

**Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting of
Bosavern Community Enterprises Ltd
Held online (Zoom)
7.00 pm Tuesday 2nd February 2021**

Welcome

Society Secretary, Rob Pickering welcome everyone attending our first online AGM, forced on us due to the Covid 19 restrictions. He explained the procedures for discussing items and for voting. He finished by calling for a big thank you to all our staff and volunteers with have had some major challenges over the last 12 months and which may not be over yet. The meeting warmly supported the message of thanks.

Present:

Members: Rob Pickering (Director & Society Secretary), Yvonne Bristow (Director), Chris Nelson (Director), Hugh Taylor (BCF Head Grower), Alice Plynn, Ailsa Johnson, Andrew George (CCLT), Ian Willsdon, Sue Lewis, Chris Ing-Simmons, , Frances Rippon, Kate Beckley, Jill Neville, Jenny Rowe, Deborah Shephard, Dominic Goetz,
(Meeting quorate.)

Others: Holly Whitehead, Dilys Down (Finance Officer & G&EP Project Manager), Florence Browne, Hannah Smith

1. Apologies for absence –

Jackie Packer, Sue James, Dave Mundy, Liz Allmark, Lesley Bradley-Peer, Tim McQueen, Katie Wonnacott, Lucy Mollison, Mary & Roger King, Ellie Parker, Chris Bovey, Tom Jane, Katie Kirk

2. AGM 2019 - Approval of Minutes

Motion to Approve: Proposed: Kate Beckley

Seconded: Frances Rippon

Minutes unanimously approved.

3. Report from the Directors and Staff on BCE Activities

Reports had been made available to members prior to the meeting via the BCF website.

(www.bosaverncommunityfarm.org.uk/agm-2020/)

Head Grower's Report – Produce

Hugh recorded detail of work undertaken from March onwards through intermittent lockdowns. Despite Covid and the shutdown of wholesale orders (from local cafés, restaurants and markets) revenue to date from veg box customers and Farm Shop exceeded 2018/ 2019.

Rob reported revenue from Sales up on last year. From 10 months' trading income up until 31st January, shop sales are up 33% on 2019-20 and veg boxes 90%. Predicted turnover (including grants) for financial year 2020-21 is over £190k, compared with £125k previous year.

There was discussion regarding regulations regarding the commercial sale of seeds. At last year's AGM Fran Rippon had suggested we sell more seeds. We have since done this in the Shop. (Hugh: no VAT on veg seeds, but flower seeds attract VAT). Ian Willsdon suggested we also consider setting up of a Seed Bank at the Farm.

Action: Rob to discuss with the Allotments Group and the Community Garden Group with a view to the farm setting up of Seed Bank.

Kate B asked what proportion of vegetables was being bought in from local organic producers to provide for increased demand from Shop and Veg Box customers. Hugh reported 30-40 per cent bought in from now (February 2021) until end of Hungry Gap (May/June) and none during summer/autumn – when all the produce sold is produced at the Farm.

Holly W asked if we could grow more on the Farm. Hugh reported there is scope for producing more - dependent on manpower extra polytunnels and machinery.

Action: BCE Board need to analyse best sellers and focus on expanding those areas e.g. also increase number of chickens, grow more in polytunnels, etc.

BCF Allotment's report

Rob reported that during the year there had been strong interest from people wanting to take on an allotment at BCF and presently there are only 6 whole plots left. (£50 per plot; £30 per half plot).

There are some improvements / set up work to complete e.g., fencing around the plots on the east side of the field. We hope to get this work done in the coming months. There are also issues about drainage as field can get waterlogged in mid-winter and with growing /building wind breaks.

Kenidjack Allotments – the present lease of the land from the National Trust runs until May 2022. The Kenidjack Allotments Association have expressed their wish for BCE to negotiate a new lease so the allotments can continue.

Growing and Empowerment Project report

This is an education and training project supporting people who are economically inactive or unemployed in West Penwith. Grants from the European Rural Development Fund, the European Social Fund and Cornwall Council via the Community Led Local Development group (CLLD) are funding the project. These support the team of 4 part-time staff, and have enabled the purchase of a portacabin, polytunnel, and office equipment amongst other things, and which will be legacy infrastructure at the end of the project (summer, 2022). Recruiting now: 40 participants (10 per quarter). Training includes growing, harvesting, cooking, shop and creating CVs. Extra manpower will help Hugh and his team. Rob P thanked the grant funders for enabling BCF to set up this project.

Other projects/fundingMarquee

We received a grant, Cllr Sue James, from the Cornwall Council Community Chest to purchase a marquee.

