

The SOC

Scotland's Bird Club



COUNCIL MEETING 86/02

12th June 2022 Minutes

SOC Scottish Charity Number: SC 009859
A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Session 86/02 of Council was held at 10:00 hrs on the 12th June 2022 using Zoom virtual conferencing software.

Present: Ruth Briggs (President). Jeremy Wilson (Vice President), Lesley Creamer (Vice President), David Lindgren (Hon Secretary), Richard Kerr (Hon Treasurer), Chris Wernham, Zul Bhatia, Alan Knox, David Rackham, Richard Somers Cocks, Neil Stratton, Jeremy Brock, Peter Gordon, Hannah Lemon, Richard Leslie and Rachael Wilbourn

In Attendance: Wendy Hicks

Action

- 1 **Apologies for absence** Apologies were received from Rick Goater and Elizabeth Irwin.

- 2 **Minutes of Council Meeting 86/01 held on 13th March 2022**

The minutes for the meeting on 13th March 2022 were approved, subject to the correction of minor typographical errors and clarification of Youth and Junior membership criteria

The action points from the March meeting were considered. All had been fulfilled save for adopting a suitable Investment strategy, which the Strategy Group were progressing, and the mentor programme, which was carried forward and would be progressed by the Birding and Science Committee (BSC).

3	Birding and Science Committee	<p>Jeremy Wilson referred to the draft minutes that had been circulated of the Committee's last meeting. He commented particularly on the progress being made with the Knowledge Gaps work, and on the work being done by the Birding and Science Officer on the Birdtrack Steering group.</p> <p>Rachael Wilbourn asked about the MOTUS project. Alan Knox referred to the funding offer that had been made and discussed at branch level in this connection. Agreed that Alan and Rachael should be invited to the next BSC meeting, as it was more appropriate that the feasibility of the project be</p>	Alan Knox and Rachael Wilbourn to attend next BSC meeting
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	considered centrally, particularly as it could require considerable resources to implement.	
4	<p>Management Committee</p> <p>Lesley Creamer reported that no meeting had been held since the last Council meeting, as there had been no particular management issues. She highlighted Wendy’s report on Waterston House that had been tabled, specifically mentioning Shenaz’s video on Waterston House, the successful reversion to more routine work patterns, successful trend of optic sales, and the arrangements being made with a university student volunteer to cover Shenaz’s extended leave. In discussion, it was suggested that a more professional and universally applicable video introduction to Waterston House be commissioned, to make more of Shenaz’s initiative.</p>	
5	<p>Strategy Group</p> <p>The Chair referred to the meeting of the Group that had taken place on 16th May, restarting the Group’s work after a hiatus during the pandemic. She highlighted the work that was being done on the risk register, the Communications Strategy and on finance matters.</p> <p>In discussion it was agreed that the Strategy Group should progress the review of the Risk Register, which had been agreed in 2019, and was now due for that review. The result of that review would be brought back before Council for consideration. The intention was that this be available for the September meeting of Council.</p>	<p>Strategy Group to coordinate and present reviewed Risk Register to Council</p>
6	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>The Treasurer referred to the financial information that had been circulated. He explained that the Profit and Loss account anticipated the position that would be shown in the Annual Report, noting that this would be presented by Whitelaw Wells at the next Council meeting. He also explained that the new budget, which had been adopted by Council, was now being used on Quickbooks alongside actual results. Although this was at an early stage and the budget needed further development, it was nonetheless useful as a comparison.</p> <p>He noted that the deficit anticipated in the budget was £55,000, being the same as that for last year. Capital from reserves was being used to fund this, and whilst there remained more than adequate cover in the reserves, the reserves were finite. The position would continue to be monitored. This started a more general discussion on how things might be changed to generate a surplus, referring to more effective fundraising, legacies, grants and income generating projects (such as perhaps trading Waterston House as a café). It was suggested that the resources of staff, branches, the committees of the SOC and Council should all become more active in pursuing the goal of greater net revenue.</p> <p>The Treasurer asked Council to note the final subscription levels that had been set, as there had been some small practical changes from the position agreed at the last Council meeting.</p>	
7	<p>Events</p> <p>Wendy updated the meeting on the progress that the working group had made in identifying and confirming speakers for the Annual Conference, mainly</p>	<p>Steering group to continue</p>

	<p>through contacts around the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Group. The conference was still scheduled for 26-27th November 2022 in Pitlochry.</p> <p>There was a report on the Scottish Birdwatchers' Conference. The very positive Google Poll on this event illustrated the appetite for face-to-face meetings. Less positively, it was agreed that the technical glitches at the venue had been annoying. Noting that catering quotes had been very high, so no catering was offered, as it would have pushed up overheads considerably. Participants agreed that the event had been a great success and that particular thanks were due to Chris Wernham and Ben from BTO Scotland, to Richard Somers Cocks and Melvin Morrison (Moray Bird Club), and to Wendy.</p> <p>The Chair reported on the success of the Youth Event (participants between 11 and 15 years old) that she had attended on its last afternoon. Thanks to be passed to Jane and to Ben (BTO Scotland)</p> <p>The Branches Weekend had taken place in the Grant Arms in Grantown on Spey. A workshop environment had allowed a good exchange of information across different branches. Agreed that it was important not to lose momentum on the matters discussed amongst branches, and on the value of an invited list of participants.</p> <p>Noting that there were initiatives around bird sound, and that this could be the theme of a future conference. Highlighting the work being done with inmates from Perth Prison, research work such as the St Kilda Wren (and others) Hannah Lemon reported on, and the SOC Sound Archive which was being made available online. Noting that technology was now making it easier to feature sound to wider audiences.</p>	Conference planning	
8	Council Vacancies and Elections	<p>A successor was being sought for Jeremy Wilson as Vice President <i>Birding and Science</i>. The position had been advertised in <i>Scottish Birds</i>, and Wendy was tasked with following that up with emails to encourage a response. The Appointments Panel would also be meeting to identify a suitable and willing candidate.</p>	Appointments Panel and Wendy to ID suitable candidates
9	Revised Constitution	<p>The Secretary presented a paper setting out suitable wording for the Club's Constitution such as would allow member meetings to be conducted virtually in future. It was agreed that this be recommended to members at the next AGM. He sought guidance as to whether a more general review of the constitution should be conducted and it was agreed that this was not needed at present, as the constitution was compliant with all applicable law and regulation.</p>	Wendy and David to liaise on presentation of new constitution resolution to members
9	Membership Trends	<p>The tabled report showed a gentle growth trend. Discussions on the point suggested a greater ambition for substantial growth in membership numbers.</p>	
11	Next meeting	<p>The next meeting was set for 4th September 2022, potentially for Loch Leven, although that would necessitate hybrid Zoom arrangements with those unable to participate in person.</p>	