

Portree and Braes Community Trust AGM

17th March 2021 at 7pm

Via Zoom

Present

Roddy MacHugh, Janice MacHugh, Fiona Thomson, Iona MacDonald, Thomas Wilson, Lorna Cormack, Roger Liley, Duncan Brown, Harriet Forrest, Calum Matheson, Catriona Maclean, Catriona MacDonald, Annmarie Campbell, Bill Edgar, Drew Miller, Ross Cowie, Faye Thomson, Matt Harrison, Faye Macleod, Sophie Issacson, Irene Deplano, Chris James, Myra Urquhart

Apologies:

Neil Campbell, Janice McGuire, Shona Cameron, Jen Pearson, John Boyd,

Welcome

Calum Matheson, on behalf of Chairman Donnie Nicolson, welcomed everyone and acknowledged that this would be a slightly different AGM this year being online.

Chairmans Report

Development Officer, Fiona Thomson, provided a general update on PBCT activity over the course of the year on behalf of the chairman:

Staffing

Three members of staff have been employed:

- Fiona Thomson, employed full time as Development Officer. Contract confirmed until March 2022.
- Iona MacDonald, employed part time to progress community land buy outs. Contracts runs until end of March 2021.
- Sophie Issacson, has completed the second year of her contract and the trust are in the process of securing funding for an additional two years.

Communications

An e-newsletter is now available twice a year. 200 people have signed up, an increase from 137 people in 2020.

The trust has featured in a number of press articles in the last 12 months and SCR work was also featured in national press.

The Trust now has 2888 followers on Facebook, an increase from 2492 in 2020.

Membership

No new members have been recruited this year due to restrictions on having face to face events etc.

Harbour

The Harbour group continues to meet on average bi-monthly. The group have been contributing to the discussions surrounding the Skye and Raasay investment plan on behalf of the trust. It's still an uphill struggle – the trust does not yet own land at the harbour so this limits development opportunities. The trust must work in partnership with other agencies and move at their pace when exploring development opportunities.

Bayfield

The car park redevelopment and extension is almost complete. Parking permits can be purchased. The group have almost finalised the lease which will secure £10k for the trust annually plus 40% of the net profit generated from trust owned car parking spaces. This could create in the region of £25k income in total per year for PBCT.

The ward discretionary fund has recently awarded the group £1600 to purchase a hover mover and cover some maintenance costs relating to the grassy sloped area at Bayfield.

Fearann Eilean Iarmain (FEI) Land Purchases

The trust is continuing to pursue purchase of the Bayfield woodland space and the Bayfield picnic area after several unavoidable delays. This transaction is in the very final stages but must be completed before the end of the month. Well done to Iona who has done everything possible to try to get this project over the line in the timeframe.

The trust was unable to pursue to purchase of the Lump as the sellers' circumstances had changed and the land was no longer available for the price originally discussed.

There are still aspirations to secure ownership of the KGV playing fields.

The trust had a tree survey carried out on the Bayfield woodland which provides advice re: maintenance and conservation of the space as well as suggestions for appropriate development.

Toilet provision

The trust took the decision to close the pier toilets towards the end of 2020 and the intention is to reopen when suitable and in line with covid regulations.

Outdoor activities

After reviewing the outcome of the tree survey the outdoor activities group are in agreement that they would like to keep this particular area as natural as possible and that any development should be sensitive to the space.

The group are now revisiting the project to create a new playpark in Portree and are exploring options for raising funds for feasibility work.

Health Services

The group are in the final stages of confirming a funding package for a project officer for this post. If all funds are approved the trust can secure Sophie's post for a further two years to continue to support community engagement in the improvement of local health and social care services.

The options appraisal is continuing. The community engagement group feel strongly however that at the most recent workshop meeting that their voices are not being heard and that the Independent facilitator and NHS Highlands are attempting to steer the process in a direction which the community members are not comfortable with. The group are in touch with local councillors about this.

The Helipad

The trust continues to successfully manage the facility with donations made by users.

Allotments

A small group of local residents have revisited this project and have been assured that the land transfer for the allotments is imminent. This was positive news after waiting over 5 years for an update although it's important to manage expectations until this transfer is complete.

Events

Unfortunately, there were no events in 2020 for obvious reasons however the group successfully installed a Christmas lights display so this kept them busy! Any plans for 2021 are provisional.

£10k has been secured from the HIE community led tourism fund for events equipment including a stage system and gazebos.

Paths and Signs

£10k was secured from the Corra Foundation comic Relief fund to revamp the Tigh na Drohcaid garden. The Clean Up Club have been helping with delivery of the project and in line with restrictions have started helping with initial works to clear the space.

Other regular Clean Up Clubs are on hold for the moment.

