

THE MORAY FIRTH PARTNERSHIP  
("the Partnership")



Company Number: SC196042

**MINUTE of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
of the Partnership held at Great Glen House, Inverness on  
13 February 2008 at 10.00am**

**Present**

Sinclair Young (Chair)  
George Hogg (Vice Chair)  
Peter Tilbrook (Director)  
John Dunthorne (Director)  
George Dobbie (Director)

and other members of the Partnership as shown in the AGM Attendance List (Annex A)

**Apologies**

Mike Comerford (Director)  
Clive Goodman (Director)

Apologies were intimated from other members (see Annex B).

**Notice and Quorum**

Notice of the meeting, copied to members, was taken as read. More than 10 members being present, or duly represented, the meeting was declared quorate and proceeded to business.

**1. Chair's Report**

Sinclair Young gave a brief review of the activities over the last year, and identified some of the work and projects that the Partnership proposed to take forward over the coming year. Future plans included: Moray Firth "Gainsay" Project – the next phase of the 'Hands Across the Firth' project; Sustainable Marine Recreation & Tourism Development project; MFP Annual Conference to be held in May; Eco-schools Project; Expanding the MFP website; as well as continuing work on our Beach Guardians and North Sea Trail projects. It was hoped to reconvene the MF Fisheries Action Group, in light of the Scottish Government's announcement that the Moray Firth was not one of the three pilot Inshore Fishery Groups being taken forward initially.

Formal thanks were expressed to all Members of the Partnership, Staff, MF Action Group members, Directors and to Sponsors for their valued support. The list of core and project sponsors was displayed.

**2. Accounts & Reports**

John Dunthorne, the finance director, gave a brief overview of the accounts for the year to 31 March 2007, which showed a surplus of income over expenditure of £8,805. This compared to a surplus of £3,944 in the previous year.

The Partnership was following a policy of trying to increase funding from projects, and to reduce reliance on a few key core funders. However, the small team of staff restricts the

number of projects that can be successfully managed in any one year. This means that there remains a need for core funding. The Scottish Government was considering proposals for central funding of coastal partnerships, but no clear outcome was in sight.

The balance sheet showed the Charity had total reserves of £97,523, compared to £88,718 in the previous year. These reserves included £59,828 of "Restricted Funds", which related to cash received in advance for projects, i.e. money that was ring fenced for those projects and not part of the general funds available to the Partnership. "Unrestricted Funds" related to reserves for core activities totalled £37,695.

The Board was satisfied with the results for the year and the level of free reserves, which were in line with its policy to have a cash buffer equivalent to at least three months' ongoing operational costs.

John Dunthorne explained that, due to unprecedented delays, the accounts had yet to be signed off by the independent financial examiners. The draft copied to members had been approved by the Board, examined, and was expected to be signed off in the next day or two without amendment. He asked members present to accept the accounts on this basis, with the proviso that, in the unlikely event of any significant change being proposed by the independent financial examiner, the revised version would be copied to members for approval.

**Resolution 1** - To receive the statement of accounts of the Partnership for the period ended 31 March 2007 and the balance sheet as at that date, with the reports of the Board of Directors and Independent Financial examiners thereon. (subject to above proviso)  
Resolution 1 was passed unanimously. (proposed by Roger Goodyear, seconded by Cath Millar)

### **3. Election of Directors**

The Partnership can have a maximum of 7 directors in terms of its Articles of Association. Each year, one third of the directors must retire by rotation. Peter Tilbrook and Michael Comerford were due to retire by rotation, and both had indicated that they did not wish to stand again. Peter was retiring and Michael was unable to continue due to very significant business commitments. Sinclair Young expressed gratitude to both Peter and Michael on behalf of the Partnership for their valued service and commitment and their very significant contributions to the Partnership's work over the years.

Two formal nominations to join the Board had been received, from Maureen Macmillan and Gordon Mackie. The Board expressed its support for the candidates, both of whom had particular experience and knowledge that would be very valuable to the Board.

**Resolution 2** – To elect up to two directors to the Board.

Both candidates were elected unanimously.

Maureen Macmillan – Proposed by Peter Tilbrook Seconded by Brigitte Geddes

Gordon Mackie – Proposed by Roger Goodyear Seconded by Cath Millar

### **Composition of Board following the election:-**

Sinclair Young (Chair), George Dobbie, John Dunthorne, Clive Goodman, George Hogg (Vice Chair), Maureen Macmillan and Gordon Mackie.

