

SCOTTISH POLICE BENEVOLENT FUND

Registered Charity number SC043489

Minutes of the 9th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund on Monday 16th August 2021 at The Police Treatment Centre, Castlebrae, Castleton Road, Auchterarder, PH3 1AG.

1. SPBF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Catherine McNally - (CM)

Stephen Clark - (SC)

Bill Clark - (BC)

Richard Wood - (RW)

Graham Ross - (GR)

Patrick Nicol - (PN)

Lynne Gray - (LG)

Ross Polworth - (RP)

Also In Attendance:

Mairi MacGregor (SPBF, Treasurer) - (MMc)

Gary Brown (Operations Manager) - (GB)

Mark Mulholland (Alexander Sloan Accountants & Business Advisers) - (MM)

2. OPENING OF MEETING:

The Chair (CM) opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

CM confirmed that the minutes of the last AGM had previously been published and disseminated and they were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting by those who were present at the meeting.

3. APOLOGIES:

CM advised that apologies had been received from Richard North (member from the West Area) who had been delayed and was running late – he hoped to join the meeting at some point.

4. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES:

Trustees were elected as follows: -

North Area

Bill Clark

Patrick Nicol

Ross Polworth

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West Area

Catherine McNally
Lynne Gray
Richard North (in his absence)

East Area

Graham Ross
Stephen Clark
Richard Wood

5. CHAIR'S REPORT:

The Chair (CM) welcomed all present to this year's Annual General Meeting, the 9th since the creation of the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund.

CM went on to provide the following address: -

"Can I welcome you all to this year's, our ninth, Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund and it is a pleasure to welcome you all in person. I know we had all hoped to meet face to face following our 18-month period of on-line local and Board of Trustees meetings, however the national situation is now showing improvement and with restrictions easing it is only now possible for me to chair an 'in person' meeting for the first time.

Upon reflection it has been a significant and challenging year for all charities and for those we support. Our financial position has improved since the last year with an improving bank balance, while debtors reduced, these factors are a direct result of rigorous application of our guiding principles and a clearer long-term financial view. We continue to have in place a formal financial strategy which will inform our short and long-term budgeting. The number of beneficiaries has decreased on the previous year to 45, but we provided grants totalling £118,663.61 and loans of £2750 which represents strong support to those we have assisted. The charity has paid out significant amounts of financial support to individuals and families in need and I will leave Mark (Mr Mulholland, Auditor, Alexander Sloan Accountant's & Business Advisers) to deliver the financial status in more detail for the charity over the last year. I am pleased that the charity is functioning as it should be and continuing to deliver financial support to those who need it most. Following on from my predecessor Nigel Bathgate I will make no apologies for reiterating that we are a charity of last resort and not a first port of call. We are also not the provider of financial advice, but we can assist to signpost those who approach us to appropriate organisations.

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As the pandemic progressed we anticipated a flood of applications and saw at the beginning a number of applications where the applicants anticipated financial hardship sometime in the future and requested assistance at that time. These were not supported in line with our guiding principles. A steady number of applications have been submitted over the last year, but few directly related to the impact of the pandemic. As life returns to a new sort of normality it can be predicted that expenditures of our members may be tested with the charity seeing an increase in applications as a result. Only time will tell as to the true financial impact the last 18 months has had on our members.

I'm sure we all appreciate Gary Brown's concerted and continued efforts to secure various funding sources for this charity. The pandemic has had a bigger impact on all fundraising with a move towards online events and voluntary contributions from viewers, however the easing of restrictions may allow traditional fundraising methods to restart and I am confident that the charity is ready to respond to maximise efforts for our beneficiaries. We are realistic that as a small charity we probably do not sit particularly high in the pecking order, but Gary has made contacts across fundraising spheres which may be beneficial in the future. The charity will continue to seek funding sources and I again note that the Police Service of Scotland for whom we are their designated charity have contributed no funds since our inception yet support other police related charities.

We have been fortunate and have benefitted from some significant legacies, last year was no different. It is always suggested that you cannot rely on these one-off events, but these events occur regularly and assist in our ability to support members in most need.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following individuals and organisations who provide support to the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund:

Mairi McGregor, the charities Treasurer for all her efforts throughout the year to liaise and direct payrolls, manage the applications, negotiate with auditors and generally provide a well-stocked library of historical but relevant information which guides many a Trustee.

