

Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company

Minutes of the Second Annual General Meeting held on Friday 5th March 2010 at RSPB Leighton Moss Visitor Centre, Silverdale.

1. Present and Apologies

Ann Kitchen (Chairman), Ken Kitchen, Ian and Lisa Henderson, Harry Warner, K Claire Dixon, Jeanette Smith, Roger Cartwright, Roger Walton, David Emmett, Peter Standing, Robin Horner, David Askew (Finance Director) and Mike Smith (Secretary).

Apologies were received from Gordon Crabtree, David Farrant, Stephen Kirtley, Ann Gegg, Laura Middleton, Liz Richards, Sue Hewett, Bob Hamnett, Peter Kennedy, Philip Marshall, Philip Pacey, Stewart Platts, David and Jill Player and John and Jill Webb.

2. Minutes of the last AGM and Matters Arising

On a motion proposed by Ian Henderson and seconded by Ken Kitchen, the minutes of the last AGM held on Feb 23 2009 were approved by a show of hands as a true record.

Matters Arising: Minute 4: David said that the £1500 had now been spent and the remainder of the loan returned to the lender.

3. Welcome and Chairman's Report on Company Activities

Ann Kitchen welcomed shareholders to the second AGM and her first as Chairman. She reported that it had been a busy year for the Board. Looking at some of the Board's remits she covered the following points:

- i) The Board was keeping a watching brief on land sales in the area. While not looking for land per se, ensuring that conservation grade land is safeguarded either by acquisition by organisations such as RSPB, the National Trust or the Landscape Trust or some responsible individual. Members were asked whether, in circumstances where the Company would have to raise a large sum of money quickly, they might be willing to make a temporary loan in order to secure a purchase on the understanding that they would be repaid after a fund raising initiative.
- ii) Sales of the Conservation Cookbook were continuing as well as the construction of the Web Shop. (There is now a BCCIC website at <http://www.arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk/bitterncic/index.html>)
- iii) Conservation grazing is still on the agenda.
- iv) The Board is looking at sustainable energy and a low carbon initiative in the AONB possibly working with initiatives such as the Cumbria Community Energy Trust.
- v) There is a current initiative to make the web-based Grantfinder available for organisations and individuals in the area who shares the aims and objectives of the Company.
- vi) The Board feels that now is the time to look for further shareholders, both large and small. Those with a shareholding of just £10 are valued as much as

those with larger holdings. If you have friends and or relatives who might be interested in becoming shareholders please contact any of the Board.

She added that further down the agenda there would be an election for 3 Directors. As this will still leave vacancies on the Board, it would be good to find at least one new director with an interest in renewable energy, for example. Thus the Board would welcome anyone on to the Board who will support our objectives and can give a little of their time to the company. She thanked John Webb and the rest of the Board for their work and support over the past year.

4. Community Interest Statement

This will be written post AGM and a report sent to Companies House.

5. Report of the Finance Director and Presentation of Accounts

David Askew circulated copies of the financial report (for the year ending Sept 30 2009) received from Thompson & Co. He stated that it showed a small loss over the year partly as a result of the timing of income and payments. In general the Company was breaking even. The Company has to certify to Companies House that it is financially sound. Expenses have included purchasing items for the AONB Office wood fuel boiler as part of an approved donation totalling £250. Corporation Tax totalled £4.00. The remaining loan of £8,500 that appeared in last year's accounts had been repaid. Accountancy services from Thompson & Co cost £350.

In answer to a question about the cost of using professional accountants, David Askew agreed that the work could be done by a volunteer if one could be found with the necessary experience and holding professional indemnity insurance. Ann Kitchen thought that it was particularly important for a new company to have professional accountancy advice for the first few years.

David stated that the accounts were public documents and can be made available to anyone requesting them.

Ian Henderson proposed that the accounts be approved and Roger Cartwright seconded this. The accounts were then approved by a show of hands.

6. Appointment of Accountants

Ann Kitchen suggested that the Company needed to have one more year of professional accountancy advice but that after this a volunteer would be sought. Ian Henderson proposed that the Company re-appoint Thompson and Co as accountants and Lisa Henderson seconded this. Thus the reappointment of Thompson and Co was agreed by a show of hands.

7. Election of Directors

Ann Kitchen stated that according to the articles of the Company, a third of the Board (two and two-thirds of a director) should resign each year. They are then eligible to stand for re-election. We have decided that three directors will resign: John Webb, Mike Smith and Ann Kitchen. John Webb has decided not to stand for re-election while Mike Smith

and Ann Kitchen are standing. This will still leave vacancies on the Board and we have no new candidates.

The appointment of Ann Kitchen and Mike Smith as directors was proposed by David Farrant (absent from the meeting) and seconded by David Askew. These two directors were then elected by a show of hands.

The total number of Board members is therefore 7 with 3 vacancies. They are : Ann Kitchen, Mike Smith, David Askew, David Farrant, Robin Horner, Roger Walton and Bob Hamnett.

8. Business Plan Update

David Askew said that although he did not have copies of the updated Business Plan the document is available on the BCCIC part of the AONB website. He stated that it had been updated to reflect the acquisition of the Grantfinder licence.

9. Any Other Business

Harry Warner asked whether the Company had considered liasing with the Heron Corn Mill in relation to para.31 of the Business Plan. The Mill was installing a small hydroelectric generator in the River Bela outside the mill. Ann thought that the potential for similar schemes in the AONB was limited. She felt that the Company needed however to be more proactive in promoting suitable renewable energy schemes. She asked members whether they would favour a bi-annual newsletter from the Company to update members on any developments. This was agreed.

The business meeting closed at 7.20 pm. After the meeting David Askew gave a presentation on the AONB's Low Carbon Landscape Initiative. Members were then taken to inspect the new wood-chip boiler recently installed at Leighton Moss to heat the visitor centre and offices. Ann Kitchen then gave a talk on the Grantfinder Initiative now launched by the Company.