

Fernaig Community Trust
AGM, 13 December 2016
Achmore Hall, 8.30pm

Colin McAndrew welcomed all

Present : Jim Coomber, Neil MacRae, Colin McAndrew, Lizzie Bird, Dave Mockett, Duncan Gibson and Crisdean MacRae

1. Apologies Georgie Grimson, Jack Bird, Moray Waddell, Sue Waddell, Mary MacBeth and Phil Game

2. Adoption of minutes of AGM December 2015

The Minutes of the 2015 AGM were approved. Proposed by Neil MacRae and seconded by Dave Mockett

3. Chair's report

It hardly seems a year since the last AGM, but presumably that's just a result of getting older. Overall this has been a satisfactory year for the Trust with several projects moving forward and an agenda of outstanding items identified to be dealt with. This time last year I reported on the Whole Farm Review of the Trust. That was completed and last month a meeting was held with our adviser to discuss his findings and recommendations. (That report will be made available on the website.) In brief, he found the Trust to be well managed and has a clear view of its responsibilities. He recommended we pursue SRDP funding for public access; and take action on the allotments. He concluded that we are asset rich, shared our concern that we are still seeking a long-term income stream, but was unable to solve that issue for us. There seems to be no silver bullet.

I reported last year consultation with the Forestry Commission on their draft land management plan for Lochalsh, which continues a commitment to joint working on the Strome Woods. The FC published its Plan for 2016-26 in July and it can be viewed on the FC website. It remains to be seen how current Scottish Government proposals to review the governance of the Forestry Commission in Scotland will impact on the ground and on its operations. The new arrangements are expected to be announced in the New Year.

A major activity this year was the Directors' decision to proceed with a funding application for a footpaths project under the EU-funded SRDP 2014-20. Our plans were developed, external expert advice was secured, and an open meeting held to share our proposals. A fully costed plan was submitted by the May deadline, and the footpaths plan published on the website. The proposal has since been assessed by SNH, who approve or decline proposals for Scottish Government, and this included a very useful site visit in September. In the meantime the impact of the EU referendum became known. We were informed that successful projects would have to be sent contracts before the Chancellor's autumn statement (23rd November) to qualify for funding. This was subsequently amended following intervention by Scottish Government, to cover the period until the UK's EU withdrawal and that all applicants should be notified of the outcome of their application (successful or unsuccessful) by letter before the end of the year. We have still to hear, but if successful, this will be a major project to take forward in 2017.

The hayfield was limed in the spring and we will be hoping for increase in yield over the next few years. There is an increasing problem with rushes encroaching, and we should tackle that. One field will be available for rent from April and will be advertised next month. There have been issues with wandering cattle and basically the problem is fencing that is no longer fit for purpose. We will shortly be replacing the fence along the allotment road and carrying out other identified repairs.

It is encouraging that three more plots have been taken up on the allotments, but there is still a lot of vacant ground. We plan to establish a 'user group' for the allotments to be responsible for day-to-day management, administration, and to carry out future developments. A meeting will be called in the new year to set this process in motion.

Directors have met monthly and most meetings have been well attended and business dealt with effectively. We have had to change our annual accounting method on the instructions of the Charity regulator. This was quite a chore and I would like to record thanks to Georgie for seeing through the complex process. There are more and more bureaucratic challenges facing small charities such as this, all taking up volunteer time and energy which we would hope to put to more productive uses. We have yet to resolve how to deal with Trust memberships and subscriptions, and that is on the 'to do' list. Finally I would like to thank the Directors for their commitment and support and we look forward to again working together in 2017.

Colin McAndrew
13 December 2016

Proposed by Lizzie Bird, seconded by Jim Coomber and unanimously approved.

4. Company Secretary's Report

I have fulfilled Companies House requirements and the Hon. Treasurer has filed accounts with Companies House and OSCR (The Scottish Charity Regulator.)

Colin's report has covered the activities of the Trust and I am sure you will realise that although a small Trust there has been a lot of work done over the past year and my thanks go to Colin and Georgie for the endless form filling for grant applications and re-arranging the accounts.

I would like to thank the Board, particularly Colin as Chair, for all their work over the past year.

Lizzie Bird
13/12/2016

Proposed by Colin MacAndrew, seconded by Neil MacRae and unanimously approved.

5. Treasurer's Report

Colin MacAndrew presented the draft accounts as Georgie unable to attend due to illness. See attached

Proposed by Crisdean MacRae, seconded by Duncan Gibson, unanimously approved subject to audit.

6. Appointment of Auditor

Following their work on the 2015 accounts it was agreed to retain the services of the Lochaber Voluntary Action Community Accounts Service.

Proposed by Neil MacRae, seconded by Colin MacAndrew and unanimously approved..

7. Any Motions to be proposed

No motions were received.

8. Elections of Directors

No nominations were received.

Those directors staying on the board were:-

Neil MacRae, Duncan Gibson, Roddy MacPherson, Colin MacAndrew and Dave Mockett

By rotation the following directors stood down but were re-elected

Andrew Bone)

Lizzie Bird) All Proposed by Jim Coomber, seconded by Crisdean MacRae

Georgie Grimson) and unanimously agreed

So the Board consists of the following 8 directors

Neil MacRae
Duncan Gibson
Roddy MacPherson
Colin MacAndrew
Dave Mockett
Andrew Bone
Lizzie Bird
Georgie Grimson

Officer roles will be agreed at the Trust's next meeting on the 10th January 2017

With no other business, Colin McAndrew thanked all those present for attending the AGM and the meeting closed at 20.15