Gary Brown, who has managed not only the web-site but has undertaken significant exploration of funding streams since his appointment as part time operations manager.

Mark Mulholland, our Auditor for his continued association with this charity, for providing the annual accounts and for leading us comprehensively through them. I am aware that Mark is leaving his current employer for

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pastures new and we wish him all the best in his new role. We will miss his sound advice and wise counsel.

Jenny Shanks, one of our trustees who is due to retire from the police service and who has given many years of faithful service to the charity as the Secretary of the West Sub-Committee and as a Trustee. We wish her a long, happy and healthy retirement.

It would be remiss of me not to mention my predecessor, Nigel Bathgate who retired from the police service earlier this year after many loyal years of service to both the police and the SPBF. Nigel was a stalwart on the charity's Board of Trustees, as Chair and as a member of the East Sub-Committee. His knowledge, experience and contribution is sorely missed by everyone involved in the charity and I would like to record our thanks to him for all his hard work and commitment.

Stevie Clark, who, while remaining a trustee, is standing down as Secretary of the SPBF. Stevie continues to remind us all when we need it of the purpose of the charity and has maintained a tight grip of the correspondence ensuring the SPBF responds appropriately to enquiries.

Further thanks go to the Scottish Police Federation, Association of Superintendents and the Retired Police Officers Association who all provide their support directly and indirectly through promoting the charity and providing personnel so that the local committees and the Board of Trustees can deliver and support beneficiaries.

In continuing that theme, the members of the local Area Sub-Committees and those who are on the Board of Trustees similarly deserve recognition for the hours that you commit to delivering essential assistance throughout the year.

It is difficult in terms of our charity to talk about success. Our constitution provides that the purpose of the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund is the prevention or relief of poverty and the relief of those in need.

During this last year, the charity has supported 45 new individual beneficiaries. I will let Mark (Mr Mulholland, Auditor, Alexander Sloan Accountant's & Business Advisers) highlight the amounts involved. I should stress that these sums involved are not insignificant and highlight this charities commitment to supporting our members and, often members of the wider police family in times of tragic need. That commitment will never cease.

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In relation to our investments, the global markets have stabilised over the last year and vindicates the advice and decisions at the last AGM to hold onto our existing investments.

Out with the individual beneficiaries that the charity provides, the charity continues to support a number of external causes all of which have a direct link to the Police Service.

While a challenging year for all of us and for the charity we are continuing to support our members through their most difficult of times and we can be reassured that the charity will remain true to the guiding principles which will keep it in a financially stable position for the future.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS:

Mr Mark Mulholland (MM) was present at the meeting and advised that the accounts had again been audited by Alexander Sloan Accountants & Business Advisers. MM highlighted that he was happy to be able to provide the charity with a "clean and unqualified report". A copy of the accounts was made available to everyone present and a full and detailed update was provided by MM.

Points of note included: -

- During the year, the sum of £195,772 (2020 = £193,980) was received from members of the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund via the monthly subscription. This represents a slight increase in the charity's membership;
- Donations and legacies for this year totalled £298,332 (2020 = £414,236);
- Expenditure on the cost of charitable activities for this year was £185,414 (2020 = £362,918);
- Net income was recorded as +£132,783, which sees a reversal on last years' negative figure of -£82,602;
- After gains / losses on investments, the total movement in funds was +£419,303 in comparison to -£154,022 in 2020;
- Grants for the past year totalled £130,375 (2020 = £258,815), whilst donations to other organisations amounted to £10,099 (2020 = £39,720);
- The cost of charitable activities are down on last year and appear in accordance with the financial budget strategy;

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- A total of £2,567,776 was retained in accumulated funds at 31st March 2021 compared to £2,148,473 at 31st March 2020;
- Management controls were deemed all to be in order; and
- No key risks or significant recommendations were identified.

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

8. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS (AOCB):

None.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING:

CM closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The next AGM is scheduled for Monday 15th August 2022 – meeting details to be confirmed in due course.

Catherine McNally

Chair

Stephen Clark

Secretary

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