

Minutes of Scottish SPCA AGM meeting – Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

At 12 noon on 20 June 2023 in person at Radisson Red, Finnieston Quay, 25 Tunnel Street, Glasgow, G3 8HL and virtually on Zoom.

Welcome

Fiona MacLeod welcomed everyone to those joining in person and online. She confirmed that the meeting was being recorded and thanked everyone for their support throughout the year.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Board Director Steven Naismith and various members and partners.

Adoption of the Minutes of the AGM held on 12 May 2022

The minutes of the AGM held on 12 May 2022 were agreed, approved, and accepted as a true and proper record.

Receive and Consider the Society's Annual Accounts for Year Ended 31st December 2022 together with the Directors Report and Auditors Report

Fiona MacLeod advised that the Annual Review and Accounts for 2022 were available through the website and that the Annual Accounts and Directors Report for the Society and its subsidiaries, Braehead Enterprises, Glasgow Dog and Cat Home and Scottish SPCA Property Trustees Ltd were available online. She confirmed that the accounts had been audited by Henderson Loggie.

Fiona MacLeod proposed that the annual accounts and directors report for 2022 be adopted. As no members disagreed and these were accepted.

Retirement and Appointment of Directors

Fiona MacLeod announced that under the memorandum and articles of association directors Alan Biggar and Susan Johnstone were retiring and Susan Dunsmuir and Lisa Davidson had stepped down from the Board and thanked all for their excellent and dedicated service.

She also welcomed five new Board members, Steven Naismith, Helen Page, Willie Finlayson, Edwin Alford and Caroline Trotter who had joined during 2022 and early 2023.

Fiona MacLeod asked if anyone was opposed and as no members disagreed these appointments were accepted. She noted that our articles require us to have not less than six and not more than twelve directors at any time and this brings us to ten directors, with a wide range of skills, in many core areas.

Re-Appointment of Auditors for 2023 and Authorise the Directors to Agree the Remuneration of the Auditors

Fiona MacLeod recommended the reappointment of Henderson Loggie as the Society's Auditors for 2023 and authorisation of their remuneration As no members disagreed and they were accepted.

Introduction to the Board

Fiona introduced the board noting that they are all passionate about animal welfare and feel privileged to be able to serve what is one of Scotland's largest and best-loved charities. The trustees possess a range of core skills of veterinary care, financial management and investment and have added areas such as marketing and technology expertise. She noted the key focuses of the board are:

- Making sure our people, and the animals they care for, are kept safe
- Ensuring our long term strategy delivery
- Ensuring the brand and reputation of the Society is enhanced at every opportunity in order to raise maximum funds for the team's great work.
- Providing robust challenge on financials – and continuing our track record of real value for money delivery for our supporters and members.
- This means investing our precious funds wisely through these most challenging times
- Retaining, supporting and challenging a strong senior leadership team.
- Overseeing colleague and volunteer offers
- Having no more hidden heroes by raising our profile.

Celebrating our Fantastic Staff & Volunteers

Volunteers

Kirsteen Campbell (CEO) reported that we were so lucky to have so many amazing volunteers, to whom we are very grateful and in awe of everything they manage to accomplish and there isn't time to thank each individually. In 2022 847 Scottish SPCA volunteers gave us 21,695 hours which, in a cost-of-living crisis, is truly remarkable. She thanked each and every volunteer..

Long Service Awards

Turning to the long service awards and initially those with 20-years' service, Kirsteen paid tribute to Ian Futter, June Chalcraft, Sarah Millar and Louise Turkington.

Congratulating Linda Knox with 25-year service and Anna O'Donnell and Linda McLean for their 40-year service.

Kirsteen also congratulated and thanked Sharon Comrie, who was in attendance, who recently retired after an incredible 50 years of service with the Scottish SPCA.

Looking Back on 2022 and our focus in 2023

Looking back on 2022 Kirsteen Campbell noted that she is incredibly proud of all we achieved in 2022.

