

Lochgoil Community Trust Ltd

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MINUTES (Draft)

Held in the Village Hall 24th October 2019

Present: Tom Murray – (Chair), Elizabeth Bain, Anne Livingstone, Roger Brook, Tim King, Irene Campbell, Karen Pollock, Sheron Hambly (Minute Secretary). Members attending – 28.

- 1. Welcome:** Mr Murray welcomed all to the AGM of Lochgoil Community Trust.
- 2. Apologies:** Matt Wynne, Donna Brook, John and Betty Bryce, David and Jean Gibson, Leslie and Avril Cuthbertson.
- 3. Approval of minutes of the last AGM on 25th October 2018:** Approved by Gary Pollock, seconded by Iain MacInnes.
- 4. Chairman's Report:** This has been a very busy year for the Trust with the completion of the River Walk, the creation of Lochgoil Park and Gardens and work on the potential purchase of the Deer Larder via a Community Asset Transfer (CAT). Representatives also attended Area Network meetings and a range of other meetings. For this reason, the Chair invited other Directors to give separate reports.
- 5. Treasurer's Report:** copies of the accounts had been previously distributed. These were composite accounts of the Trust and Bus accounts. The hydro generation payment was received in September.

Q- Why was the road tax cheaper this year?

Last year's accounts included two payments (2017 and 2018).

No other questions or points of verification raised. The accounts which have been approved by the board and scrutinized by the Auditor have been lodged, and accepted by Companies House and OSCR. Accounts proposed by Gary Pollock and seconded by Jim Paton. The Treasurer's proposal to retain Milne Craig as auditors was accepted.

6. Donich Hydro Report: Elizabeth Bain

The index linked community benefit payment of £7432 has been received for the year to September 2019. The second electricity generation payment has also been received based on revenue to end 2018. Since the hydro started operating, £57k has been received and a separate agenda item will show how the Trust are using the funds. The 2019 electricity generation target should be achieved in spite of dry spells earlier this year. The payment is net of all costs including rent paid to Forestry Land Scotland (FLS). As outlined in the financial projections presented by Pete Clark at

previous AGMs, the rent has increased significantly, highlighting how beneficial it would have been if the Trust had been able to purchase the land. A reduction in business rates was secured last year by challenging the rateable valuation. There has been no decision yet this year, so it may need to be claimed back if a reduction is obtained. No substantial repairs have been required.

7. Updates

Trust Funding: Tim King

The scoring process outlined at the last AGM has been implemented and circa £28k of Trust funds have been allocated to community projects. No valid application has yet been turned down, although some have been approved with caveats where a risk to the Trust or community has been perceived. Directors score applications individually and if necessary, discuss at Board meetings to obtain consensus. As well as allocating funding to other groups, the Trust have managed a number of projects. This has included submitting funding applications to external organisations and providing project management and hands on practical volunteering. It has been a successful year for the community, please keep the applications coming in, the funds are there to be spent. The application process can be found on the community website.

Q - Can people applying for funds attend meetings to discuss applications?

No – The Trust are following similar procedures to external funders – it is not normal practice for applicants to be present when funding decisions are made. A Director of the Trust will contact the applicant should further information be required in support of the funding application.

Community Action Plan (CAP): Tim King

The CAP is a village asset. Whilst it is not owned by the Trust it helps to ensure that we are meeting the stated needs of the community. Progress in the first year has been made against 6 of the top 10 priorities by the whole community, including newly established businesses. We are now in Year 2 of the CAP and the Trust have identified key areas that we will be focussing on: the new jetty, litter reduction, village hall, water transport and Community Asset Transfer. This does not mean that we will not support other projects.

The Trust have produced 5-year maintenance plans for each asset that we develop. Using volunteers is likely to reduce maintenance costs but budget still needs to be ringfenced.

