**Fernaig Community Trust**

**Draft Minutes of AGM, 11 December 2018**

**Achmore Hall, 7.30pm**

Colin McAndrew welcomed all

**Present :** Colin McAndrew, Georgie Grimson, Lizzie Bird, Martin Irving, Duncan Gibson, Roddy MacPherson and Neil MacRae

**1. Apologies** Jack Bird

**2. Adoption of minutes of AGM December 2017**

The Minutes of the 2015 AGM were approved. Proposed by Neil MacRae and seconded by Duncan Gibson.

**3.** **Chair’s Report to AGM, 11 December 2018**

This past year has been a busy and productive one for the Trust and I hope my report reflects that. The Directors have continued to show their commitment and worked with diligence to ensure the Trust’s affairs are managed to the best of our ability. Monthly meetings have been well attended and always conducted in a positive and professional fashion. Georgie took on the task on ensuring that we were compliant with the new General Data Protection Regulations which came into force in May which was extra work on top of making sure the now much more complex Annual Accounts process was completed on time.

Last year I reported on progress with the Footpaths project, at that point still in the construction phase. I outlined the financial challenges we faced and how we were resolving them. As you know, the path and all the associated works, was completed on time by the end of February and I wish to put on record our sincere thanks to the contractors, Highland Conservation, for their high quality work and attention to detail right to the end. We also have to thank Social Investment Scotland for providing their financial input, which meant all invoices were paid on time while awaiting grant payments, which in turn came through quickly and in full. Thanks to staff at Rural Payments in Inverness, who processed our claims with all speed. This meant that by early May we were able to pay off the bridging loan and ‘close the book’ on the project. Those several months were very demanding, keeping tabs on everything, and sincere appreciation to Georgie for all her efforts as Treasurer. No doubt Georgie will be stressing the need to build up our much reduced bank balance over next year.

Almost from day one it became obvious that our decision to build the footpaths was a correct one and a resource of real value has been created. It has been truly transformational and become a popular and well used facility for all the community and visitors alike. Over 400 native broadleaf saplings have been planted to further enhance the path. The land has healed from the construction work – the path now looks as though it has been part of the landscape for years. The successful official opening event in August as part of Community Land Week was enjoyed by all who took part and we have the film record of that as a permanent reminder. Many thanks to those who contributed various donations to the day, and to Scottish Government for their financial support and providing the film crew. Perhaps duck racing has been established as a popular tradition so should become an annual event. We now have the responsibility to look after the path, and no doubt will be organising various work parties to help with maintenance next year. We would really welcome more people becoming involved in the work of the Trust, especially young ones and have to find out what would attract them.

Finally on the path, we have recently learned that the project has been nominated by the SRDP for a ‘Rural Inspiration Award’ to the international European Network for Rural Development. Even if not successful, it’s gratifying to know our efforts and achievements have been recognised on a wider stage. We have learned a lot from this project and which should give us confidence to tackle future activities.

Overall this has been a decent year for all the land-based activities and tenants have worked hard and productively on the smallholdings. All available land is occupied. We were pleased to help out with providing a temporary home for Ross MacMillan’s sheep due to lamb in the spring and the early hot dry weather meant a hay crop was won by Colin Parsons before the end of June. Martin’s Herdwick flock continues to grow and attract a lot of interest and attention from those using the path. Current 5-year leases all come to an end in March, and we will be in touch with tenants about renewal soon. We will be offering new SLDT leases 2019-24. This will include proposing a modest rent increase per Hectare for the next 5-year period, as rents have remained unchanged since the Trust was set up 20 years ago and are a significant source of our income. Finally on the land, we still struggle to have a greater uptake for the allotments and will promote them again in the spring. And quite a few are let but not worked.

Recently we have been pleased that part of the Old Forest Office is being used as workshop space for wood carving, producing a useful rental income, and we plan to restore the small room in the office for our own use. And finally getting round to repainting the outside is a springtime priority.

In conclusion I would again like to thank all the Directors for their commitment and contributions to the Trust: not least to Georgie for a very busy year as Treasurer, and to Lizzie as Company Secretary, who is happily restored after a lengthy period of ill health.

Colin McAndrew

11 December 2018

**Proposed by Lizzie Bird, seconded by Martin Irving and unanimously approved.**

**4. Company Secretary’s Report**

This is a very short report due to the fact that I have not been operating on full batteries this year due to having a major operation in June following a couple of months of illness. However I am nearly back to 100%

Normal Hon. Sec duties have been carried out – they are very few and the main thrust of my report is a huge thank you to the rest of the directors but particularly Colin and Georgie for managing and dealing with all the paperwork, red tape, the arrangement of the bridging loan the Trust needed for the new path. The amount of time and worry with the responsibility of achieving yet having to manage the loan with due diligence was huge, time consuming and I know caused a few sleepless nights. Colin and Georgie you are real stars –thank you so much. What a small Trust has achieved is momentous.

Lizzie Bird

11th December 2018

**Proposed by Martin Irving, seconded by Georgie Grimson and unanimously approved.**

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

Georgie presented the draft accounts.

FERNAIG COMMUNITY TRUST TREASURERS REPORT 2017 – 2018

INCOME £ 158,739.76

EXPENDITURE £ 158,849.52

SPENT £109.76 MORE THAN WE RECEIVED

BALANCE AT 31 AUGUST 2017 – £6,608.63

BALANCE AT 31 AUGUST 2018 - £1,194.08

ANNUAL SURPLUS/ DEFICIT - £-5414.55

The large deficit this year is due to monies spent on the footpath.

We had a very busy few months when all the path work was taking place and money seemed to be haemorrhaging from our account but we got there in the end. Colin has given a more detailed account of this period in his annual report and thanked all the agencies and people involved, but I would just like to thank Colin personally for all the work he did at this time and for keeping me up to date with all the details of loans/payments etc.

BREAKDOWN OF MAJOR INCOME SOURCES

OFFICE RENTS £ 687.69

ALLOTMENT RENTS £ 100.00

SMALLHOLDINGS £ 1,370.40

DONATIONS £ 564.04

FOOTPATH INCOME £148,712.53

APART FROM THE USUAL EXPENDITURE WE HAD THE FOLLOWING

FOOTPATH – £157,828.38

MORE DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SPREADSHEETS ARE AVAILABLE IF ANYONE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THEM.

When the accounts have been approved I will forward to the accountant for auditing

**Proposed by Neil MacRae, seconded by Martin Irving, unanimously approved subject to audit.**

1. **Appointment of Auditor**

It was agreed to retain the services of the Lochaber Voluntary Action Community Accounts Service.

**Proposed by Colin MacAndrew, seconded by Lizzie Bird and unanimously approved**.

1. **Any Motions to be proposed**

The Secretary reported that no motions had been received.

1. **Elections of Directors**

Those directors staying on the board were:-

Neil MacRae, Duncan Gibson, Martin Irving, Roddy MacPherson and Colin MacAndrew

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

Lizzie Bird and Georgie Grimson

**Both were proposed by Colin MacAndrew, seconded by Martin Irving and unanimously approved**..

So the Board consists of the following 7 directors

Neil MacRae

Duncan Gibson

Martin Irving

Roddy MacPherson

Colin MacAndrew

Lizzie Bird

Georgie Grimson

Officer roles will be agreed at the Trust’s Board meeting following the AGM tonight.

With no other business, Colin McAndrew thanked all those present for attending the AGM and the meeting closed at 20.08