### **Appointment of Chairman**

In terms of the Articles of Association, the Chair is elected annually by the Board at its first meeting following the AGM. Any current director is eligible to stand. Members would be advised who had been appointed Chair in the following MFP newsletter.

#### **4. Appointment of independent financial examiners**

**Resolution 3** - “to authorise the Board to appoint independent financial examiners to the Partnership and to fix their remuneration” was approved unanimously.

Proposed by Brigitte Geddes Seconded by Howard Loates.

It was noted that if the Partnership’s income exceeded £250,000 in 2007/08, the accounts would require a full audit, rather than the current independent financial examination as allowed in terms of the Companies Acts

There being no further business the official part of the meeting was declared closed and members were then invited to take part in an informal discussion session. The Chair thanked Scottish Natural Heritage for allowing use of its boardroom and for arranging a tour of the building for members.

#### **Informal Discussion Session**

Stewart Campbell expressed an interest in the Moray Firth Trail/ North Sea Trail/ North Sea Cycle Route, and a desire to see a continuous trail, which would be particularly beneficial to local residents as well as becoming an added tourist attraction with attendant economic benefits.

Kathryn Logan explained that the 26 partner areas in six North Sea countries that developed the North Sea Trail had agreed to form a new Association. This would ensure a continuing legacy for the North Sea Trail project and allow members to continue to maintain the web site, and to develop and promote the trail on an international basis, with a desire to “fill in the gaps around the coast” as well as to increase all abilities access. It was noted that the only long distance section of the Moray Firth Trail was the 50 miles of the Moray Coast Trail, developed by Moray Council, and there would be significant difficulties in obtaining funding for the development of new parts of the trail, as well as practical issues of accessibility and safe routes.

Stewart Campbell thought the Core Paths Plan showed routes that were almost joined up and it was suggested that if the Moray Firth Partnership could promote the vision of a joined up trail, and have potential / desired routes included on future local plans, this might encourage relevant groups to help to fill in the gaps.

**There being no further items raised for discussion, the meeting closed and members were invited to join a guided tour of Great Glen House and to partake of light refreshments.**

**Annex A – Attendees included :-**

Moray Firth Partnership Annual General Meeting 13 February 2008

Sinclair Young (chair)	Moray Firth Partnership - Director
John Dunthorne	Moray Firth Partnership - Director
George Dobbie	Moray Firth Partnership - Director
George Hogg	Moray Firth Partnership - Director
Peter Tilbrook	Moray Firth Partnership - Director
Kathryn Logan	Moray Firth Partnership - Manager
Dominic Shann	Moray Firth Partnership - Staff
Frances Bell	Projects Assistant
Irina Birnie	Aberdeenshire Council
Alisdair Cameron	Black Isle Partnership
Stewart Campbell	Alness Community Association
Christina Chisholm	Highland Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers
Brigitte Geddes	Geddes Language Services
Robin Gilbert	HIE Inverness & East Highland
James Grant	Roskill Farm
Roger Goodyear	Scottish Traditional Boat Festival
Wendy Harpe	Beauly Angling Club
Richard Jenner	Chanonry Sailing Club
Howard Loates	SeaWatch
Gordon Mackie	Director nominee
Ken Maclean	Inverness Harbour Trust
Joan Maxwell	Highland Nordic Walking Group
Gordon Menzies	Ness District Salmon Fishery Board
Cath Millar	Burghead Headland Trust
Jim Miller	
William Stobo	Kyle of Sutherland Heritage Society

**Annex B – Apologies included:**

Hugh Blakeney	Ness District Salmon Fishery Board
Lord Burton	Ness District Salmon Fishery Board
Sally Cartwright MBE	
Mike Deeming	Maritime Coastguard Agency
Chris Ferne	Dornoch CIC
Isobel Gregory	Sandhaven & Pitullie Harbour Trust
Keith Gregory	Sandhaven & Pitullie Harbour Trust
Therine Henderson	Sandhaven & Pitullie Harbour Trust
Tom Inglis	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Ben Leyshon	Scottish Natural Heritage
Wing Cmdr. McCracken	RAF Kinloss
Ian Macfarlane	Macfarlane Shipping Company
Peter Macintosh	Sky Watch
Maureen Macmillan	Director nominee
Sandy Park	Highland Council
Doug Ritchie	
Angus Ross	
William Shearer	Salmon Net Fishing Association of Scotland
Jenny Sleeman	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
John Summers	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Vanessa Halhead	