

Minutes from Harlaw Hydro Annual General Meeting

St Joseph's Hall 9th June 2017 at 7:30pm

Present

22 members

Apologies

20 members

Balerno Village Trust (BVT) – (slides 4 -10)

Keith Taylor – Chairman of BVT – outlined BVT's activities in the community, from the monthly Farmers Market to the embryo playpark improvement project – summarised in the AGM power point.

The possibility of taking over the Harlaw Visitor Centre is being investigated and an asset transfer request has been submitted to City of Edinburgh Council. The business case for such a move is in the early stages of development. Flotterstone Visitor Centre has already been transferred to a commercial operator.

BVT was pleased to get its first donations from Harlaw Hydro, £5k was spent on a community consultation commissioned jointly with the Community Council, £4k enabled the 2G pitch project to reach its target (the pitch was opened in September 2016) and a number of members gave their interest payment to BVT to support its work in the community.

Annual General Meeting

Chairman's Remarks – (slides 11 -16)

It's good to remind ourselves that our society was Initiated in . . . Funded by . . . and is Managed by . . . people in the Community.

On an on-going basis there have been principally three operational activities; managing the water supply, routine maintenance and keeping the communications working.

Water Supply

When there is plenty of water there is no problem – we run constantly at up to 70 kw an hour. However when its dry, as it has been for much of the last 12 months, various incompatible forces come into action. CEC, who manage the reservoirs, are obliged to provide about 320 l/s of water at a point in Colinton and they expect half of that to come from Threipmuir/Harlaw. We can generate at 160 l/s but for much of the year we only have about 120 l/s reaching us from Threipmuir. CEC's obligation takes no account of the amount of water available and we believe they have been under closer scrutiny as they instructed us to keep running at 160l/s thus fairly quickly draining Harlaw; then there is the Malleny Angling Association who have spent £15,000 stocking Harlaw and would like some water for them to swim in.

Maintenance

Maintenance at present is confined to adding a precise amount of grease to the generator bearings each month; this is faithfully carried out by 2 of our number Tsjerk and Alister. However Tinck, the manufacturer of our turbine, advise that the runner should be inspected each year, this involves lifting the 1.4 ton generator clear of the turbine, a virtually impossible task with the equipment in our turbine house. Following a long and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to persuade our equipment supplier and engineer to resolve the matter we have commissioned a lifting cradle which we expect to have in place this summer.

Communications

As many of you will know internet access is great when it works but finding and resolving a problem can be a nightmare. We use the internet to control the turbine as well as to

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provide the feed for the power meter on the website. The line was slow and all too often the control screen was locking out, sometimes we could reset it remotely but other times we had to go up the hill and do the bill Gates fix, switch it off and on again. Andrew spent a considerable amount of time analysing and investigating and we now use BT's fibre and a Virtual Private Network giving us a faster, more reliable and more secure connection.

Doors Open Weekend

At last years AGM someone suggested we should take part in Edinburgh's Doors Open weekend. We have applied to be part of this year's event, Friends of Pentlands, BVT, Pentland Regional Park and Malleny Angling Association have all said they will join in too. If there is anyone who would be able to help organise this event the door is open just talk to me or any other board member.

Visitors

Having a turbine on the edge of Edinburgh means there is a steady stream of 'can we talk to you and visit please' but one was a real surprise. A deputation from the Victorian Parliament (Australia). They were very interested in not just the turbine but how we raised the money, what help was provided and did the community involvement work.

Retirement

This year 2 of our directors are standing down and are not available for re-election. Johanna Carrie has provided a valuable link with Transition Edinburgh who piloted the installation of solar panels on many of our schools and public buildings and Tony Allen has been our treasurer for the past few years. We had hoped to make a small presentation to each of them but unfortunately they were unable to attend but I think we should formally thank them for their help and commitment.

The Community Benefit – our first donation to BVT

At last year's AGM agreed to donate £5,000 which as Keith said was used to fund the community consultation. We also gave the Harlaw Hydro Board permission to advance up to £5,000 if BVT asked for it. BVT requested £4,000 to enable the 2G Pitch project to reach its goal. In addition a number of our members donated their interest to BVT for the benefit of the community. A total of over £11,000.

Accounts – (slides 19 -24)

- The P&L and Balance Sheet were both presented and highlights described. Points arising:-
 - The rise in the electricity charge was queried and will be investigated.
 - The Society now holds over £40,000 in cash, a new situation, the Board undertook to review what to do with this consistent with the needs for repair and share redemption.
 - There are no plans or obvious need to ask members for additional funding.
- The following Financial Provisions, Members Interest and Surplus to BVT were approved
 - Repairs Provision - £3,000
 - Repayment Provision - £3,000
 - Members Interest - £16,120
 - Donation to BVT - £10,000Proposed by David Teal and Seconded by Andrew Clark
- The Accounts and the verification of accounts were approved.
Proposed by Mike Molleson and Seconded by Andrew Clark

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Election of Board Members – (slides 25-30)

- Retiring – Tony Allen and Johanna Carrie
- Appointed by BVT – Richard McLeod, Lynn Molleson and Martin Petty
- Nominated for election – Simon Dormer, Gordon Grassick and Ian Hynd

Proposed by Andrew Clark and Seconded by Mike Molleson

POST MEETING

We discovered that two of the people who offered to propose and second motions were not members of the society. Andrew Clark offered to propose or second in their place and the need to remind those attending that only members can vote has been noted for next year.

End of the Formal part of the AGM

Small Grants Scheme – (slide 32)

BVT have agreed to partner The Rotary Club of Currie, Balerno in supporting and administering The Community Chest. The scheme will offer grants of up to £500 to organisations in the area. The scheme will be publicised after the summer.

Harlaw Hydro Education– (slides 33-37)

The website and power meter in the Harlaw Visitor Centre continue to provide information and the design for the supporting display has been reviewed. The aim is to complete and install the display boards in time for the Doors Open event. Anyone with the contacts or skills to help to make this happen will be welcomed.

Minuted by Andrew Clark and Martin Petty