

# **BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST**

## **Minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2021 in Finzean Hall**

Ordinary Members Present: *Alison Bell, Liz Bracegirdle, Liz Clarke, Louise Counsell, Paul Chapman, Andrew Craig, Graham Davidson, Nancy Davidson, Robert Dinnie, Nicky Fyfe, Jonathan Kitching, Simon Lindsey, Sian Loftus, Joel Pierce, David Younie.*

Proxies: *Aidan Bell, Richard Davidson, Lorraine Lindsey, Toby Rider, Richard Wright, (20)*

Others Present: *Rick Paul, Toni Watt (2)*

Apologies from Ordinary Members: *Callum Bell, Angie Bolt, David Bracegirdle, Andrew Counsell, Andrew Farquharson, Guy Haslam, Jean Haslam, Helen Jackson, Pete Jackson, Dave Latham, Jean McLeod, Alastair Pout, David Winton, Jane Winton. (14)*

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

On behalf of the Board, the Chair of BCT's Trustees, Alison Bell, welcomed everyone to BCT's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting, and introduced the Trustees and team to the members present. She confirmed that everyone present has signed in and noted the apologies received.

### **2. Minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

Alison asked for approval of the Minutes of BCT's 22<sup>nd</sup> AGM held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2020, a copy of which was in everyone's meeting pack. They were proposed by David Younie, seconded by Louise Counsell and approved by the members unopposed.

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

There were no matters arising from last year's minutes.

### **4. Trustees' Report for the Year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.**

Alison explained that even during the pandemic, the Board of Trustees had continued to meet on a regular basis on Zoom and were also able to communicate with partners to operate as well as could be expected in the circumstances. Highlights of the year were participation in Doors Open Day and the 'Aye, it was a'body' project. She noted that Toni Watt had joined the team from NTS and was nurturing BCT's relationship with the school, but that BCo's planned felling had been cancelled because of Covid and would now probably not happen until 2022. The report was proposed by Paul Chapman, seconded by Jonathan Kitching and approved by the members unopposed.

### **5. Approval of the Accounts for the Year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.**

Alison reported that because BCo had been unable to make a donation in 2020 due to the cancellation of the felling, BCT's position was less strong than usual but still financially secure. The Accounts were proposed by Louise Counsell, seconded by Andrew Craig and approved by the members unopposed.

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

Alison informed those present that because BCT had two vacancies on the Board, no Trustee had to step down. One nomination was received from current co-opted Trustee Simon Lindsey and he was therefore duly elected unopposed.

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

Alison 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 the coming year. This was proposed by Paul Chapman, seconded by David Younie and approved by the members unopposed.

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

Alison explained that the Trustees recommend that the Annual Subscription for Associate Members should remain at £20 (UK) and £25 (Overseas). This was proposed by Andrew Craig, seconded by David Younie and approved by the members unopposed.

Finally, Alison thanked those who had made a special contribution to BCT over the year: Hedge Shand and Guy Haslam for their work on the Board of Trustees, Jean McLeod as Patron, Doug Boyle as BCT's forest agent, Ian Hector for his grass cutting, and Robin Callander for his commitment to the Parish of Birse.

There being no further formal business, Alison concluded the AGM

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Following the AGM, Alison, supported by the other Trustees, held an Open Meeting

Sian Loftus spoke of BCT's plans for the Old School complex, which was in active use from the 1730's to the 1960's. Following some time as an outdoor centre, BCT took the lease in 2000 and bought it in 2004. However, it has fallen into virtual disuse and needs to be revitalized, hence the Old School Project. She took questions from the floor relating to funding plans, and internal layout of the Old School. The timescale for completion is Soup Kitchen – 2022/23, Old School 2024/25.

Alison drew members' attention to the Core Values and 5 Year Strategic Plan that was in everyone's meeting pack and asked that they read and comment if they felt anything needed to be explained or amended. This will be added to the website imminently.

Toni Watt discussed BCT's stance on the use of pesticides, and explained that in an attempt to reduce their use, there would be an experiment to plant Yellow Rattle along the paths to hopefully reduce the need for grass cutting and promote the growth of wild flowers. A date has been set in late September to prepare the ground for seed planting in early October.

**In Closing**

Finally, Alison thanked all present for attending and offered refreshments in the foyer.