



***Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on
2nd February 2020***

Welcome and Apologies:

- **Present:** David Howell (Chair), Iain Frazer (Treasurer), Hugh Edmond, Luke Emerton, Anne Hislop, Chris Robinson, Kayt Howell (Manager)
19 FDT members
- **Apologies:** Gordon Cowtan (Consultant)
- David welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for turning out on a day of such bad weather.

Brief Annual Report – Governance and Futures Projects

- Kayt referred everyone to the handout which had been distributed to everyone at the meeting and confirmed that this covered the financial year 2018/19. During that time, Matthew Black (FDT Energy Adviser) had left the FDT meaning that it was no longer possible to offer energy advice. Consequently, it was decided that this would be a good time to reflect on the work done by the FDT in previous years and focus on moving forward. This was felt to be particularly important as the mortgage on the wind turbine will be paid off in the next few years meaning that the FDT will be receiving considerably more income.
- Governance Project – Kayt and Gordon have worked with current and former Directors to produce a draft code. They were greatly assisted by one former Director with experience in this field, Holly O'Donnell, who kindly volunteered her time. They will now develop strategies, a suite of policies and make administrative changes to create the appropriate systems to be adopted by the Board. The whole process has been a good opportunity for reflection and discussion and Kayt thanked everyone who has been involved.
- Futures Project – This was set up in May 2019 to look at what FDT should be doing in the future. Financial constraints over the past few years have limited the work done by the FDT but they are proud of what has been achieved over the last twelve years. The significant increase in income in a few years' time means that now is a good time to take stock and make plans. A lot of talking and reading has been done along with community consultations and discussions with experts in the field and the Scottish Government. The aim is to have a short report ready by the end of March which will identify long-term directions for the trust although it was acknowledged that the goals may be subject to revision as circumstances change. Some interim proposals include improving sustainability in Fintry and reducing energy costs, reducing the village's carbon impact, adopting the Scottish Government's targets for carbon reduction (but getting there quicker) and looking at ways to adapt to climate change. The Board are keen to hear the views of the residents and a questionnaire was available for completion.

Financial Report:

- Iain thanked Gordon for all the work he has done previously as Treasurer.
- A financial summary report was provided on the handout and the full draft report was available to view at the meeting or on the FDT website.
- The finances are in better shape than had been anticipated this time last year although the FDT are still not in position to be offering grants at the moment. This will be looked at again in the future. The project at Balgair Caravan Park created a deficit and this is being monitored closely. The FRED account was not listed on the summary report as this is in the process of being wound up.
- Question from FDT member: Why are the accounts published on the website marked as draft? Iain explained that the accounts are still to go through the voting procedure and the Treasurer's name needs to be changed.
- David pointed out that there is not always enough wind to generate the income needed to cover the mortgage and hence, there is sometimes a deficit in the accounts. There are just over three years left to pay on the mortgage with income predicted for another ten years after that. Any ideas from the community with regard to how to use the money would be greatly appreciated.
- David also explained that the FDT are also starting to think about what will happen at the end of the turbine's life. The FDT have indicated to FALCK that they would still like to be involved but it is unclear at the moment what will happen with the wind farm and how the FDT can remain a part of it.
- Question from FDT member: How much money is expected once the mortgage has been paid off? David said it is expected to be between £200 and £400k per annum. A large amount which brings with it a lot of responsibility.
- Question from FDT member: If the turbine is revamped, do FALCK have any obligation to put money back into the community again? Chris answered that this would depend on how FALCK decided to proceed. They would probably need to apply for planning permission again and this would almost certainly involve putting money back into the community.
- Question from FDT member: Do turbines usually wear out after 25 years? Chris answered that it was difficult to say but often the gear boxes wear out or the turbine might need a new blade.
- Question from FDT member: Would the FDT have to contribute to a refurbishment? David replied that this would need to be discussed with FALCK at some point in the future. FALCK are not sure yet about what their plans will be.
- Question from FDT member: If the wind farm is decommissioned, would the FDT have to contribute to the cost of this? David answered that the FDT would not have to contribute as this had been written into the original agreement. Chris commented that he was not aware of any wind farms that had been decommissioned after they had reached the end of life.
- Question from FDT member: Would the Scottish Government's policy on renewable energy have any influence on FALCK's decision? Chris felt it almost certainly would but explained that there has been a lot of debate recently over whether planning permission would be required if the life of a wind farm is to be extended. The Scottish Government are trying to make the process as easy as possible but planning permission would be required if there were plans to change the height or the power of the turbines.
- Question from FDT member: If FALCK decided to take down the turbines and put in new ones, what would happen to the existing site? David replied that they would be required to restore the site to how it had been originally but none of the cost of this would fall to the FDT. Chris said that the Scottish Government had commissioned a study at the moment to look at the environmental impact of removing the concrete foundations versus leaving them in situ.

Board Elections

- Iain had to stand down as a Director but was standing for re-election. There was also one other vacancy on the Board. There were no other candidates. Iain was re-elected by a unanimous show of hands.
- Question from FDT member: Were there no other vacancies on the Board this year? David reiterated that there was a vacancy but no-one had expressed an interest. He asked again, if anyone would like to put themselves forward but no-one did. David requested that anyone was interested in joining the Board to get in touch.

Questions

- The Scottish Government is introducing new regulations in 2022 with regard to wood burning stoves in an effort to cut down on emissions and air pollution. Would the FDT be able to help with advice and financial assistance for residents who were looking to replace their stoves? Kayt replied that this would definitely fall into the remit of the Futures Project.
- Please could the Board introduce themselves? David apologised that this had not been done at the beginning of the meeting and each member of the Board introduced themselves.
- Whilst the FDT are unable to provide grants and therefore have less links with the Community at the moment, would they consider being involved in smaller projects in the community? Kayt answered that the FDT are keen to hear suggestions for projects but do not have enough staff to get the projects set up and then run them. They are more than happy to help with advice but the projects would need to be run by Fintry residents.
- There is lots of water in Fintry, has any thought been given to heat recovery from the Endrick Water? David said that this had been looked into in the past but there had been objections from SEPA and the Fisheries Trust as the Endrick Water is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation. He agreed that it may be worth looking into again.

Brief Introduction to the Sustainability Day

- Kayt gave a brief run through of activities that were planned for the rest of the day and explained who would be in attendance.

Thank you and close

- David thanked Jo Skabara for recording the minutes of the FDT's meetings.
- David then thanked everyone for attending the meeting and invited them to stay and enjoy the Sustainability Day.