

# BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST

## Minutes of Board Meeting

15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (on Zoom)

Trustees Present: Alison Bell, Toby Rider, Liz Bracegirdle, Simon Lindsey, Sian Loftus, Nancy Davidson.

In Attendance: Toni Watt (Manager), Rick Paul (Secretary to the Board). Alastair Pout (local resident, item 2 only).

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome: The Chair welcomed new Manager Toni Watt to the team, and also Alastair Pout to deliver the Raptor report for 2020.

### 2. Raptor Report

2.1 AP summarized the breeding of raptors in the Forest of Birse, and highlighted the use of bangers as bird scarers in a non-agricultural situation. Trustees decided to follow this up by forming a subgroup comprising TW, SLe, LB, AB and AP. AP then left the meeting.

### 3. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings

3.1 The minutes of meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were agreed. RP to arrange with AB for signature.

### 4. Matters Arising

4.1 The smoke detector and emergency lighting checks for November 2020 were completed.

### 5. Properties and Projects

5.1 Finzean Community Woods: LB and SLe reported that a limited thinning would suffice and it would be helpful if homeowners themselves could mark which they consider the most problematic trees. LB and SLe to visit those households affected. They noted evidence of non-native trees in the wood and that some people were using the community land as an extension to their garden. Trustees agreed that people should be made aware of its importance as a conservation area before any action is taken.

5.2 Community Path: AB reported that the dog mess signs were up, but another is required at the top of the path. AB to contact Davie Hector.

5.3 North Hill Forest Plan: TR reported that Robin Callander is engaging with Scottish Woodlands to progress a separate plan for each forest. Scottish Woodlands will be responsible for all dealings with Scottish Forestry, the governing body.

5.4 Tree Tubes: TR reported that some time ago it was agreed to remove all tubes on the basis that those trees which had not thrived were probably going to die anyway. Current thinking is that tubes should be removed on a tree-by-tree basis. SLo to ask RC to explain our obligations and TR to discuss with Ewan Christie.

5.5 Birse Kirk: ND told the meeting that no progress had been made with maintenance at the Kirk. She will contact ETBK in the New Year for a progress report.

5.6 Annual Meeting with the Estates: This has been postponed until January 11<sup>th</sup> 2021.

5.7 Enclosures on the Commony: SLo reported that she had spoken with RC and that there had been discussions in the past, but no single document exists defining the rights and responsibilities on the Commony. RC is setting up an advisory group comprising Paul Chapman, Doug Boyle and Jane Winton. In the meantime AB and SLo to look out any information in the archives. AB/TW to bring up the subject at the Estates' meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup>.

## 6. Other Projects

6.1 Archive: SLo noted that due to Covid there had been no City and Shire training courses, but some webinars were available. SLo showed her plan which prioritized getting to grips with what is actually in the archive and rationalizing it. AB, TW and SLo to meet before the Estates' meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> Jan.

6.2 Old School: AB met with SLo. There are some minor changes to be made to the report and then SLo will bring it back to the Trustees, and then map out with Douglas how to move forward.

6.3 Aye, it was A'body: the unveiling of the panel took place with poet laureate Jackie Kay. SLo will try to get a piece for the Facebook page.

6.4 Emergency Mast: AB received a reply from Mono that did not answer any of the questions asked of them. Trustees will re-visit in January.

6.5 Bees: Trustees decided against allowing beehives on BCT land. AB to write to Sarah Leahy.

6.6 Manager: TW gave a brief report on site visits she has made and projects she has been involved in so far.

## 7. Trustee Meetings

7.1 Board Meetings: The next Zoom board meeting will be on Jan 19<sup>th</sup> 2021.

## 8. Any Other Business

8.1 Lion TV: An email was received from a Lion TV producer asking whether BCT has any projects in 2021 that might warrant a piece in a documentary. TW to contact DTAS for more background information.

8.2 Badgers: Two dead badgers were discovered on BCT land near the Slewdrum mast. The SSPCA has been involved, as has the Wildlife Crime Officer, although no reply from him has yet been received. LB to contact 'Scottish Badgers'.

8.3 Fallen Tree: SLo reported a fallen tree at Slewdrum. SLo to let TR know the location and he will inform Doug Boyle.

Signed.....

Date.....