Grow Well Together

Supported by grant from BUPA. Supporting adults with poor mental health. Project began recruiting in December 2019 but halted in February 2020 by Covid restrictions. BUPA kept informed and aware of our intention to restart this spring. Grant money is ring-fenced. Funder has suggested another project also to be developed by us.

Co-op Community Fund grant

We have had two small grants from the Co-op Community Fund towards developing a Community Garden at the farm, in the corner of our Home Field beside our Cob building.

Rob P thanked all the grant funders for their support towards activities at BCF.

4. Motion to approve the 2019-20 Accounts.

At the 2019 AGM it was agreed that the 2018/19 Accounts would be accepted subject to the Board getting confirmation from CCAS (our accountants) that the errors picked up were corrected and that the final totals remain unaffected. The Board received this confirmation from CCAS so those accounts had been accepted.

Rob P pointed out that 2019-20 Accounts were available on our website as was the Directors' Report which also gave background details about this year's income and expenditure figures.

Since March 2020 and the pandemic lockdown, although Covid regulations and increased demand have been a strain for staff and volunteers, we have done well financially overall, with this being our best trading period to date. This financial year up to end of 31st January trading income is up 41% on the same period last year. Although there was very little wholesale or farmers' market income, shop income was up 33% and Veg Box income up a whopping 193% i.e., almost tripling.

Increasing sales has meant increasing amounts of items bought in for the shop (33% increase) and the cost of vegetables bought from external suppliers has doubled – mainly due to the massive increase in veg box numbers.

Last year we averaged around the 40-45 boxes a week level. This year to date the average over the period is around 110-115. After a dip before Christmas, numbers have again bounced back in the New Year and were 135 boxes last week.

With the continued improvements in our facilities and increasing size of our enterprise we feel in good financial shape to continue our path to financial sustainability.

Overall income (including grant income) for this year is estimated to be over £190k up from the £126k last year.

Motion to Approve the 2019-20 Accounts

Proposed: Rob Pickering

Seconded: Yvonne Bristow

Motion unanimously approved

5. Motion regarding allowing Unaudited 2020-21 Accounts

The Directors put forward to following motion for consideration by the members present at the AGM:

“As legally allowed within the Deregulation (Industrial and Provident Societies) Order 1996 and following the conditions set out in Section 25 of the Society's Rules we agree that the Society's Directors can collate and present unaudited accounts to the next Annual General Meeting of the Society and have an Accountant's Report, signed off by a Registered Auditor.”

Motion to Approve:

Proposed: Fran Rippon

Seconded: Chris Ing-Simmons

Motion unanimously approved

6. Appointment of Auditors/Independent examiner

At the 2019 AGM the Board was requested to consider changing our accountant and auditor after the discovery of some minor errors in that year's Accounts. At the first Board meeting following the AGM it was agreed that after consideration, and confirmation from CCAS that those errors had not affected last year's final income and expenditure figures, it was decided to retain the services of Andrew Fisher (Registered Auditor) and Cornwall Community Accountancy Service (CASS).

The Board would like this AGM to support the following motion. “Motion to remain with the current accountants (CCAS) and registered auditor (Andrew Fisher)”

Proposed: Rob Pickering.

Seconded: Kate Beckley

Motion unanimously approved

7. Election of Directors

Rob P led the thanks to Sue Townsend, who stood down from the Board in October after serving for a year and a half, for all the work she did as a Director on behalf of the Farm.

According to our Society Rules, a third of Directors must stand down at each AGM.

No Director nomination forms had been received for this AGM.

Rob announced his intention to stand down from the Board as of now and therefore was no requirement to elect more Directors this year.

The current BCE Management Board Directors are Yvonne Bristow and Chris Nelson.

During January, the Board advertised for new Board members and several people have shown interest in joining. A meeting is being organised to explain to them what is involved and to discuss how they could contribute. Once this is done, then by mutual consent, they can be co-opted onto the Board. Members will be informed of any new Board members.

8. Any Other Business

Health & Safety checks

The question arose about who performs Health and Safety checks at the Farm. The meeting agreed that these should be the responsibility of and undertaken by paid members of staff.

Action: The Board to discuss this with paid staff so responsibilities can be agreed.

CEE Bill Alliance – West Cornwall

Lesley Bradley-Peer, Secretary of Transition Penwith has asked that we mention the CEE Bill Alliance - West Cornwall (Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill), a parliamentary Private Members Bill they urge people and MP's to support. She would also like Bosavern as an organisation to consider endorsing the Alliance. A flyer has been uploaded to our website, onto the AGM 2020 webpage. I don't know the details of the bill but it does sound like something our Board should look into and consider supporting on behalf of the organisation.

ACTION: For the Board to consider the organisation publicly supporting.

9. Date of AGM 2021

Will be announced in due course.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm