



Scottish Environment LINK 33rd Annual General Meeting. 6 October 2021 held online

Attending: Charles Dundas (Chair to item 4), Sam Gardner (Trustee), Karen Blackport (Trustee), Helen Todd (Ramblers Scotland), Malachy Clarke, (FoES), Beryl Leatherland (Trustee, SWLG), Tim Ambrose (Treasurer, Cairngorms Campaign), John Thomson (SCNP), Diarmid Hearn (NTS), Catherine Gunby (Fidra), Alan McDonnell (Trees for Life), Annie Robinson (CIEEM), John Mayhew (APRS), Kevin Lelland (Trustee, JMT), Lucy Graham (Trustee, SWT), Calum Duncan (MCS), Janine Ballantyne (NTS), Joe Nunez-Mino (Bat Conservation Trust), Alistair Whyte (Plantlife), Aedán Smith (RSPB), Denis Mollison (HWDT), Barrie Fisher (KSB), Paul Walton (Trustee), Helen Senn (Trustee, RZSS).

Staff: Deborah Long, Alice Walsh, Vhairi Tollan, Juliet Caldwell, Fanny Royanez, Miriam Ross, Esther Brooker Tanya Matora.

Charles welcomed everyone, including Tanyara Matore, new Finance and Operations Manager. He noted that this was Beryl Leatherland's last AGM. He noted that the year end summary is in the introduction to the annual accounts, with a highlight being the establishment of the Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland as an independent organisation and LINK's newest member.

1. **Apologies for absence:**

Craig Macadam (Vice Chair), Mary Scott (Trustee), SAGS, BBCT, ARC, SCRA, WTS, Pat Monaghan and Coralie Mills (Honorary Fellows)

2. **Minutes of last meeting on 11 November 2020 (Paper 1)**

These were proposed by John Mayhew and seconded by Beryl Leatherland.

3. **Annual Report & Accounts for year to 31 March 2021 (Paper 2)**

These had now been signed by Charles Dundas and Tim Ambrose and were up on the LINK website. Tim explained the reason the financial parts were unusually long and repetitive this year, due to inclusion of ERCS as a subsidiary charity. This will be repeated for part of next years accounts due to ERCS being independent from July 2021. LINK's finances are in good health, with more income than expected from subscriptions, for which he thanked members. We were supportive of those members in difficulties. Our income was also higher due to Covid

related from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Government, and from reduced expenditure on travel, subsistence and events, though activity level remained high. This resulted in a surplus, with considerable designated reserves for fresh activities, and reserves for specific activities. Income exceeded £500,000 necessitating a formal audit, due to holding funds for the ERCS. Our auditors found everything was in order. Tim invited questions (there were none) and recommended them to the members. Paul Walton seconded.

4. Election of Trustees & Office Bearers; Appointment of Honorary Fellows (Paper 3).

Charles outlined the process of one-third of elected trustees standing down every AGM, with the option of re-election for a further two three-year terms. This year Beryl Leatherland was retiring having completed her full three terms. Charles Dundas and Lucy Graham were standing again. One nomination had been received from the call out to members from Kathy Wormald. There were no contested places. Charles invited Kathy to explain some more about her background and what she would bring to LINK as a trustee. Kathy has a background in the environment, nature conservation and international development sector, with extensive experience of organisational development, finance and economics. She was CEO of Froglife for 14 years. Following a restructure at Froglife, her role is more strategic, enabling her to take more part in LINK and devote the time needed to being a trustee.

Tim chaired the next part of the meeting. He asked for nominations to support elections of Lucy, Charles and Kathy. This was proposed by Helen Todd and seconded by Kevin Lelland and approved by the meeting. On the appointment of Office Bearers, the Board recommended Charles to continue as Chair, to provide continuity this year, for Craig Macadam to be appointed as Vice-chair and Tim Ambrose as Treasurer. This was proposed by Paul Walton, seconded by Beryl Leatherland. The vote was carried.

Charles Dundas confirmed the Board proposed to co-opt Sam Gardner and Karen Blackport, and checked that the meeting was happy to approve it as a block. They were so it was proposed by Beryl Leatherland, and seconded by Calum Duncan.

Charles reported that we have not appointed a President following the end of Joyce McMillan's term. He proposed keeping the position vacant until we find a suitable candidate. He noted that LINK had not suffered from the lack of someone in the role, though we would like to have the role filled, and invited members to think about suitable people to approach. This was approved.

The meeting agreed to vote on the five Honorary Fellows as a block; Claudia Beamish, Paul Wheelhouse, Roger Crofts, Tricia Henton and Sally Thomas. It was proposed by Diarmid Hearn, seconded by Lucy Graham.

5. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiners / Auditors:

Tim proposed reappointment of Emma Marshall at Geoghegans to conduct the audit or independent financial examination, as required next year. This was seconded by Kevin Lelland.

6. Annual Subscriptions for the year 2022/23 (Paper 4)

There were no changes proposed. It was proposed by Calum Duncan, seconded by Lucy Graham.

7. Any other business.

There was none.

Marking Beryl's departure from the Board: Charles summarized Beryl's contribution as a trustee, serving the full three terms including on several Board subgroups. He reflected that no other trustee brought the level of scrutiny and in-depth attention that she had done. She brought experience from a small voluntary run member body, in addition to her contribution to the working Groups. She was presented with a card and gift. Beryl said she had nine very enjoyable years as a trustee. It was a really important role as it was an opportunity to act as an ambassador. She urged members, especially the younger cohort to consider standing for election. She commended the way the Board operated, the level of decision-making and the time spent resolving issues and considering the next steps forward. She wanted to thank LINK staff, past and present, in particular Deborah and her predecessor Jen Anderson, and the other staff. It had been a great experience and she would miss it.