At last years AGM she proudly introduced our 10- year strategy and ambitions for animals. A year when animals and people have never needed us more. A year when we experienced rising demand, costs and pressure on our income.

She is grateful to each and every member of our Board, team, volunteers, partners and supporters who have enabled the society to rise to the challenge and not miss a step. Responding to animals and people in need while effecting systemic change that will make lives better forever.

She paused for a short video that highlighted the many achievements of the Society in 2022.

2023 and beyond

Kirsteen noted that the Scottish SPCA is truly special organisation. She don't know of any other organisation like ours that delivers the breadth and depth of services hour after hour, day after day. Our people never stop. At the start of the year calls to give up an animal had trebled and now they have quadrupled. People are struggling and that means the animals in their lives are too. They don't want to give up their much loved companions but they feel they have no choice. Feed your pet or feed your family – that's a very real decision being made by thousands of people across Scotland every day.

Calls of deliberate cruelty have also risen at an alarming rate with our inspectors and animal care teams and vets seeing animals in increasingly poor condition. And it's not only companion animals, wildlife is struggling due to habitat loss and climate change.

While farmed animals and farmers face the challenge of ever-increasing costs, new pressures from climate change and land transformation and trade deals from overseas where welfare frankly just isn't as good.

As Scotland's only all animal emergency service, when someone calls from any corner of Scotland, be it about companion animals, wildlife or farmed animals, we are compelled to respond. We have no choice and it's our privilege to do it. And that's what makes our role – and the impact we have – so exceptional.

That means we truly are in the eye of the storm. A storm of rising animal welfare issues, rising costs and pressure on income. All alongside the need to retain and motivate a wonderful team in a challenging job market where pay inflation is running high and it's difficult for charities to keep pace.

The society will cope with this situation by remaining resolutely committed to delivering on the ambitions in our 10- year strategy.

She paused for a short video on the Society's strategy.

We started 2023 knowing what our priorities were and what year one in our strategy delivery looked like. We've already reprioritised to make sure we're focusing on the right things in this time of crisis!

Accelerating activities where that's the right thing to do and being laser focused on cost management and generating income to allow us to be a sustainable organisation.

She summarised three broad areas:

First - We're rescuing more animals than ever. Our animal rescue officers and inspectors responded to over 86,000 reports of animals in need in 2022, an average of over 230 per day. Answering the call when we're needed. Helping animals in crisis. From disrupting the puppy trade to helping injuries on the side of the road. And we're working smarter. Reducing days in care. Expanding fostering. Working with our partners. Delivering services in communities that are most required by that community. A relevant and modern charity.

Second - We're protecting animals, sooner and earlier. Over 250,000 people were supported by our free Animal Helpline in 2022. We're getting ahead of problems. Providing the support and services that help people and animals stay together. Educating and inspiring and equipping people with better animal welfare advice. Breaking the link between abuse of animals and human directed violence. Working with

our partners and providing services that are relevant to every community, where animals and people are experiencing different challenges.

Third - We're using our expertise to lead the debate. We engaged with a myriad of MSPs, MPs, partners, national and local government and more throughout 2022. Shaping thinking. Developing new ideas. Influencing changes in legislation and policy. Making sure life tomorrow is better than today. Driving systemic change.

Kirsteen handed over to Chief Inspector Laura McIntyre to talk about her frontline experiences.

Kirsteen thanked Laura and noted Laura's speech highlighted that to achieve all this, the society needs help. She noted that with limited resources we provide an all-animal protection and rescue service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Savings thousands of animals' lives and protecting even more from cruelty and neglect.

She noted that one thing I sometimes feel gets taken for granted is the broader value we provide to society and local communities. Educating, advising and helping families and communities on so much more than animal welfare – supporting them with broader social and personal pressures in their lives that could be impacting their ability to care for their cherished pets, not to mention the support and knowledge we provide to protect wild and farmed animals.

