

Annual General Meeting

Draft Minutes of the AGM held on Monday, 30 November 2015, 6.00pm, Lochbroom Room, MacPhail Centre, Ullapool

Present: Sue Agnew, Lucy Beattie, Alexander Boyd, Chrissy Boyd, Nigel Carr, Paul Copestake, Timothy Gauntlett, Tina Hartley, Noel Hawkins, Lee Heaney, Kay Hughes, Alice Keppel, Susan Leslie, Jenny McBain, Solais MacBride, Lisa MacDonald, Sandy MacKenzie, Serena Mason, John Menzies, Kenneth Morrison, Rosemary O'Leary, Susan Parker, Becky Thomson, Johnny Whitteridge, Tim Wright

Apologies: Jenny Berry, Louise Boyd, Reuben Brown, Diane Campbell, Kate Copestake, Ingrid Galbraith, Richard Greene, Robbie Mackenzie, Claire Munro

Flick welcomed all to the meeting and opened with introductions.

1. Minutes of the previous 2014 AGM

Approved. Proposed by Serena Mason and Seconded by Sandy Mackenzie.

2. Chairman's Report

After joining the Board last year, Flick has found the first 12 months to be an enormous learning curve, getting to grips with what it means to be a Director of a Community Trust and the responsibilities that it entails. However, she is now much more confident in her role and wanted to extend her personal thanks to everyone who has generously given their time in helping her – specifically ex-Directors, current Directors, staff and volunteers.

Flick then gave an update on work of UCT over the past twelve months:-

New Directors

During the summer we were able to welcome Rebekah Lwin, Sue Parker, Lisa MacDonald and Reuben Brown on to the Board. All of whom bring new skills and expertise.

Staff

There have been staff changes, in March 2015, Jan Breckenridge left the role of Project Officer for the Lael Forest Community Hydro Project to pursue her own new ventures and we welcomed Tina Hartley who joined Lee to share the Project and Development Manager role.

Business Plan

One of things which have been most beneficial to the Board and staff this year has been the creation of the Business Plan. Becky Thomson has pulled together an excellent, professional plan: very clear and concise.

Enabling the Board to refine what it is trying to achieve for the community and helping it to focus on the priorities identified in the Community Development Plan. It has also helped the staff to understand how they can help UCT achieve these aims. Thank you Becky and all who helped pull the Business plan together.

Lochbroom Community Renewables Ltd

Another very exciting thing has been the formation of Lochbroom Community Renewables Ltd. This is the Community Benefit Society, independent from UCT, which will now take forward the Lael Hydro project. The Hydro group have worked extraordinary hard, particularly in managing to achieve the Pre- accreditation status. Again I would like to thank all involved, especially Andy Kaye and Neil Gerrard for their diligent hard work.

Lochbroom Chalet Park

We put in our application for a Community Right to buy and it was granted in Autumn 2015 by the Scottish Government. The land came up for sale on the 3 November 2015, which has triggered the Right to Buy process, so we have until 4 December 2015, to decide whether we will exercise our right. It is a big decision for the community and a very interesting project.

Thanks

I am conscious of the time and effort put in by everyone involved in UCT and the support of its members, thanks to you all. I am now far more confident that we will manage to continue to pursue the Trust's Aims and Objects.

3. Treasurer's Report – April 2014 – March 2015

Becky introduced herself, from a historical view point Becky has been associated with UCT for many years and is now the new Treasurer. With the support of Lee Heaney, Project and Development Manager and Tim Wright, Accountant, UCT have good financial systems in place to support the organisation and in deed the role of Treasurer.

Becky gave an update on the last twelve months:-

Community Capacity Building Programme

Total funding of £96,000 for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2017 was secured from HIE's Community Capacity Building Programme, which is jointly funded by HIE and the Scottish Government. This funding enables the employment of a full time Project and Development Manager to develop new projects focusing on social, environmental and economic issues identified in the Growth Plan and support community groups in the area. One full time Project Manager was employed from April 2014; from February 2015 the post was shared between Lee Heaney and Tina Hartley. The funding also covers staff training, travel and office costs.

Keep Scotland Beautiful - Community Grant Scheme

A grant of £250 was awarded to UCT to fund volunteer days for path and beach cleaning in and around Ullapool. The grant is administered by Keep Scotland Beautiful and is funded using proceeds from the single use carrier bag charge collected by Tesco.

Lael Forest Community Hydro - Highland Council Discretionary Award

An award from the Highland Council Discretionary fund of £4,500 was received to match fund the Hydro project. The remaining match funding of £1,749 is still to be sought. (Note this statement reflects the accounting period, this amount has now been found).

