



## Scottish Fisheries Museum *Boats, fish and folk...*

The Scottish Fisheries Museum

Annual General Meeting

### **Minutes**

St Ayles, Harbourhead, Anstruther

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2024

**Welcome** – Chair Jane Ryder opened the meeting by welcoming all those attending.

The Agenda, Minutes and Annual Review were all available online and at the meeting.

Among the apologies noted was that from the President of the Museum, Lord Campbell of Pittenweem

#### **1. Minute of AGM held on 15th July 2023**

The Minutes were accepted without amendment as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **2. Chair Statement**

The Chair noted that this had been a difficult year for the museum although it was encouraging to report that we have ended on a more positive footing than what had been anticipated mid-year. As well as exceptional internal efforts, this was also thanks to ad hoc donations as well as ongoing support from Fife Council and Scottish government, our two major funders. Despite the challenges, the museum had maintained a full programme of exhibitions and activities within the existing galleries and in local venues. The year also saw the first summer sailing of the historic Reaper since refit and an expanded programme was being delivered in summer 2024.

The museum was still facing a challenging future. Many of the pressures faced - some unique to SFM – were possibly embedded within the organisation. These included significant pressures related to the extensive historic buildings in an exposed location, and associated buildings, energy and insurance costs. Meanwhile SFM was fortunate to enjoy an enthusiastic volunteer cohort who maintain the sailing vessels, Reaper and White Wing. The organisation was facing additional costs not budgeted for over former years but now considered desirable from an enhanced safety perspective, such as an annual independent survey and occasional slippage and dry docking.

The Chair noted that it was the museum's goal to significantly upgrade and rethink the museum galleries. SFM was in process of reviewing and formulating plans alongside the challenge of containing those rising costs. The Trustees had identified major funding priorities on which to concentrate. As well as covering the full costs of

the Reaper, an upgrade to business systems and capacity to meet modern expectations was urgently required. Ultimately capital funding will be needed for essential gallery upgrades and rethinking to record and to explore the present and the local and national industry. Issues of size, scale and impact of modern fishing methods will call for innovative solutions within the museum just as they do within the sector and society at large.

The Chair particularly thanked the Trustees, who had committed exceptional time and effort to addressing the challenges faced during the year. She also thanked all the museum staff and volunteers. She concluded by noting that there were still challenging times ahead but, as the full Annual report reflected, the dedication and the value of all the contributions made by so many individuals and groups was crucial to the continuing and future success of the Museum.

### **3. Financial Report (Vice Chair Kevin Dunion)**

The Vice Chair reported that the deficit for the year was £35,336 (2023 deficit £80,221).

Total reserves at the balance sheet date were £1,593,273 (2023 £1,628,609) of which £241 (2023 £101) were restricted. Unrestricted funds excluding fixed assets were £49,004 (2023 £44,468).

Bank funds of £118,774 (2023 £61,778) were held at the year-end of which £241 (2023 £11,620) were held for restricted purposes.

The deficit for the year of £35,336 (2023 £80,221) is achieved after recognising net expenditure of £14 (2023 £5,541) relating to projects.

The Vice Chair noted that The Board had reviewed the principal risks facing the organisation. The overriding risk remained the financial risk - that is of actual, anticipated, and required costs outrunning available funds for both operational and development needs. With a priority requirement to upgrade the museum galleries, capital funding and project management would be critical. Scottish Government had commissioned Community Enterprise Scotland to work with the charity to consider business sustainability and this would involve a discussion of long-term options with Scottish Government in the context of national museum policy. Meanwhile the Board had been ensuring enhanced financial management and scrutiny internally, as well as considering targeted fundraising.

The Board had also explicitly recognised the significant safety risks associated with the operations of Reaper and White Wing In considering a first sailing programme post refit. The Board devoted significant time to securing assurance regarding crew selection and training in considering a summer sailing programme for 2024.

Looking to long term maintenance, the Board commissioned an independent survey for assurance in early 2024. In future, an annual survey, together with the appointment of a Fleet Co-Ordinator (supported by a grant from the Headley Trust) was important in ensuring the high standard of the ongoing maintenance of the vessel. This was important for crew and visitor safety as well as the conservation of the vessels as museum assets.

The third major risk and uncertainty identified was organisational capacity. The museum had a very small staff complement and resilience had been tested in recent months with key staff changes. The Vice Chair noted once more the Board's gratitude to staff. However, this had demonstrated the need for modernising many old established systems as well as contingency planning. In addition, limited management capacity made it challenging to develop projects and implement them. Investment in effective project management was therefore essential for the future. This would also mitigate risks of overreliance on Board capacity and allow the Board to focus on strategic planning and direction, as well as ongoing scrutiny and support of staff and volunteers.

**4. Reappointment of Kara Brydson and Michel Kaiser, for second term**

Approved

**5. Retiral of Trustees (Kevin Dunion, George Lyon)**

Acknowledged with thanks

**6. Election of Mungo Campbell, Thomas O'Connell, Alistair Tomkins, Douglas Beveridge, Elspeth Johnstone**

Approved

**7. Confirmation: Mungo Campbell as Chair; Michel Kaiser as Vice Chair, for 2024-2025**

Approved

**8. Resignation of Jane Ryder as Trustee and Chair**

Acknowledged with thanks

**9. Election of Lord Campbell of Pittenweem as President (2024-2025)**

Approved

**10. Reappointment of Henderson Black & Co as auditors**

Approved

**11. Any other business**

Those attending noted with regret the absence of many Members – either because of summer holidays or due to the commitments of the Boats Club and Rowing Club summer programmes. The incoming Chair, Mungo Campbell agreed that the timing of the 2025 AGM would be investigated with the intention of holding this at the end of the summer.

The Chair expressed his thanks to the retiring Trustees and noted how much he was looking forward to working with the whole community associated with SFM.

The meeting closed