**Belford Community Group CIO**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Held at Bell View Resource Centre, Belford**

**On Wednesday 9th November 2022 at 6.00 pm**

**Trustees Present:**Pauline Tucker (Chair), Phil Dodd (Secretary), Amanda White, Del Hughes, Sue Husband, Ruth Dodd, Jane Cowley, Karon Ives, Dave Ogden (Treasurer), Val Barnsley

**Others Present:**William McLaren, Steve White, Val Glass, Alison Wooley, Sharon Simmonds, Denise Hiscox, Linda McMahon, Mark Dodds, Judith Thurland, Tony Broom, Keith Walker, Viv Walker

**Apologies for absence:**Nikki Dunn, Graham Sargent

**Re-election of William McLaren as President:**Phil chaired the meeting briefly, as with every AGM the President has to be re-elected after his resignation. William kindly agreed to carry on with this role, with Amanda White proposing William and Sue Husband seconding.  William chaired the rest of the meeting

**Minutes of the last AGM:**Everyone agreed they were accurate and Pauline signed them. There were no matters arising that were not covered later in the meeting.

**President’s Annual Report:**

The year to 31st March 2022 has been another good year for Belford Community group, despite the continued effects of Covid, and the financial position of the group remains strong.

The team of Trustees has been working to ensure that Belford Community Group is in a stronger and more resilient position to face the future with confidence. Each of the trustees is important to the group and each provides their own special talents.

I thank, in particular, Pauline Tucker who has chaired Belford Community Group trustees so ably. Pauline has worked tirelessly, often much more than a chair should be doing, to ensure things run smoothly. I know that at times it has not been easy with so much going on at BCG during the past 18 months.

Dave and Val, Treasurer and deputy respectively, have ensured the Group’s finances have been in good order.  Sadly, we say goodbye to them as they move out of the village and onto their next venture. They will be greatly missed.

Big thanks to our wonderful team of volunteers throughout the Community Group activities. Without all of the time given by our volunteers there would not be the facilities available to the community and the funds available to support the good causes in the village.

Thanks also to those who continue to supply the shop with goods and those who support the shop and the gym.

**Chair’s report from Pauline:**

Thank you so much for attending our AGM.

As usual I would like to thank our President, William McLaren, and the trustees for their continued hard work. I would like to offer special thanks to Dave Ogden and Val Barnsley who are stepping down as Trustees for their work over the last few years, keeping our accounts in order as Treasurer and Vice Treasurer. They will be a loss to the group. We have valued their reliability and their work both on the finances and in the shop and gym. We wish them well for the future and hope they settle into life in Berwick.

I would like to welcome two new trustees in their place. Graham Sargent will take over responsibility for compliance and act as treasurer. Karon Ives, who looks after the museum, also joins us. We look forward to working with them both.

Once again the shop committee and volunteers have endeavoured to keep the shop going, and we thank them all for their continued hard work.

The trustees have worked particularly hard behind the scenes this year and we have changed our charity status to Belford Community Group CIO, which has largely been driven by Jane and we thank her for this. This involved an increase in the workload, especially for Del Hughes, Steve White and the gym team. We have unfortunately had to close the gym for several months to get our house in order and at times this has been very stressful. I express my sincere gratitude to you all. Unfortunately we have not yet signed the lease, which is especially disappointing to Val and Dave, as we would have liked to get this done before they stepped down as trustees, but we remain positive that this will be finalised as soon as possible.

Regarding our accounts, I would like to confirm that they remain healthy. We have been determined to keep our finances in order and, although we have a healthy balance, we have to ring fence £15,000 for the shop in case of emergency shop repairs, and £15,000 for the gym for emergency repairs and reinvestment in equipment. The running costs for the shop and gym are approximately £10,000 per year. The remainder of our income is for funding grants in the village. This year we have given £4,000 to Bell View for a village generator, £2,000 for the Jubilee event, £1,500 for Belford Cinema to secure films and speakers, circa £4,500 for the arts festival, £1,500 for village Christmas lights, Christmas tree and pipe band, and £700 for the Belford Show. Both the Jubilee and Arts festivals were well received and our congratulations go to both the Jubilee committee and Jodie Larder and her volunteers for delivering these. I am sure the Christmas lights etc., will be enjoyed by villagers and visitors alike and our thanks go to Ian Carruthers for his work on this.

The trustees have a lot of work ahead of them next year. Jane Cowley is working on planning and looking at our grant request form. Nikki Dunn has come on board and will look to become a trustee at some point but has taken on the work required by the Charities Commission. Tony Broom will take over the website from Amanda White. Our thanks go to Amanda for her work on this until now. She will remain a trustee, which we appreciate. Graham Sargent will take on insurance, risk assessment, general compliance and the treasurer’s role as I mentioned earlier.

Each sector of the group, i.e. Shop, Museum, Gym, Woodlands has had to take on responsibility for risk assessments and Susan Husband has taken on Safeguarding. My thanks go to you all.

The woodland team have worked hard again this year and the Jubilee Arch is a wonderful addition to the woodlands. The markets have again proved popular and Phil and Ruth have managed to get some help.

We are now a strong team and we are looking forward to strategic planning in the New Year.  Although we would like more Trustees to join us and share the workload, and we want robust procedures in place to make the group resilient, so that the shop, gym, museum and woodlands keep going. If you would like to join us, you would be most welcome. You can come along to any meeting to see if there is a niche for you.

The workload for certain trustees has been particularly onerous with all the challenges mentioned above. We need trustees on board to take on some of this work and spread the workload, and I hope you will consider joining us.

If I have missed anyone out, my apologies, but a big thank you to you all.

**6. Treasurers report:**

Treasurer’s examiner of accounts report for end March 2022

I am in receipt of the unaudited financial statements for the end of March 2022.

These are a true reflection of the group’s financial activities for 2021/2022 financial year. These accounts, however, don’t reflect losses in gym revenue and costs incurred by the change in charitable status after this time period.

The Group’s principal sources of revenue are from The Belford Community Shop and The Belford Community Gym. The Community Shop and gym reopened after Covid restrictions were lifted and revenues eventually returned to normal. However Covid restrictions remained in place for a small proportion of the financial year leading to a small shortfall in revenue only partly made up by additional Covid grants.

Operational costs for The Community Shop and The Community Gym were therefore significantly more than the previous year.

The combination of the return of shop revenue and gym receipts meant the BCG’s financial position continued to be strong during the last financial year with significant monies available for community projects/ grant donations.

A copy of the full accounts will be available on the village website.

Thanks to The Community Shop Committee and Volunteers and also to Steve White and Dell Hughes for all their hard work with regards to the gym.

**Stand down and re-election of trustees:**

Not necessary as Val and Dave have resigned their positions.

**Election of Auditors:**Northumberland Accounting Services were re-appointed as we are satisfied with their services.

**Change of Charity Status:**

Jane spoke about this, explaining why this has become necessary.

Firstly, it was obvious that it was not best practice for trustees, both new and old to be owners of the shop, ensuring that the group as a whole are the owners, not individual trustees. Secondly, there was a risk of the trustees being at fault should any misfortune occur. However, despite the change in charity status, the day to day running of the charity remains largely unchanged.

**Grants awarded this year:**

Already mentioned in the Chair’s report

**AOB:**no business

**AGM date in 2023: Wednesday 8 November**