Housing Seminar

Funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, UCT hosted a housing seminar at the Macphail Centre in Ullapool on 27 March 2014. The seminar was attended by organisations interested in community asset ownership, including land and other assets suitable for housing, across the Skye, Lochaber and Wester Ross area. A report has been produced and is available on the UCT website in our 'completed projects' section www.ullapoolcommunity.org

Pure Power for Lochbroom

The Pure Power for Lochbroom project came to an end during this period. The project funded one full time Project Development Officer, Laura Traynor, for 2 years who provided assistance and support to local residents who were keen to install either renewable energy systems or energy efficiency measures.

Membership

Membership income increased this year from £351 to £432.

Becky completed her presentation by discussing problems associated with the lack of unrestricted funds for UCT. Income generation remains a priority for the organisation and Becky offered an open invite to meeting for ideas regarding this and asked people to get in touch with either Lee or Tina.

4. Election of Board Members

Current Directors:

Flick Hawkins (Chair)	Sandy Mackenzie (Vice Chair)
Susan Leslie (Secretary)	Becky Thomson (Treasurer)
Lucy Beattie	Reuben Brown
Rebekah Lwin	Lisa MacDonald
Serena Mason	Sue Parker

Directors standing for re-election:-

Flick Hawkins
Susan Leslie
Serena Mason

Flick Hawkins – Proposed by Serena Mason and Seconded by Lee Heaney

Susan Leslie – Proposed by Lisa MacDonald and Seconded by Sandy Mackenzie

Serena Mason – Proposed by Rebekah Lwin and Seconded by Lucy Beattie

An open invitation for new Board Members was given and Jenny McBain volunteered.
Proposed by Becky Thomson and Seconded by Lisa MacDonald.

Noted that Solais Macbain (primary school pupil) would have liked to be on the Board. Flick thanked him for his interest, due to age restrictions this is not possible. Flick would like to talk to both the primary School and High School about the possibility of a Junior UCT Board. Agreed Solais could be our junior UCT champion.

5. Any Other Business

- a) An ideas board was available in the room and all were encouraged to share their ideas regarding general “blue sky thinking” for UCT and ideas for Lochbroom Chalet Park.
- b) Copies of the Business Plan and Financial Report are available.
- c) Rosemary O’Leary – wanted to make the meeting aware of the Scottish Government initiative “Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce” which is specifically looking at the demographic of 16 – 25 age group and the provision of work opportunities. The High School are keen to work in partnership with others regarding and look at the possibility of a community award.

Presentations

Lochbroom Community Renewables Project

Tim Gaunlett introduced himself as Chairman. Work continues to move this project forward which will have a major impact on our community in terms of benefits, surplus monies raised will eventually be ploughed back into our community. One of the main message that Tim would like to promote is that of community involvement, the projects welcomes volunteers with a range of skills. As part of his presentation, Tim quoted from a book entitled 'The Road to Little Dribbling' - Author, Bill Bryson where he described Ullapool as the ideal community.

Lochbroom Chalet Park

Lucy Beattie provided an historical overview for the Chalet Park, taking us from ownership by her own family to date. The Park has not been operational for some years now and therefore has no business value. Current owners are looking for a sum of £390,000 for the whole site. As previously discussed UCT will exercise their right to buy as of 4 December 2015. We have a team of consultants (funded by HIE) working with us whose aim is to look at community consultation, feasibility study and a business plan. A community consultation event will be held in the Village Hall Committee Room on 5 December 2015.

Lochbroom Woodfuels

Laura Traynor, currently covering Maternity Leave for Sian Curley updated the meeting on the work of Lochbroom Woodfuels over the past year. Many social aims had been achieved and the Company had been involved with training for young folk in the area. One of their main achievements was receiving the Investors in Young People Good Practice Award.

6. Questions

Flick opened the meeting to questions:-

Community Broadband

A question was taken from the meeting regarding progress. Lee Heaney updated the meeting, we are Stage 1 of the application the next stage being technical. Lee reported that following attendance at a recent conference, communities had reported that the process can take some time. A request was made for timescales alongside an offer to help. A Working Group is being set up and Lee would welcome volunteers to the group.

Community Council

A question was taken on what UCT's view was around the possible demise of the Community Council. Lisa MacDonald confirmed that a letter supporting the Community Council and identifying the difference between our two organisations had been issued in the Ullapool News recently. In conclusion, it was felt that the end of our local Community Council was a worrying prospect but one that communities across the Highlands seemed to be facing. It was hoped that new elections to be held in January 2016 might to attract members back onto the Council and hopefully ensure its continuance.

The meeting was concluded with a big thank you from the Chair and Board of Directors to all who attended and for their continued future support.

TH/4.12.15