Birse Community Trust

Minute of Board Meeting
13th October 2015

Trustees Present: Jean McLeod (Chair), Anita Stutter, Doug Boyle, John Hector.
Apologies: Jonathan Kitching, Mark White.
In Attendance: Robert Dinnie (Patron), Jane Winton (Book-keeper), Robin Callander (Adviser), Rick Paul (Secretary to Board)

1. Introduction

1.1 The Agenda was confirmed. There were two apologies and two items noted for AOB.

2. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings

2.1 The minutes of Meeting on 8th September 2015 were approved and signed.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Finzean Old School: It was noted that the fire safety check for September had been done.

3 (4.1) Endowment Fund: It was confirmed that the transfer has taken place and the money invested in a fixed term savings account until 9th November 2016.

7.4 Rabbit / Bugle: It was noted that the Rabbit will include an item about the Community Woods Walk in November. It was noted the timing of the next edition of the Bugle is uncertain.

4. Finances

4.1 Management Accounts: The previously circulated income and expenditure tables for the third quarter were discussed. It was noted that the large size of BCT's current deficit on the year is because BCT has not received either the anticipated pine planting grant or a donation from BTCo. It was also noted in the context of a wider discussion about BCT's economics and its Strategic Plan, that BCT's viability depends on securing income from grants or donations in addition to the expected level of income from BTCo from timber harvesting in the forests.

5. Administration

5.1 Membership: It was noted that good progress had been made with signing up members during September and since, with the proportion of voters signed up being approximately 30% in Finzean, 20% in Birse and 10% in Ballogie. It was also noted that, while the current membership represents 25% of voters, around 30% of the households in the parish on the Electoral Register now have one or more BCT member. It was confirmed that BCT's target by the year end is 220 or more members as a third of the voters on the Register. It was agreed that it might be worth circulating a note about the membership change and form through POOT.

5.2 Strategic Plan 2016-20: It was noted the discussion under 4.1 will be reflected in the Finances section of the Plan. It was also noted that a draft version of the Schedule of Lands and Buildings to be in place at the start of the Plan, will be circulated to Trustees for comment before the next Board Meeting.

5.3 Birse Parish Liaison Group: It was noted that the Record of the BPLG Meeting on 22nd September had been circulated.

5.4 Scottish Community Alliance: It was noted that BCT has updated its profile on the SCA website, following a request from SCA for groups to update their information on the site.

5.5 BCT Projector: It was agreed that BCT should not replace the broken projector as it has been little used over recent years, and that BCT should hire locally when required.

6. Properties

6.1 Slewdrum: It was noted that BCT is awaiting a response from FCS's solicitors to the points made by J & H Mitchell about the draft disposition for the 5 ha that BCT is buying. The previously circulated letter regarding BCT's interest in the “Pearls in Peril' Project was noted.

6.2 Finzean Community Woods: RC reported on a number of topics related to the Woods and Community Path. It was noted that the Community Woods Walk organised with Finzean Community Association, will take place on Sunday 1st November at 2pm.

6.3 Corsedardar: It was agreed that RP should approach last year's piper again and also invite the Chair of BACA to lay the community wreath this year. It was also agreed that RC and AS will discuss the items about the Act of Remembrance in the Note of points from last year.

6.4 Archive Building: It was noted that Trustees had already agreed for Alison Bell to use the building for a writing class, and that she has not yet clarified the dates for the class.

7. Other Projects

7.1 Deer Management: It was noted that BCT will be hosting the annual Birse Parish Deer Management Group autumn meeting at the Old School on 29th October.

7.2 Archive: The previously circulated Background Paper and Review Paper were both endorsed. The proposals listed in the Review Paper were agreed and the draft policies on Acquisitions, Disposals and Loans were also agreed. It was agreed that JM, RP and RC will be the current Archive Management Committee to help take forward the agreed proposals.

7.3 Member Site Visits: It was noted that, while Aidan Bell had been contacted after the last Board Meeting, he has not been back in touch with either the list of participants on the spring visits or plans for autumn visits. It was noted that there will now be no further visit this year.

7.4 John Forster Memorial: It was noted that following the circulated photo montage from Guy Haslam, RC had met GH on site and this had resulted in the circulated outline design from GH. It was agreed that, while the outline design is a helpful step forward, a number of points remained to be discussed including avoiding the existing stone clearance heap, keeping the seat reasonably close to the fence, the nature of the proposed stonework in the seat and on the ground, and the scale of the construction relative to the site. It was agreed that RC will discuss these and other points with GH and also seek clarification on a range of aspects, including the approach being taken to constructing the seat and a written agreement over the proposed project.

7.5 Nativity Play: The previously circulated email of 29th September from Guy Haslam to JM as BCT Chair and the Notes on the email by RC, were discussed. It was agreed that BCT will maintain its decision not to make a donation to the Play. It was also agreed that the wider points in GH's email warranted a written response and that a draft response by RC based on his Notes will be circulated to Trustees for comment.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Forest of Birse Commonty: It was noted that this month is 20 years since October 1995 and the start of discussions between representatives of the proposed BCT and Birse and Ballogie Estates about vesting rights over the Commonty in BCT. The previously circulated paper 'Historical Notes about the Fungle in Birse Parish' was endorsed.

8.2 Local Government Boundary Commission Review: It was agreed that RC will send a submission from BCT to the Commission's current consultation, recommending that the houses west of the Allt Dinnie at Craigendinnie and Craiglarach, should be transferred from Ward 16 with Birse to Ward 17 with Aboyne.

9. Board Meetings and Visits

9.1 Board Meetings: It was agreed that the final Board Meeting during 2015 will be on Tuesday 24th November at 7.15pm in the Archive Building.

9.2 Site Visits: It was noted that Trustees had had interesting site visits to the pine planting area in the Commonty Pinewoods on 13th September and to the Mills on 27th September. The previously circulated Note of points from the Mills visit was endorsed. RC reported that he had emailed Stan Moyes after the visit, about items that should be removed from the Bucket Mill.

Signed Date