

Central Scotland Smallholders Association

Committee Meeting
31st December 2009
Inch House, Clackmannan

Present:

Graham Johnson (Chair), Andrew Sharpe (Treasurer), Carol Johnson (Secretary), Anne Massie (Committee Member).

Apologies:

Clare Hebbert (Committee Member), Karen Evans (Committee Member).

Tabled Papers:

- Minutes 18/11/09
- Development Plan
- Agenda
- Equipment purchase list
- Bio-diversity flyer for event on 20th Jan
- Membership list
- Contact list

Graham opened the meeting by thanking Bob for hosting the meeting and providing refreshments. The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

1. Minute of meeting 18th November 2009

Agreed.

2. Matters Arising

Equipment Purchase - Andrew confirmed that he had purchased a dry plucker for £860 as part of the poultry project. The funding needs to be spent by the 31st March and it was felt that we will be able to pay for all the desired equipment within timescale. There followed a discussion about the most suitable incubator and it was agreed to buy the smaller Brinsea 190 which would be more portable. **Action** Andrew. Public liability insurance was discussed and Bob agreed to seek informed/legal advise about whether a disclaimer would negate the need for insurance. **Action** Bob. Discussion around equipment purchase to be continued online between committee members. recognition, education. It was felt that the Association might have to continue attending events with their stall.

3. Financial Update

Nothing changed much since AGM. **Action** - Andrew to contact Annie regarding auditing of books. It was agreed to add Graham Johnson and Bob Menzies as signatories for bank. **Action** - bank forms to be processed by Andrew. It was

noted that the change of name had yet to be confirmed by the Royal Bank – therefore cheques have been returned to Andrew by the bank. **Action** – Andrew to submit cheques once name change has gone through. **Action** – Andrew to request new pay-in books for signatories.

4. Development Plan

There was a discussion about the need to retain members and prevent those who only join for one year and don't renew. These are usually the ones who don't regularly participate in CSSA meetings or activities. There followed a discussion around the proposed development plan and how we could continue to improve and develop the Association to maximise funds, membership, and awareness of the Association and its values. It was agreed that members would be consulted in the form of a questionnaire, asking for comments and ideas for 2010 to help prepare the training programme, event programme and provide useful information. The website was seen as an area that could contain more information for members such as useful contacts and advice, it was hoped that the information gathered from the questionnaire could be worked on and then made available to members through the website.

Action – Bob to present Development Plan to members at meeting on 20th Jan and attempt to seek further involvement from those out-with the committee.

5. Venue

Although the most used venue in 2009 continues to be the most ideal for location, it was felt that continuing to use the home of member without recompense was unfair. **Action** – Annie to check with Sandy to see if she was willing to host meetings in 2010. It was agreed if this was the case then Sandy was to receive a payment of £25 per meeting to compensate her for cost of providing refreshments, heating, etc.

6. Event Programme

Suggestions from the committee were:

- Approach Callum to see if he would be willing to do a talk on photography techniques.
- Visits to alpaca farm – **Action** Andrew to arrange
- Daye also volunteered to host a visit – **Action** Andrew will contact Daye to arrange
- Community Farm – **Action** Carol to contact to arrange

The committee would await the results of survey – **Action** Carol to present to members is completed on the 20th Jan meeting.

7. Members

There followed a discussion about how to improve benefits to members. It was felt that new members could be contacted by a member of the committee and encouraged to attend meetings or contact members who are close to them. It was acknowledged that Carol required support in this area and Annie and Graham offered to help.

8. Next Social Event

Despite the hard work that Rosemary had done to organise a biodiversity meeting on the 20th of January it was felt that this would have to be postponed to the March date. The two members who agreed to speak (RSPB and Bat Group)

would require a donation to their group funds of £25 each – it was therefore felt that the committee required further time to advertise this event as widely as possible in order to maximise attendance. It is hoped that in doing so non-members would attend who would be asked to make a donation to funds and help supplement the cost of the speakers. This was seen as a potential area for fund raising, and it was suggested that perhaps a series of speakers could be arranged on this theme (this is the international year of Biodiversity) throughout the year. Current arrangement to be cancelled and re-arranged for 24th March. The Association might also have a stall at the event to sell merchandise and drum up membership.

9. Training

It was noted that there was no external funding to supplement the training programme this year, unless the committee decide to seek new sources of funding and are successful in doing so. In the meantime it was felt that members and non-members might still be willing to pay for relevant training. The survey would give us an idea of what members were interested in – would there be the same interest if we repeat the courses that were ran last year? It was also felt that we should learn from last years training and work further with Oatridge to ensure that the training met the needs of smallholders. **Action** – Carol to include training questions in survey and Andrew to work on developing the Training programme. **Action** – Bob had previously offered to host a pruning workshop and would explore setting this up.

10. Areas for further discussion

- Timebank, groats, wwoofers. Getting help around your smallholding.
- Mentoring for members.

11. Date of next meeting:

10/2/10, 14/4/10, 16/6/10, 11/8/10, 13/10/10.