



DRAFT Minutes of Scottish Environment LINK's 25th AGM held in Birnam Arts Centre on Friday 23rd November 2012

PRESENT

Deborah Long – Chair

Members:

Fraser Wallace - JMT	Jon Wordsworth – Archaeology Scotland
Jim Densham - RSPB	Julia Harrison - RSPB
Mary Church – FOES	Calum Duncan - MCS
John Mayhew - APRS	Mandy Orr - Trustee
Bruce Wilson - SWT	Christiane Valluri-Nitsch - SWLG
Lillian Kelly - Soil Assoc Scot	Guy Harewood - SCRA
Gus Jones - BSCG	John Thomson – SCNP
Davie Black - Plantlife	Helen Todd - Ramblers
Diarmid Hearn – NTS	Angus Yarwood – Woodland Trust
Lloyd Austin - RSPB	Jonny Hughes - SWT
Alistair MacKinnon - SAGS	Aedan Smith - RSPB
Dan Barlow - WWF	Lisa Webb - RSPB
Susan Tierney– Scottish Badgers	

In attendance:

Ross Finnie, President

Helen Zealley, Honorary Fellow.

Jen Anderson, Sarah Archer, Rea Cris, Andy Myles, Nick Underdown, Alice Walsh - Staff

The meeting opened at 0925.

1. Apologies for absence

Received from: Paul Ritchie Treasurer, Eila Macqueen (outgoing trustee), Alistair Beeley NEMT, Craig McAdam Buglife, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust whose representation was changing, Alan Fox SOC, Paul Kirkland BCS, Sarah Dolman WDC and Hugh Green LINK.

2. Minutes of last meeting on 30 August 2011

The minutes were approved as an accurate record, proposed by Lloyd Austin, seconded by Angus Yarwood and approved by the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

None was raised.

4. Annual Report & Accounts for year to 31.3.12

DL introduced the report on the year's work outlining a busy year for the network and highlighting a few examples of success including:

- LINK's Rolling Manifesto, now well established, from which *Acting Locally* had been published in October 2011 to encourage political parties to publish their commitments at the local level;
- LINK's *Governance Matters* publication, informing an important strategic debate;



- *Environment and Economics, Helping Scotland to flourish* – LINK's contribution to the debate on economics and growth, commissioned from Simon Pepper and informed by members;
- a considerable level of strategic liaison carried out over the period; and
- LINK responses to 17 consultations, oral and written evidence to 3 committees, 8 briefings and 7 reports.

Angus Yarwood, speaking to the accounts, reported that the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation's funding for LINK's core work would stop in late 2014 though the Foundation's support for marine was likely to continue. Board and staff had reviewed and revised LINK's five year financial scenario; more time was to be invested in the next few years on fundraising from all sources including corporate – for project work – and the indicative rise for membership subscriptions was 5% per year with a view to membership income meeting between 50% and 60% of essential LINK costs.

In response to points raised from members present, it was noted that EFF was focussing on other projects and had already funded LINK for around 15 years. With respect to membership plans, a drive was underway for potential new members and old members which might consider rejoining; in addition, LINK would try to recruit more organizational supporters and was also considering a new affiliation for business supporters, for which a proposal would come to members in the spring.

Calum Duncan reported on marine funding; uniquely for the Links this had been proactively offered by EFF and Tubney Trust in 2006-07. In Scotland, it had been decided to house the project under LINK. In response to the Links' inquiry, EFF was recognizing that this was an important moment for marine work and indicated willing to consider funding a further phase to 2016. Tubney Trust had now wound down. If EFF (and any other complementary) funding were secured, it would continue to be used in a way from which the wider network could benefit.

There were no other questions and the report was proposed by Angus Yarwood, seconded by Gus Jones and approved by the meeting.

5. Election of Board of Trustees & Office Bearers; Appointment of President and Honorary Fellows

DL introduced the item reporting that Eila McQueen (outgoing Vice Chair) and Jonny Hughes were stepping down. Jonny would continue to advise board and network on matters European and International with his new post as Regional Cllr for IUCN in Western Europe. As a token of thanks, the meeting made presentations to Eila (via Jon Wordsworth) and Jonny, thanking them for their considerable contributions on the board over the years.

DL indicated that there were four vacancies on the Board. Of these, the Board proposed that Ian Findlay become and elected trustee to ensure continuity ahead when other longer serving trustees would step down. Nominations for Beryl Leatherland and Simon Jones had been received. Additionally, the Board proposed to co-opt Mike Robinson especially for his marketing expertise and Mandy Orr who brought funding expertise particularly of the corporate sector. The proposals were proposed by Jon Wordsworth, seconded by Roger Powell, and approved en bloc, by the meeting.

DL reported that Paul Ritchie was willing to stand for another year as Treasurer, herself as Chair for a further year and that Helen Todd was willing to stand as Vice Chair. Their election was proposed by Lloyd Austin, seconded by John Mayhew and supported by the meeting.



DL reported the Board's recommendation that LINK reappoint Ross Finnie as President; Ross had invested a lot of time, energy and thought over the past year, and highlights included his hosting a LINK meeting with CBI Scotland, attending all board meetings, and travelling with Deborah to meet a Cairngorm National Park Authority delegation and BSCG members in October. The recommendation was proposed by Jonny Hughes, seconded by Helen Todd and approved by the meeting.

6. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiners

Jen Anderson reported that LINK planned a market review of accountants accustomed to working with charities, as good practice to check best value for money. It was proposed to continue to use Morris & Young of Perth through end of year accounts at April 2013 and do conclude the review by the summer, letting firms know the outcome well ahead of the 2013 AGM. The proposal was proposed by Jon Wordsworth, seconded by Calum Duncan and approved by the meeting.

7. Annual Subscriptions for the year 2013/14

Angus Yarwood spoke to the paper circulated. As reported at 4 above the Board had assessed LINK's future funding scenario adjusting the business model in anticipation of a drop in income from traditional grant streams in 2014. There was more emphasis on fundraising from a wide range of sources; spending was being constrained, with a lower staffing level. As part of the income scenario and to protect LINK's independent voice, the Board proposed a rise of 5% on subscriptions for the year ahead and anticipated similar rises in the following two years, though would review and confirm this in each of these years. With advance notice the Board hoped members would be better placed to plan. There were no questions or observations. The resolution was proposed by Calum Duncan, seconded by and approved by the meeting.

8. Any other business

The meeting recorded a big vote of thanks to Deborah Long for all her hard work and for the work of all the trustees over the year.

The meeting closed at 0955.