

Draft Minutes of the AGM of the Strathblanefield Community Development Trust held in The Village Club on Wednesday 28 September 2011 at 7.30pm

Board Members Present: Gordon Ash (In the Chair)
Robert Davy
Sue Graves (Company Secretary)
Margaret Vass
Dai Hutchinson
Anne Balfour

SCDT Members Present: Pat Davy, John Gray, Joan Hoggan, Mary Brailey,
Keith Hutton, Keith Vass, Alastair Smith, Alan Morris,
Willie Oswald, Robert Flashman, Richard Begg,
Edward Pickard, Elizabeth Normand, David Campbell,
Gillian Mackay, Joan MacDougall, Lorna Ash

Board Member Apologies: A Hutton
J Gregor
I Hamilton

SCDT Member Apologies: Elspeth Posnett, Mike McNulty, George Thom,
Philip Graves, Jim Sim, Angus Graham, Eleanor Forest,
Bill Farquhar, Ian McCredie

Gordon Ash opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the Village Club. There was a special welcome for the new Minister of Strathblane Parish Church, Richard Begg. He then introduced the Board of the SCDT to the members.

Minutes of the AGM held on 29 September 2010

The Minutes of the AGM held in the Village Club on Wednesday 29 September 2010 were proposed for approval by Dai Hutchinson and seconded by Robert Davy.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes

Elections to the Board

The Chair proposed the formal adoption to the Board of Ian Hamilton, Alan Hutton and the re-election of CC representative Margaret Vass. This was seconded by Willie Oswald. Alan Morris raised the question of sending out election papers to SCDT members to nominate new members to the Board prior to the AGM and this future course of action was proposed by Mary Brailey and seconded by John Gray. The other directors were happy to be re-elected and this was adopted by the meeting. Alan Morris's comments on three consecutive terms of office were noted.

Draft Business Plan

Gordon Ash explained the Draft Business Plan to the meeting and after clarifying some points raised including stressing that the Business Plan incorporates the ethos of the Community Action Plan, the adoption of the Business Plan was proposed by John Gray and seconded by Robert Davy. The amended Community Action Plan (insert “draft”, drop “industrial units” and “village centre” references) to be put on the website.

Accounts

Sue Graves briefly went through the Financial Statements for the year to 31 January 2011 which had been circulated to members with the AGM agenda. She explained that the accounts are drawn up under the specific rules for Scottish charities.

There were questions from the floor about the sum of around £50,000 paid for the energy efficiency project (BVEEP). Sue Graves explained that this money was paid to Solas Insulations Ltd which was responsible for administering the project during the year. All invoices were approved by the grant-making body, Climate Challenge Fund, prior to payment. Their procedures are rigorous and so all expenditure would have been heavily scrutinised. Even so, since there was obvious interest in further information being available Gordon Ash said that he would be pleased to meet individuals who had any particular concerns and agreed that more detail would be provided for next year's accounts.

Sue Graves explained that BVEEP had now concluded and a member wondered whether a final report of the project had been drawn up. Mary Brailey, CNG, confirmed that CNG are currently considering the final report. Once it is approved it will be made available on the website.

Further discussion took place about the village survey which cost around £7000. Sue Graves advised that this was the fee from a professional marketing company which drafted the village survey, collated the results and issued report findings, a summary of which was circulated with The Blane.

In conclusion it was agreed that there was no suggestion of impropriety but it is important to ensure proper communication between members, the Community Council and the CDT. The existence of the expertise on the CDT helps the village to obtain access to funds which would otherwise be difficult to achieve. On this point Alan Morris suggested that funds might be forthcoming from Development Trust Association Scotland. This will be noted and researched.

Annual Report

The Chairperson Gordon Ash summarised the achievements during the year.

Greenheart

Phase II had been very successful and the play park was extremely popular with the children. Phase III (final phase) is ongoing with one or two grant applications in the pipeline. It was suggested that Greenheart could also look at paths maintenance and it was noted that the SCDT had recently joined Killearn, Balfroon, Buchlyvie and Drymen as part of the South West Stirlingshire Paths. There was the possibility of applying for funds for tools and to reinstate some paths.

Allotments

It was reported that an Allotments Group had been formed and a Development Officer, Louise McAllister, had been taken on board to educate and promote the idea of allotments. A suitable site had not yet been found but investigations were ongoing. Any individuals involved in the handing over of potential land had stressed a desire for privacy and it was noted that there is funding available to progress this further.

Community Action Plan

It was accepted that the word “action” was possibly not appropriate as the plan deals mainly with improving and upgrading. The Plan is to be presented to Stirling Council Planning Partnership in October but this will take the form of merely presenting thoughts and ideas for the future. Many other villages are also presenting their own “plans” to the Partnership.

Summer Fair

It was reported that this event is now moving more towards a community fair and it was felt that this will go from strength to strength.

Property

It was reported that this area had been relatively quiet during the year. The subject of affordable housing had been looked at but was only at a very early investigative stage. The site of Browns shop is also being looked at for possible development.

Funding

The Chair reported that funding had again been successful and formed an important part of the Trust's working brief. The suggestion was that there could be further funding available for groups within the village.

Annual Report (cont)

Carbon Neutral Group

It was reported that the CNG are exploring the idea of renewable energy. Some other villages are already looking at biomass, water and wind turbines etc. but it was stressed that these are only possibilities at the moment but that it was important to consider them.

Interpretive Map/Signage

The Development Trust is working on an updated Interpretive Map involving different walks, cycle tracks, landmarks etc. and are checking with local landowners for access permission. It is hoped that this will be up and running in the Spring of 2012.

On-Line Business Directory

Ian Hamilton and Alan Campbell, the person in charge of the website, are working to improve the On-Line Business Directory. They are keen to introduce new contacts and create the means/links for people to keep in touch with each other. They are also working towards updating the SCDT website itself.

Newsletter

It was reported that the SCDT is going to produce a bi-monthly newsletter and it was hoped that this would work in conjunction with the use of the noticeboards and the Blane. Mention was also made of a project being undertaken by Anne Balfour and Martin Shields (both members of staff at The Herald) to produce a book of “before” and “after” photographs of various aspects of Blanefield and Strathblane.

Community Trust Network

It was felt useful for other trusts to get together perhaps three times a year to compare notes and ideas.

Music for Young People

The Chair reported that there was an enthusiasm within the villages for the young people to take part in music and it was hoped that some of the established musicians in the area would be willing to come on board to pass on their expertise once a suitable venue has been established.

Richard Begg raised the importance of liaison between the SCDT and the Church in respect of facilities and activities for the youth in the area and it was agreed that co-operation and co-ordination was the best way forward.

There being no further business, the Chairperson Gordon Ash closed the meeting at 8.45pm

