

Minutes of the Braemar Community Limited Annual General Meeting 2020
21st January 2021 at 7.30pm Via Zoom

Present:

Simon Blackett (Chair), Doreen Wood, Dave Chandler, Jim Stark, Aimi Blueman, Glenn Perkins, Rhi Turner, Christine Watts, Andrew Martin, Colin Wight, Colin Hunter, Liz Robertson, John Macpherson, Margaret Palmer, Dave Evans, Fergus Macleod, Neil Caple, Fiona Hunter, Matt Halliday, Sarah Hubbard, Al Hubbard, Richard Baker, Marilyn Baker, Sandy Richardson, David Sherrard, Doug Bruce, Doug Anderson, Iain Mackay, Brian Wood, Anna Martelli, Sue Sherrard

Agenda Item:

1. Apologies

Trevor Garlick, Karen Noble, Colin Hunter

2. Minutes of the AGM 28th November 2019

Minutes of last year's AGM were distributed prior to the meeting.

Proposed by David Chandler and seconded by Jim Stark. The 2019 AGM minutes were approved by the meeting.

3. Matters arising from the 2019 minutes.

Brian Wood noted the 4 page historical guide booklet was in fact 24 pages. Thanks were given to Maureen Kelly who had also produced a booklet re both World Wars with Fiona Hunter and a Jacobite Book was underway.

4. Chairperson's Report – Simon Blackett

The Chairman reported the Board had met at regular intervals though the year and thanked Doreen for facilitating the Zoom meetings.

The Castle had been unable to open due to Covid restrictions but the grounds had been open and used; attractions had been added such as the grass circle, woodland walks, wildflower meadow, picnic benches and the Martin Creed Neon installation.

Hanane had left in the summer to become a nurse, Georgina had been furloughed. The flat was currently unoccupied.

Raising the Standard had been a big success, securing Lottery funding, thanks were given to Trevor Garlick, Nadine, Georgina and Dave along with the rest of the team for their work. Sandy Richardson would detail the project later in the meeting.

Auchtavan had no open days but people were encouraged to go individually. It was hoped the Fife Arms might be able to use the buildings and working fires were being explored.

BCL has responsibility for the Society and Monega bridges and some work would be needed on these in the future which would require funding. Work on a potential Dee bridge could not be considered at the moment due to the large projects currently being undertaken by BCL.

There would be no Mountain Festival until 2022 due to Covid-19.

The Community Housing Scheme was progressing, with Sam Foster as project manager. Surveys were underway and funding for these and architects had been provided by CAF Venturesome. The Community Consultation had attracted some 60 people. A new Legal entity would be set up, rather than BCL taking forward the project.

There would be 15 units, the houses would be passive houses, a new road would be required involving the felling of some trees and the project would cost around £2 million. Castlehill Housing would manage the properties, with a Braemar Housing Allocation Policy.

The Tomrichton wood was in the process of being purchased for the community, funding was being provided by the Scottish Land Fund. There would be a nature trail, tree planting, bird boxes etc. Whilst there would be some remedial work, it was hoped the wood would be kept natural with minimal interference.

Simon outlined plans for a new Braemar Community Ltd website, and how it would fit with the Community Portal which would have an inward and outward facing element.

The Hydro was performing well.

The Chairman thanked the Directors for their work in the last 12 months.

Doug Bruce queried the Dee Bridge project, was it going to go ahead again when pulled previously, and would it be the same design? Simon said it could be looked at some stage in the future when other large projects had been completed, the design had not gone to planning previously but would likely be similar.

Richard Baker queried the need for two websites. Al Hubbard explained that Braemar Scotland was the visitor facing element for Tourists and was being revamped with Phoenix funding. The inward-facing element was for the community linked to the Smart villages project.

Doug Bruce asked what the cost of the housing included; it was explained the cost of the land was £1 and costs were associated with building 15 houses and a new road. The Wood had been valued independently and money for purchase provided by the Scottish Land Fund.

5. Financial Report – Dave Chandler

A draft set of accounts ending 31st March 2020 were distributed by email prior to the meeting. Dave Chandler also displayed and explained a summary of the accounts.

Accounts had been delayed due to the RTS project and being unable to access the accountant until November.

Dave highlighted key areas of the accounts; £96,890 income was achieved by castle visitors, salaries had increased. Dave thanked the Castle Manager, staff and volunteers.

The funds raised for RTS and the expenditure required on the project was also explained. The Castle gave £47,206 in reserves to the RTS project.

The castle surplus was £12,500 which shows it is financially viable and sustainable. Unfortunately RTS has required lots of funds and reserves are low at £19,000.

Since March, the Castle has tried to minimise costs and to seek grants to cover running costs.

RTS and the Housing project have raised large sums via grants, around £2 million will have been raised for community projects by next year.

Simon Blackett thanked Dave for the huge amount of effort he has put in over the last 12 months, particularly with the RTS project.

The resolution to receive and adopt the Directors report and audited accounts was proposed by Glenn Perkins and seconded by John Macpherson.

6. Appointment of Auditors

The resolution to re-appoint Anderson, Anderson and Brown as auditors of the Company and their remuneration fixed by directors was proposed by Simon Blackett and seconded by Doreen Wood.

7. Appointment of Directors

Aimi Blueman, Dave Chandler and Rhi Turner to retire by rotation but Dave Chandler and Rhi Turner have indicated their willingness to stand again for office. Christine Watts and Andrew Martin to stand for election as directors. Simon Blackett thanked Aimi Blueman.

The reappointment of Rhi Turner and David Chandler was proposed by Jim Stark and Seconded by Richard Baker.

The appointment of Christine Watts was proposed by Doreen Wood and Seconded by Aimi Blueman.

The appointment of Andrew Martin was proposed by Dave Chandler and second by Glenn Perkins.

8. AOCB

Sandy Richardson, the RTS Professional Fundraiser, gave a short presentation on the RTS project. Brian Wood noted Sandy's optimism and queried this in a post Covid climate of National Debt. Sandy said the quality of the project bodes well and the project benefits from fitting with several potential funding streams. It was hoped wealthy and philanthropic individuals would be major contributors.

Doug Bruce commented that having the Housing project as a separate legal entity to BCL was a good move.

Dave Chandler raised a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Simon Blackett, Chairperson, closed the meeting.