



MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF
THE NORTH HARRIS TRUST

TUESDAY 8TH MARCH 2022

7.30PM – Community Centre, Tarbert

1. Apologies: Donnie MacLeod, Tim Langley, Donald Macleod

Present: Calum J MacKay, Kirsty MacKay, Barbara MacKay, Steve McCombe, Michael Hunter, David Wake, Robert MacKinnon, Finlay E MacLeod, Diana MacLennan, Calum MacDonald, Phil Butterfield, Donald J Morrison, Steven Morrison, Kate Lewis, Paul Russ, Lena Morrison, Shaun Hayes, Alison Bloomfield, Shaun Bloomfield, Romy Benedetti, John MacDonald, Cathy Morrison, Morag MacLeod

2. Minutes of AGM 2021

The minutes of the previous AGM were proposed by Finlay E MacLeod and seconded by Robert MacKinnon to be a true account of that meeting.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Calum J Mackay, welcomed everyone to the 19th Annual General Meeting of the North Harris Trust.

A copy of the previous minute and the 19th Annual Report were circulated previously by email. The Chairman's Report is included in the Annual Report and Calum highlighted a few items from his report.

Calum thanked staff and directors for their continued hard work throughout the year. There was a considerable amount of work undertaken despite the circumstances of the past couple of years. There were a couple of changes in staff and directors with Karen MacRae leaving to take up new employment elsewhere and Phil Bertin retiring as a director. Lena Morrison was nominated to fill the vacancy for the Tarbert area and was welcomed onto the Board.

Overall the Trust is in a fairly positive position despite the circumstances and looks forward to consulting with the community in the year ahead.

4. Staff Reports

Staff reports were circulated in the 19th Annual Report and Calum invited any questions raised from the staff reports.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

Calum MacDonald, CIB Services, gave a brief financial report and informed everyone that the Trust had a strong balance sheet with a clear audit trail. This reflects well on the Trust.

6. APPROVAL OF AUDITED ACCOUNTS

Calum MacKay thanked Calum MacDonald for his work in preparing the accounts. The audited accounts were approved.

7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

CIB Services to be retained as auditors.

8. CONFIRMATION OF DIRECTORS

Confirmation of directors was approved, with Kirsty MacKay, Kate Lewis and Robert MacKinnon wishing to continue unopposed and Donnie MacLeod resigning as a director for Scalpay. John MacDonald was nominated as a director for Scalpay.

9. APPROVAL OF DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

The Draft Strategic Plan was presented for approval but it was agreed to postpone the deadline for approval for 2 months to allow feedback and suggestions from members. Any comments, observations and suggestions are to be returned by the beginning of May.

10. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION

Shaun Hayes (SH) asked whether the Minutes of Board meetings could be uploaded to the website in a more timely fashion after meetings have taken place. This was noted.

SH also asked whether the Minutes could be published in the Dè tha Dol? but it was felt that that wasn't the best option for Minutes to be publicised. The Dè tha Dol? covers all of Harris and it was felt the North Harris Trust Minutes would only be of interest to its members. It was also mentioned that other organisations do not publicise their minutes in the Dè tha Dol? and it would be better to publish informative articles rather than Minutes which are publicly available on the website. It is included in the Strategy Plan that more news articles will be published.

Engaging with the community has been difficult due to Covid restrictions but it is hoped to hold more Community Consultation meetings this year.

John MacDonald (JMD) asked for an overview of the Nature Restoration Project. Michael (MH) gave an account of the project and JM expressed that it was a great scheme and that he was very supportive.

SH asked whether it would be possible to have a breakdown of the project spend and MH said it would be once all project income and expenditure was finalised.

SH asked what the process was for re-electing Directors and Office Bearers and why there hadn't been a rotation of Chair over the years. Calum MacKay explained the procedure and that over the years no one had been prepared to take on the commitment and work responsibility as most Directors have other work commitments.

SH asked whether the number of Directors made it difficult in decision making. Kirsty MacKay expressed that Directors were very good at supporting each other and sharing responsibilities. KM felt the number of Directors on the Board did not make decision making difficult.

Barbara MacKay explained that each Director had their own area to represent and that having more Directors made it a fairer process when it came to voting on decisions.

JM asked what there was to look forward to in the coming year and MH informed that tree planting would continue and that a new Ranger would be in position next month (April).

SH asked whether there were any plans in developing energy related projects. David (DW) explained that there were none at the moment due to lack of grid capacity and the Feed In Tariff.

SH asked whether Hydrogen had been considered and DW responded that it hadn't at the moment as it was too risky.

SH asked if NHT would become involved in the scheme for Carbon Credits on Peatlands. MH explained that it had been investigated but further information would be required. NHT and other community organisations are working alongside the Peatland Restoration Office and Community Land Outer Hebrides who are currently investigating the benefits.

SH stated that Outend, Scalpay, had become a parking hotspot, especially with campervans, and a nightmare for local residents. Eilean Glas Lighthouse is a big attraction for visitors. MH explained that it is hoped to put parking meters in the area in the hope that this issue can be resolved. Further parking options are also being investigated to alleviate pressure from this area. The matter has also been raised at the Harris Forum meetings.

The Harris Wardens last year helped with parking issues but it is currently unsure whether funding will be available for these positions this year.

Staff and Directors are always available for any questions or issues.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

DRAFT