

Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company

Old Station Building, Station Road, Arnside, Cumbria LA5 0HG



Minutes of the 12th Annual General Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Friday 22nd October 2021 at RSPB Leighton Moss Visitor Centre, Silverdale.

1. Present and Apologies

Ann Kitchen (Chair), Ken Kitchen, Malcolm Stevens, Val Stevens, Jeanette Smith, Ann Turnbull, Liz Anslow, Ray Anslow, Fiona Allan, David Askew, Mike Smith, Heather Rhodes and Robin Horner were present for the meeting.

Apologies were received from David Farrant, David Player, John Webb, Bob Pickup, Stephen Kirtley, George Steele and Margaret Bromley-Webb.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the last AGM (2019) and matters arising

The minutes of the last AGM held in March 2019 were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report on Company activities

The chairman welcomed all shareholders to the meeting. The 2020 AGM had had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus; however, the directors have continued to work together, albeit adhering to social distancing rules. Three of the categories in the Earth Shot prizes hosted by Prince William this week could form the basis of our Business Plan for 2022-26. These are:

1. Protect and restore nature;
2. Build a waste-free world and
3. Fix our climate.

We have made a start by updating the Energy Saving booklets, beginning with Fact Sheet 4 dealing with heat pumps. Another three will be finished by the end of this month and it is hoped to finish the last by March 2022.

The solar PV initiative continues to reduce the carbon footprint of the area. Solar panels on Storth School are performing well and those on Silverdale School, following the roof repairs, have now been replaced and the Company is now again receiving its share of the Feed-in tariff. Solar panels on the AONB office are also working well.

The Parish Signboard project is bearing fruit under the aegis of the AONB. Arnside, Storth, Beetham and Yealand boards are now up, while the Silverdale board awaits a final decision of the route of the Coast path. The Silverdale Woodbank continues to thrive, and the Wildlife Atlases are now back on sale in the RSPB shop following their temporary withdrawal during the Coronavirus restrictions. The BCCIC continues to support the work of the AONB in many other ways. An important area of concern is plastic and how to reduce its use in our locality. A leaflet written by Val Stevens is on the website.

The Company remains on a sound financial footing and has managed to further many of its aims. We always welcome suggestions from shareholders as to further possible

initiatives. We are currently working with the AONB Partnership (including the Landscape Trust) to put together a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to improve the ways we work together, to further our joint aims and provide a good selection of events.

David Askew is retiring from his post of finance director but will continue as a director. His place will be taken by Ray Anslow who was co-opted last year. Roger Walton retired from the Board last year and Bob Hamnett is retiring this year. There remain vacancies on the Board and we would like to hear from anyone who is interested.

Our thanks go to Roger, David and Bob for all they have done for the Company. Thanks are also due to all the Directors, Shareholders and Lucy and everyone at the AONB Office.

4. Report of the Finance Director and Presentation of Accounts

The financial report that has been circulated and is on the Website, covers the year ending September 30th, 2020, although of course another financial year has now passed. The Income/loss account shows a lower turnover due to the Covid impact. This year will be only be slightly higher. Expenses have been largely in line with previous year. The Company has made a loss so there will be no tax liability. The balance sheet shows that the Company continues to be worth £7,538 compared with £8,711 the previous year. Called up share capital remains at £11,210.

5. Approval of Reports and Accounts

Malcolm Stevens proposed that the Chairman's and Finance Officer's reports be accepted, this was seconded by Fiona Allan. This was agreed by a show of hands.

6. Re-appointment/Election of Directors

Directors who came to the end of their 3-year term in 2020 and wish to be re-appointed are Robin Horner and David Askew. Malcolm Stevens who was co-opted in July 2019 wishes to be confirmed as a director for a three-year term to 2022. Ray Anslow proposed that the appointments be confirmed. This was seconded by Val Stevens.

Val Stevens who was appointed Director in 2018 wishes to be re-appointed for a three-year term. Ray Anslow who was co-opted in 2021, wishes to be confirmed as a Director for a three-year term. Malcolm Stevens proposed that these appointments be confirmed. This was seconded by the Secretary.

7. Any Other Business

The chairman suggested that the 2021 AGM be held around the end of April 2022. This was generally agreed.

Following the business meeting, with the theme of '*How will we heat our homes in future*', Valerie Stevens introduced two participants; Martin who has installed a ground source heat pump in an existing property off the gas grid and Andrew who has an air-source heat pump in a newly-built property. They gave brief descriptions of their systems and answered questions from shareholders. The Chairman thanked participants for their inputs.