River Walk: Roger Brook

£31k was spent on the River Walk, mainly from a major grant from Scottish Natural Heritage. There were also personal donations and a contribution of £1.7k from Trust funds. The opening on 17th November 2018 was well attended and the walk is used regularly by locals and visitors. Nothing has been spent from the maintenance budget this year, as all work has been undertaken by volunteers, including strimming, construction of additional ditches, minor repairs and path extensions.

We are waiting for forestry work to be completed before we can assess work on the next stage of the path but are confident that we can extend to Drimsynie Beg using our own efforts.

Q - Parking in passing places, especially at the bridge is causing problems.

The Trust will investigate additional signage.

Q - What weed killer has been used?

Roundup has been applied to specific areas.

Q - Can the Trust put up signs to ensure all dogs are on a lead as badly-behaved dogs are discouraging people from visiting the path?

The Trust are reluctant to penalise well behaved dogs but agreed to investigate potential options including signage.

Lochgoil Park and Gardens: Karen Pollock

A design was donated by Tim King after consultation with the community and construction started in November 2018. The site was levelled, a pond dug and additional paths and drainage constructed. Volunteers planted saplings, ornamental beds, wildflower meadows, lawn and pond and constructed the growing area. Next steps include the children's nature area, regeneration of the curling rink, additional raised beds and poly tunnels. External funding is being sought for these projects. The project was made possible by the generous donation of the land by the Rifle Club. Trust grants of £8543 covered hard landscaping and legal costs, the project also received over £5k of cash and in-kind donations and external funding. A 7000m² boggy field has been transformed into a community asset which meets 5 of the top 10 CAP priorities.

Community Asset Transfer (CAT): Summary of update sent by Matt Wynne.

We hope to submit a CAT for the Deer Larder by the end of 2019. The Scottish Land Fund (SLF) are funding a structural survey and valuation for the building. Matt is working with John Alexander to produce a 5 year business plan and evidence of community support. Potential uses could include facilities for small businesses/trades, IT training, homeworkers and a Community Shed. If the business plan is successful, the next stage is to apply to (SLF) for the money to buy the building. Finance for the refit of the building would need to be found through other grants.

Community Minibus:

Following individual Director reports, the Chair continued with his update. Funding from Argyll and Bute has been secured for next year to help with running costs of the existing bus, with additional funding for the purchase of a new bus. Our bus is underused by the community apart from Ardroy and the National Activity Centre who have been regular users this year. We may have to give this due consideration before making a commitment to replace the bus. Unfortunately, the CAT for the Forestry Hydro land fell through but we are continuing to look at the purchase of the Deer Larder. Thanks go to Matt Wynne for taking over this project.

Lochgoil Park and Gardens – the Chair thanked those Directors involved and all the volunteers who have made such a terrific project possible for the community to enjoy.

Pete Clark resigned earlier this year as a Director of Lochgoil Energy, Tim King has been appointed as his replacement. The Hydro and the CAT schemes are major undertakings for the Trust over the coming years but are essential to ensure the financial stability of the community with the increasing difficulties in obtaining grant funding.

8. Election of Directors to Board:

Anne Livingstone, Irene Campbell and Tom Murray were standing down as required. Tom and Irene stood for election. The chair thanked Anne for her contribution as Director. An election was required as David Moffat and Jim Paton had been proposed and seconded as candidates. No proxy votes had been requested. A secret ballot was held with Tom Murray, Irene Campbell and Jim Paton elected to the Board.

9. AOB

Q - A member had not received notification when joining and had also not received the email for the AGM.

The Board had previously responded to the first issue and as a result of that feedback the membership process had been changed and an online option introduced. The member's email address was included in the mailout for the AGM however it may have gone into a junk folder. This is obviously an issue for the Trust to consider and communicate to members. This is the first time we have used email to communicate and it may take a while to overcome technical issues.

No further questions received.

The Chair thanked his fellow Directors for their time, effort and patience.

He also thanked all for coming and subsequently endorsing the work of the directors of Lochgoil Community Trust Ltd and invited people to partake in a glass of wine.

Thanks for the work of the Directors was received from the floor and gratefully acknowledged.