

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of THE GALLOWAY NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION SC047398

13 October 2022 at 19.30 by Zoom

Present: Rob Lucas (chair of trustees), Lois Aitkenhead, Violet Baillie, Peter Buxton, Caroline Buck, John Chapman, John Craig (trustee), Hilary Craig, Maggie Driscoll, Anna Hale, Robert Hale, John Haston, Victoria Hesketh, Lisa Hooper, Andrew Horberry, Michael Lawton, Lesley Littler, Rachel Lucas, Vincent Mason, Liz Matear, Sandra McDowall (vice-chair of trustees), Allan McDowall, Eric McGowan, Andrew Pym (trustee), Ruth Pym, Cliff Robertson, Jean Shaw, Christopher Shaw, Lynn Stewart, Paul Tarling (trustee), Andrew Taylor, John Thomson, Marijke van Drunen Littel (trustee), Alan Wake, Chris Walker.

Apologies were received from Dame Barbara Kelly (president), William Crawford (retiring trustee), Mark Gibson (trustee), Gordon Mann (trustee), Jamie Ribbens (trustee), Neil Picken (trustee), Godfrey Bedford, M.K. Bruce, Duncan Ferguson, Janet Gibson, Lesley Grindley, Alan Grindley, Donald McHarrie, David Stitt, Marion Thomson and Carolyn Walby.

In the President's absence, Rob Lucas welcomed everyone to the 5th AGM; being online for 3rd time allows more people to attend from far and wide.

Minutes of the AGM held on 16th September 2021 were accepted as a true record, proposed by Christopher Shaw and Paul Tarling. There were no matters arising.

The President's Report, which is included in full in the Annual Report, was read by Sandra McDowall. The important points arose from our activities through the year, with four highlights:

- continuing to gather support for a Galloway National Park;
- continuing to promote the ambition for a Galloway National Park through a variety of media;
- engaging with the Scottish Government and local politicians to show why Galloway should be chosen as a new National Park to fulfil the Government's commitment within this Parliament; and
- promoting a 2022 calendar to show some of Galloway's Special Places.

There were no questions.

The Treasurer's report was given by John Craig who confirmed that the accounts had been scrutinised by an external examiner and can now be viewed on the website. During the year, GNPA received new subscriptions of £260, donations of £10,684 and calendar income of £3,752. The main items of expenditure related to PR services, web site development and audit fees. The net income for the year was £9,135 and the balance at 30 April 2021 was £19,417.

Trustees: Rob Lucas announced the retirement of William Crawford, Chris Walker and Andrew Wolffe, all of whom had made significant contributions. Both William Crawford and Chris Walker have agreed to become patrons and remain closely involved with our ongoing work. Victoria Hesketh was appointed as a new trustee. Rob also restated the current trustees hope that more people would wish to become involved and he invited them to contact him direct through the GNPA website.

The Chairman then gave an update since April 2022. He described the framework for inviting bids for National Park status and the basis on which they will be evaluated: this is an ongoing consultative process and liable to change. However there is an end date given the commitment to designate a new National Park before the next election. It is expected that bids will be invited in the latter half of 2023. GNPA is working closely with Dumfries & Galloway, South Ayrshire and East Ayrshire Councils to agree how the best bid for Galloway can be prepared, although many of the details to be required by the Scottish Government have yet to be explained.

He then thanked all our supporters, all trustees, patrons and volunteers for their work, Dame Barbara Kelly our President, and everyone who contributed to the calendars of 2022 and 2023.

Any other business:

- Having been invited by Rob Lucas, John Thomson (chair of SCNP and a member of the National Park Stakeholder Group) talked more about the process. He confirmed the very definite commitment of the Minister, Lorna Slater. He also said that while she would be in favour of more than one being designated, finances may limit the process to just one.
- In reply to a question about our supporters, Rob Lucas explained that there are about 850 members of the Association, 150 Business Champions and 40 active Young Supporters. About one third of the members are not local and spread around the UK and abroad. All others are local to Galloway.

With thanks to everyone for attending, the meeting was brought to a close.