

BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST

Minutes of Board Meeting

6th October 2020 (on Zoom)

Trustees Present: Guy Haslam, Alison Bell, Nancy Davidson, Liz Bracegirdle, Simon Lindsey, Sian Loftus.

Apologies: Hedge Shand, Toby Rider.

In Attendance: Jane Winton (Book-keeper), Eoghan Cameron (Manager), Rick Paul (Secretary to the Board).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Election of Chair: It was agreed by all present that GH should be re-elected as Chair.
- 1.2 Trustee Introductions. For the benefit of the new board, each Trustee gave a brief personal introduction, including any conflict of interests.
- 1.3 Agenda/Apologies: The agenda was confirmed and apologies noted.

2. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings

- 2.1 The minutes of meeting on 13th August 2020 were agreed. RP to arrange with GH to sign.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 The smoke detector and emergency lighting checks for August and September 2020 were completed.

4. Finances

4.1 Management Accounts. JW explained the Quarter 3 income and expenditure figures and the bank balances. GH gave his evaluation of where the Trust will be at year end and also on the potential request for a donation from BTCo. It is likely that this will be smaller than usual, as BTCo currently have limited funding until they complete a harvest at Slewdrum Forest.

Given that there was very little money remaining in Community current account (Acct No. 3) and we were expecting a number of invoices, the Board agreed that JW could transfer money from the Community Reserve Fund (Acct No. 4).

4.2 Endowment Fund. JW has moved the balance into an interest-bearing account.

5. Administration

5.1 AGM: The draft minutes were agreed by the Trustees and will be put forward for approval by the members at the next AGM.

5.2 AGM Feedback: Trustees agreed that the attendance at the Zoom meeting had been good and that the meeting had gone very well. The meeting fulfilled the Trust's legal obligations re the AGM and approving its annual accounts. The Trustees remain keen to plan to hold an open meeting when the Covid 19 restrictions are lifted, GH had applied to Marr Area and the Trust had been granted £500 towards our extra expenses associated with holding an online AGM.

5.3 Manager's Position: GH confirmed that EC was leaving the area in November and it was agreed that BCT should advertise for a local to fill the position. GH to send out job spec to Trustees.

6. Properties and Projects

6.1 Finzean Community Woods: Trustees agreed to limited tree felling in the Community Woods across the road from Farquharson Park. This would be conducted in 2 phases (a chain saw training course in October and a limited 2 day harvest by a contractor in early 2021). GH will write to residents in the centre of Finzean and then discuss the harvesting with the contractor on site. The plan is to leave the harvested wood on site for the local residents to use (possible donation).

6.2 Community Path: Trustees agreed to appoint a contractor to improve the path surface. GH will apply to the windfarm panel for a grant to cover the cost. GH to check whether Davie Hector has installed the dog mess signs.

6.3 North Hill Forest Plan: This will be discussed in a separate meeting, which will be set up when the Forest Agent has sent back a summary of the comments received.

6.4 Doors Open 2020: Trustees congratulated AB, TR and JK for an excellent video and suggested it be put on the website with a link on social media.

- 6.5 Mills: GH reported that the weirs had survived the recent heavy rain. Davie Hector is organising a volunteer day at the Sawmill (after meeting note this will be on 25th Oct – details to follow). GH agreed to contact D Hector ref the damage to the south side of the weir.
- 6.6 Corsedardar: RP to contact Councillors to gauge interest in a very limited laying of wreaths for Remembrance. RP to video the event.
- 6.7 Birse Kirk: GH to contact Andrew Nicol for an update on maintenance work (after meeting note: GH received an e-mail just after the meeting and will follow this up).
- 6.8 Annual Meeting with the Estates: GH to arrange in November, any Trustees welcome to attend.

7. Other Projects

- 7.1 Archive: EC had organised for an initial short survey of the archive and a report by the National Conservation Service. SL agreed that she would identify the key actions in the report and also contact a local conservation organisation to see if there were able to provide support. It was agreed that getting volunteers involved was a key element of moving forward.
- 7.2 Old School: SL agreed to regroup with ND and AB, review the assessment and report back to the Trustees. Lottery and HES funding are a possibility in 2021. SL also to agree the split of funding for the current review as the scope included preparing grant bids which is currently not possible due to the Covid 19 restrictions.
- RP to ask Vivien Moorhouse whether the meeting room could be used for a pop-up shop.
- 7.3 Aye, it was A'body: Trustees agreed to SL's suggestion to move the unveiling of the panels to an online event involving Jackie Kay. Path signs are on hold pending planning permission. SL agreed to cut down the project video and will then send it to JW, who will put on the website.

8. Any Other Business

- 8.1 Commony: EC to arrange for tube removal on the most critical trees.
- 8.2 BTCO. Deer management – to be discussed at next meeting.
- 8.3 Finzean Hall Car Park: Planning permission has been applied for; tarring will probably take place in February 2021.
- 8.4 Static Bat Detectors: Aileen Salway from NE Scotland Bat Group has asked to install bat detectors at the Old School. LB to follow up.
- 8.5 Facebook: New Trustees to be introduced on BCT's Facebook page.
- 8.6 Rabbit Article: GH to write and circulate to Trustees.
- 8.7 Post Boxes: SL highlighted the report on Post boxes and noted that there is a new post box at the Farm Shop which should be put on Facebook.
- 8.8 Trustee Roles: GH suggested that this be revisited in 3 months when the new Trustees are settled in.
- 8.9 Powlair Road: Trustees agreed that GH will ask Davie Hector to build a staggered gate on Powlair Road where the community path joins the Powlair Road.
- 8.10 Raptors: Alastair Pout has offered to give another talk on raptors. AB to suggest either the Nov or Jan meeting.
- 8.11 Role of Chair: AB suggested GH could give a short job description at the start of the next meeting.
- 8.12 Industrial Heritage Society: SL informed Trustees that there is an event entitled 'Keeping the Wheels Turning' available to watch online.
- 8.14 Amazon: JW to arrange for BCT to be added to 'Amazon Smile'.
- 8.15 Dyke at Old School: RP to email Vivien Moorhouse at Finzean school about repairs.

9. Trustees Meetings

- 9.1 Board Meetings: The next board meeting will be the Zoom AGM on Nov 17th, followed by Jan 12th. The North Hill Forest Plan meeting will probably be towards the end of October.

Signed.....

Date.....