It used to cost around £16m-£17m to operate every year. That's now £20m-£21m. And that's £20m of generosity with no government funding. We'll do everything we can to adapt and innovate our services, be as efficient as we can and keep our cost base down. But we must grow our income and build our brand, and we must diversify and engage a broader audience in our work and garner support. We are everyone's Scottish SPCA and we need everyone's help.

We are fully prepared for the fact that we won't earn enough income to cover our costs in 2023. In fact, we think there will be a £3m gap. And we forecast that situation may persist for a few years, all be it we'll be doing everything we can to close that gap.

We're fortunate to have a board of trustees who recognise that in times of crisis it's important to focus on the right things and fund the right things. A board with a broad range of skills and experience who are bringing great challenge and support to our charity.

It therefore won't be a surprise to you that we are investing in our brand to help us grow our supporter base and fund our work. We recently launched a new brand territory and fundraising campaign and I'm proud to show you that today. It centres on our role as rescuers. And that means getting ahead of the problems I outlined as well as being responsive.

Kirsteen paused for the society's brand video.

Kirsteen hands back to Fiona.

Fiona noted that last year she talked about one health triangle and the key relationship between people animals and the environment. This was magnified in lockdown and has become even more compelling during the cost-of-living crisis. Our colleagues and volunteers are working tirelessly to keep people and their animals together through Pet Aid, which is soon to be expanded to include basic veterinary care. We know there are so many mental and physical benefits a pet can bring to people's lives and believe that's more important than ever during challenging times like the current cost-of-living crisis.

Fiona noted last year she spoke about how incredible our team and volunteers are- 12 months on I'm running out of superlatives to describe their passion, expertise and commitment.

She noted that the Board have been fully engaged in challenging and interrogating the current position and future plans and are supportive of the direction of travel.

Some tough choices have had to be made to support the organisation through a time of huge increases in demand for our services coupled with challenges from cost of living in terms of our traditional income sources.

The board have approved a call down on funds to ensure we operate with good cash headroom as the society delivers its essential strategic changes to get ahead of animal welfare issues. As well as approving a long-term plan which is both achievable and ambitious and lays out a clear roadmap to make us as efficient as effective as possible in delivering our lifeline services. We will do this while growing our net income by at least 20%. She noted this won't be easy AND yet it's essential.

The Scottish SPCA team is Proud of our 184 year past and very focused on our future.

Fiona ended by summarising her five key messages for supporters and partners:

1. Make no mistake the current situation is an animal welfare CRISIS- with demand for our services skyrocketing and cost of living hitting us and our supporters. Our year on year costs have increased by £3million.
2. The whole Scottish SPCA team is totally dedicated to bringing their skills and experience to beat that crisis on behalf of all Scotland's animals.
3. Our 10 year strategy is robust and has been universally supported by all our stakeholders. We are accelerating elements of that strategy in 2023 and 2024 including areas such as PetAid feedback and veterinary, fostering and of course fundraising. We are working smarter and using technology to help us.
4. As a Board and Senior Leadership, the last thing we want to do is cut back on lifeline services – especially during a time when people and animals are most challenged. So we are prepare to use our invested funds to help cushion this crisis. We need supporters help and that of Scotland's businesses and trusts and generous philanthropists.
5. So while we are judiciously using our invested funds to help cushion this crisis- We are reaching out and need YOUR help- and that of Scotland's businesses and trusts and generous philanthropists as well as our absolutely phenomenal monthly supporter base.
6. We must stop being “silent heroes”. People expect we'll always be there as Scotland's Only All Animal Emergency service. The amazing work we do is often taken for granted, or people wrongly assume we get government funding. We are in every community in Scotland every day making the lives of animals and people better.

Closing

Fiona closed with a special thanks to everyone for making the AGM happen and to everyone for attending. The meeting was then brought to a close.

Signed: Chair

Date: