

## BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST

### Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting held at Finzean Hall on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Ordinary Members Present: Alison Bell, Doug Boyle, Liz Bracegirdle, Eoghan Cameron, Margaret Chapman, Rex Chapman, Billy Christie, Euan Christie, Andrew Craig, Graham Davidson, Nancy Davidson, William Davidson, John Forbes, Jason Glynn, Sam Glynn, Doug Grey, Guy Haslam, Jean Haslam, Davie Hector, John Hector, Chris Hockley, Kate Hockley, Jonathan Kitching, Dave Latham, Sian Loftus, Jean McLeod, Alastair Pout, Toby Rider, Allan Shand, Anneka Stolte, David Winton, Jane Winton, David Younie (33)

Others Present: Sarah Brown, Alice Loftus, Vivien Moorhouse, Kate Pout, Rick Paul, Anne Paul (6)

Apologies from Ordinary Members: Aiden Bell, Calum Bell, Jacqui Chapman, Paul Chapman, Callum Christie, Carolyn Christie, Kathryn Christie, Richard Davidson, Deborah Dinnie, Dorothy Dinnie, Hazel Dinnie, Robert Dinnie, Robert F Dinnie, Andrew Farquharson, Donald Farquharson, Kate Farquharson, Ellie Flather, Hamish Forbes, Wendy Hector, Helen Jackson, Peter Jackson, Dale Kitching, Lewis McLeod-Slater, Ken Milroy, Lucy Rider, Mel Shand, Gareth Wright, Richard Wright, Samantha Wright, Sarah Wright, Patsy Younie (31)

Apologies from Others: Richard Christie (1)

#### 1. **Welcome and Apologies.**

On behalf of the Board, the Chair of BCT's Trustees, Guy Haslam, welcomed everyone to BCT's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting, and noted the apologies.

#### 2. **Minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2018.**

Guy asked for approval of the Minutes of BCT's 20<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2018. They were proposed by Doug Boyle and seconded by Jean McLeod.

#### 3. **Matters Arising.**

There were seven matters arising from last year's minutes:

- 1) The new Annual Report format. There should have been a 2019 budget included in the 2018 Report. Unfortunately this was not ready in time for the printers but will be included next year.
- 2) Repairs to the Weirs. These are now fully complete.
- 3) New build housing for locals. This is not considered to be in BCT's remit
- 4) Community Engagement Workshops. A number of these have been held.
- 5) Community Action Plan. This is a topic for the Community Councils.
- 6) Broadband Speed. Speeds are now higher in Ballogie and Finzean, but still poor in Birse.
- 7) Sustainable Forest Management. This will be covered in the presentations later in the meeting.

#### 4. **Trustees' Report for the Year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.**

Guy introduced the Trustees' Report as printed in BCT's Annual Report. This report was adopted by the members present by a clear majority in a show of hands.

#### 5. **Approval of the Accounts for the Year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.**

Guy provided an overview of the Annual Accounts printed in the Annual Report, covering the main items of income and expenditure in 2018. The Accounts were approved in a show of hands by a clear majority.

#### 6. **Election of Trustees**

Guy informed those present that Pam Taylor was retiring as a Trustee leaving one post vacant on the Board of Trustees. He informed the meeting that BCT had received one nomination to become a Trustee from currently co-opted Trustee Alison Bell, and therefore Alison was duly elected unopposed.

#### 7. **Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner.**

Guy explained that the Trustees are very satisfied with the way our current financial examiners handle BCT's accounts, and proposed that they be re-appointed for this coming year. This was approved in a show of hands by a clear majority

## **8. Fixing of Annual Subscription for Associate Members.**

Guy explained that the Trustees recommend that the Annual Subscription for Associate Members should remain at £20 (UK) and £25 (Overseas). This was approved in a show of hands by a clear majority.

There being no further formal business, Guy concluded the AGM

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*Following the AGM, Guy Haslam, supported by the other Trustees, gave an update on the Trust.*

### Current Financials

*Guy provided a summary of the Trust's income and reserves and explained that after a period where the Trust had acquired a wide range of buildings and assets, the Trustees wanted to step back and ensure that the Trust was making the best use of these assets, as some of them are currently underused or require / will require significant funding to maintain them in their current state.*

### Old School Project

*Alison Bell explained the history of the Old School back to 1732 and how BCT had secured funding to complete a feasibility Study to identify options for the site. Meetings with architects and locals had resulted in various ideas and work continues to determine the way ahead. BCT will then need to secure the funding required.*

### Aye, it was aabody

*Nancy Davidson gave a summary of the "Aye, it was Aabody" project and explained the connection that Birse area had with the slave trade in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The project was still ongoing with several events planned for 2019, many of which involved local schoolchildren.*

### BTCO and Forestry

*Toby Rider explained the history of Birse Trading Company, a subsidiary of BCT. He informed the meeting that BTCO was tendering for a new forestry agent, and that no major fellings are due this year.*

### Commonty

*Eoghan Cameron explained the history of the Commonty and confirmed that, after a long period of tree planting on the North Hill, the Trust plan to let the woods to develop naturally with low input.*

*Alastair Pout asked if the whole of the Commonty should be considered in future planning, not just the North Hill. Guy explained that BCT had very few rights over the southern side of the Forest of Birse valley.*

*Anneka Stolte thought there should environmental studies/surveys should be completed to confirm the diversity present in the area. Guy proposed they meet outside the meeting to discuss further and will email them to set up meetings.*

### Mills

*Eoghan Cameron spoke about the Grade A listed mills complex, and noted that whilst BCT is the landowner, it does not own all the buildings which are in various states of repair. There is significant external interest in the mills with a number of visits recently and a 'Friends' of the Mills' volunteer group has been formed.*

### Focus

*Finally, the Chair closed the meeting with an overview of projects that the Trustees are focussing on for this year. He then thanked everyone for attending and invited them to join the Trustees in the refreshments provided.*