£9,00 has been secured from the Town Centre fund to install 3 additional advertising boards by the tourist information centre. These can be used for community news, and the trust plan to sell advertising here to help generate an income.

Skye Community Response

The trust continue to provide a covid-19 helpline service – over 2000 calls have been received to date with an average of around 6 calls per day.

The group are still distributing PPE and equipment on request – they recently supplied 100 pulse oximeters across Skye and Raasay.

Funding has been secured from HIE for staff to support the service until May 2021.

Portree Food share

The Portree Foodshare has been running since May 2020. It's currently providing around 79 cooked meals per week and supporting around 80 households per week.

Minutes of previous AGM

Proposed – Lorna Cormack

Seconded – Annmarie Campbell

Matters Arising

None

Treasures Report

Duncan Brown explained that a copy of the accounts was made available to attendees in advance and hoped that everyone had had a chance to look over these.

Duncan asked everyone to keep in mind that the year being reported on was until end of May 2020.

The balance of the account was detailed as follows:

Paths group – approx. £10k

Allotments - £713

Bayfield – just over £4k – most of this balance will be required to cover the cost of legal fees to purchase land

Harbour group – 50p – no financial activity there recently

Toilets - -£400 – toilets had to be closed early so PBCT lost the opportunity to generate income . The fact that the toilets are in the minus is a cause for concern and this will need to be rectified once income from Bayfield parking becomes available

General Trust – just under £1200 – this balance is required to pay insurance, after which the balance will be minimal

FEI - £970 – will be used to cover legal fees relating to the land purchase

Staff- funds are in place to cover staff costs

Playparks - Just over £19k, £7.5k of this may need to be returned if not used.

Events - £978 – some of this is going towards the purchase of events equipment

Helipad - £6588 – occasional donations are made for use of the site

The Lump - just over £300. No activity here recently

SCR - just over £80k is left in the fund. £40k has been ringfenced to be used in response to future outbreaks of Covid-19.

The community centre – there were issues accessing the community centre accounts and adding new signatories to the community centre bank accounts so funds were transferred into the PBCT account so that PCCA bills could be paid. £4700 is currently in the PBCT account for the purpose of the community centre.

Men's Shed - £60

Current total of £146,650 in the bank. This period there was a turnover of over £300k . Last year the turnover was around £200,000. This is a significant increase with lots of transactions to administer.

Bill Edgar congratulated Duncan on a job well done for looking after the finances. Calum Matheson seconded this.

Elections

Ross Cowie wanted to acknowledge the great turnout and thanked all the staff and office bearers for their work to date.

Ross Cowie proposed that the committee members and office bearers were re-elected with an amendment of Calum Matheson as Chair instead of Vice Chair, Donnie Nicolson as Vice-Chair instead of chair and with Duncan Brown remaining as treasurer and Annmarie remaining as Secretary. Bill Edgar seconded this proposal, and no objections were noted.

Graham Smith inquired if there were any new individuals who were interested in becoming a trustee. Fiona Thomson explained that there had been no inquiries and added that she believed that PBCT currently had their maximum number of trustees according to the constitution.

Continuing committee members:

Ross Cowie
Graham Smith
Neil Campbell

Irene Deplano
Bill Edgar
Janice McGuire
Chris James
Janice MacHugh
Roddy MacHugh
Jen Pearson

AOCB

Catriona MacDonald wanted to express gratitude for the PBCT's continued support for health and social care projects in the area, in particular for Sophie's role as project officer and for the support of the health services group.

Catriona Maclean commented that she thinks PBCT are doing a great job and congratulated the board for their achievements. Catriona was pleased to hear in the update that plans to progress purchase of the Lump were not progressed by PBCT as she believes that it was never a sustainable, viable piece of land to take ownership of. Catriona inquired about other existing plans for the management of the land.

Calum Matheson responded that FEI had withdrawn the land for sale. A lease to PBCT may be an option in future, but this is yet to be discussed with FEI. PBCT acknowledge that the land has a lot of liabilities attached and the trust would have to weigh up the benefits against the liabilities if they were going to pursue any interest in the land.

Drew Millar inquired about who would be liable for the land at the Lump now? Drew also congratulated the trust on all work to date, particularly in the last couple of years, acknowledging that trusts are a valuable asset.

Calum Matheson responded that, as far as he was aware, the Highland Council will be withdrawing from the Lump and the responsibility for the land will revert back to FEI.

Close

Calum Matheson thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting. There was a vote of thanks for Calum as chair of the meeting.

Fiona Thomson asked PBCT trustee's to reconvene for a business meeting after a 5 minute break.

PBCT would like to acknowledge Jan's for generously providing access to the Zoom video conferencing facilities.