

Wigtown & Bladnoch Community Initiative

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY 3 DECEMBER 2020 at 7.30 pm BY ZOOM

PRESENT

Members: Andrew Wilson, Kevin Witt, Nick Walker, Robin Richmond, Matt Kitson, Gill Hay, Anne Dunford, Les Dunford.

Associate members: Jak Kane, Jim Tennant.

APOLOGIES from members

Sue Swift, Ian Wood, Hope London, Roselle Stead, Jonie Proudfoot, Laura Mustian, Emily Geddenlogue.

WELCOME & PROXIES

As convenor, Nick welcomed all to the meeting, and apologised for some confusion over the Zoom access codes. There were no objections to the meeting being recorded to assist minuting, with the recording thereafter deleted. **Proxies** had been registered for three members, Hope London, Sue Swift and Ian Wood who all granted their voting to Kevin.

MINUTES OF 2019 AGM

Approved (prop. Jak; sec. Robin). There were no matters arising.

CONVENOR'S REPORT

Most of 2020 was impacted by COVID-19, but the AGM applies to the 2019-20 year. Since taking over ownership of the former Bank of Scotland building towards the end of the previous financial year, a lot of work has been done. Funds were raised to add to what had been completed previously. Designs were completed. Planning and building warrant approval were granted. Tenders were sought for the work, and Luce Bay was successful as lead contractor. In August 2019, we held an open meeting about the garden which showed a lot of support for community use, including supporting Wigtown in Bloom with a poly tunnel at the far end of the garden. We intended to meet further but delays in progress and COVID led to that being deferred into 2021. We expect the building work to be complete by mid April 2021 at present. We also defined a Housing Allocation policy, and recently folk had the opportunity to give formal notice of their interest in the two social housing tenancies. We have five expressions of interest for the larger family flat upstairs, and two for the accessible ground floor flat. Matt has made a short video to show progress: youtu.be/9fnsmSRSFyg

Interest in the old Showfield has continued with nothing submitted in regard to planning since January 2020 and the planning assessment therefore somewhat stalled. The former barracks site has apparently been sold and the buildings demolished.

We have produced occasional e-newsletters. We are grateful to funders. I am grateful to the community, the company members, and especially to the Board, and the design team - QS Stuart Callander and architect Hazel Smith. We look forward to an exciting couple of years.

Questions:

Does the design need to alter due to COVID, such as with ventilation in communal spaces?

- to be raised with architect.

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Garden wall at distal point provides limited security; can that be reviewed?

- **to consider addressing this when garden planning resumes.**

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Currently Nick Walker (convenor), Jake Kane (nominee of Wigtown Comm. Council; treasurer and Co. Sec.), Andrew Wilson, Robin Richmond, Roselle Stead, Matt Kitson, Jonie Proudfoot and Kevin Witt.

Robin and Andrew retired by rotation per the Articles of Association. Both were nominated to stand again; no other members were nominated. Wigtown Comm. Council re-appointed Jak at CC AGM in summer 2020. The meeting agreed to reappoint and maintain the same Board. Office bearers will be finalised at the next Board meeting.

ACCOUNTS TO 29.2.2020

Jak presented the accounts. Remaining from grants in 2018-19, there was £16,000 from Scottish Land Fund (the bulk of which went towards purchasing the former bank building), and £480 from the Rural Housing Fund (granted for developing the feasibility study and business plan). There was £80,000 from SSE's D&G Sustainable Development Fund, £60,000 from D&GC Town Centre Living Fund, and £100,000 from SG Town Centre Capital Fund, £146,119 from Rural Housing Fund (which is drawn down as invoices come in), and £18,205 from Kilgallioch Community Benefit Fund. Expenditure in the financial year is £5,500 for architect fees, asbestos assessment, and administrative costs from Machars Action. Luce Bay will be paid in stages as aspects of work are completed. Total funds available at year end, £212,176.

The bunkhouse and flats project is budgeted with 10% contingency, but already extra work has been needed, due to finding aspects of the building needing attention as work proceeds. So far additional costs are within the contingency. If more funds needed, we will need to revisit fund raising. Housing aspects attract low rate VAT (5%); the bunkhouse element requires for VAT payments.

Questions:

Extra cost addressing strong room clearance - how could that be unexpected?

- **there were two but planning was based on the one that was evident from the outset.**

What plan for revenue costs?

- **the business plan addresses this. Insurance, utilities, rates, etc. are all relatively low at present.**

Tax liability?

- **No earned income at present, so no liability for tax at his stage.**

Meeting approved the accounts as presented. Jak to circulate with minutes to membership.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Matt's thanked Jak for considerable work with design team and contractors on ongoing basis.
- Kevin suggested consideration of letting the Bunkhouse as a whole, single unit, if COVID regulations make normal functioning difficult.
- Jim offered to assist with project work remotely if that would be helpful.