

**The Bike Station/ Recycle-to-Cycle Ltd  
Minutes of Annual General Meeting  
Sun 13 January 2019**

**Location:** Edinburgh Bike Station



**Chair:** Alan Brown (AB)

**Acting Secretary:** Shane Buckeridge (SB) Minutes

**Also Directors present:** Kim Harding, Markus Hiemann, Chris Horne

Alice Lyall, Alistair Lees (AL)

Apologies received from: Chris Brace & Ian Maxwell

**Staff in attendance:** Sasha Taylor (CEO) Steve Hynd SH (EBS Manager Mark Sinclair MS (PBS Manager) Rich Beard (EBS Workshop Manager), Ruairidh McGlone (Development Manager), Gordon Archibald (Mechanic), Devald Kiss (Mechanic) Andy Wolfe (Dr Bike)

Volunteers attending: Danny McQueen, John Fairgrieve, Colin Dunn, Tim Simons, Richard Hessey,

Interested public attending: John Askham, Paul Copper

AB welcomed everyone & apologies (above noted)

**Previous Minutes** of AGM 13 November 2017 accepted as accurate. (Please note hard copies for next one need to be available for attendees)

### **Chair's report**

It has been another challenging year for the Bike Station, funding as it does its fixed overheads from seasonally fluctuating trading and grant income. Our managers have put in place a flexible and dependable workforce that is able to respond to these demands and to the stringent financial climate of the retail and charity sectors.

Despite the challenges we have highlights to be proud of, notably increased trading income from the Perth branch due to the new premises and staff there becoming more focussed on customer needs in what is a very different setting to Edinburgh.

Sales targets for Edinburgh continue to be met and the Edinburgh branch now has a dedicated training suite that offers further opportunities for income generation through delivery of workshop qualifications.

Further opportunities are being explored through the development of sales and hire of electric. The project has also developed an e-bike off-road experience marketed on Airbnb, proof that our staff are looking at new and innovative ways to increase our reach. Plans are underway to explore the viability of a presence in Dundee to coincide with the major regeneration of that city, something the board see as a natural expansion from the Perth base to Tayside's biggest city.

In financial terms the organisation has managed to pay down a significant part of the Directors Loans as only around 15% of the original loan is now left to pay over the next financial year. The year hasn't been without its difficulties. The Treasurer stepped down from post in January 2018, leaving us with a gap in financial processes. A previous treasurer responsible for the setting up of the project kindly volunteered to be co-opted on a temporary basis in order to 'steer the helm' whilst a more permanent post holder can be recruited. We hope to have a replacement in post before the end of 2018.

Cash flow issues remain a challenge when trading slows down over the winter months and a range of options are being considered to respond to this. The current board has become more active in terms of engagement with the finances and day to day issues at the pro-

jects with specific board members offering support and mentorship to key managers. Our senior staff appreciate working more closely with the board.

The board has recognised that in order for the organisation to move from surviving to thriving that there is a gap in the current management structures. With this in mind we have recruited a Chief Executive Officer to help consolidate the successful aspects of business and to explore opportunities for expansion that will bring in not just more revenue but a more robust, stable business

### **Treasurer's Report**

AB read out the following from our acting Treasurer: :

My apologies for not delivering this in person, due to the pressure of other work.

The 2017-18 accounts show that the Bike Station had an operating surplus of £60.857 for that financial year. While this surplus is a welcome sign after the problems of previous years, it is still very important that the organisation develops a sufficient reserve fund in order to safeguard us against seasonal cash flow issues and to provide a buffer against any reductions in trading or grant income.

The managers and board continue to keep a close watch on income and expenditure against targets, and the performance in the first 9 months of the current financial year is satisfactory, although the next quarter is always our most challenging one.

In this connection during 2018 we started using new accounting software which should provide management information more readily, the EPOS computerised tills in Edinburgh that were destroyed in the fire have been restored and a new chief executive is in post.

Challenges during the year ahead include deciding whether to maintain the trading company alongside the charity and therefore keep completely separate accounts throughout the year. There is a continuing need to ensure that the organisation is not liable to charge VAT on any of our sales, to make sure that all our activities in Edinburgh and Perth are producing an appropriate margin while still operating in a charitable manner by providing affordable refurbished bikes and cycle training, and exploring new sources of finance including gift aid on donated items.

While I have been happy to act as treasurer on an interim basis, I look forward to handing over to someone else who can spend more time and has greater accountancy knowledge.  
Ian Maxwell 10/1/19

Thanks were expressed for Ian stepping into the role at a really important time for BS & for his work throughout the year.

ST circulated copies of the Auditor's accounts for 2017/18 which were formally accepted by the board.

### **Staff Updates:**

SH discussed key issues for EBS including the growing importance of e-bikes as future donations & the expert knowledge required in dealing with these & the need for specialist training needed for existing mechanics. For the 17/18 period this saw the move back to original premises following post fire refurbishment & this created the opportunity to alter the layout to make it a more comfortable & appropriate space for staff & customers alike. AL asked about the impact of competitors including cycle hire schemes now in operation.

MS discussed the challenges in the current financial climate. All PBS volunteers passed on their appreciation for the opportunities that PBS has provided. (It was noted that there are approx 9 regular volunteers) He also mentioned creative ways they are considering for using the space to help with community engagement inc the pop up restaurant in the previous year. He hopes these kind of initiatives help grow awareness amongst the local population.

ST welcomes the opportunity to be part of BS and appreciated the warm welcome that's e has received & now approx 12 weeks into post as CEO. In this period she reports focusing

on getting a snap shot of BS business and engaging with the various stakeholders to understand their roles. She is now exploring ways to improve the organisation's running & considering ways to increase BS's impact more widely to make sure that we are in a better position financially to deal with an increasingly competitive market.

## **Board Elections**

As per usual protocols all Directors formally stood down & all were noted as wanting to stand again for another term with AB expressing his interest in continuing as chair & SB highlighted that Office Bearer positions would usually be agreed at next formal meeting of Directors (**which will be Thurs 7 February at 6.45pm at EBS**)

AOB

Discussions took place about the two parts of Bike Station: the charity & the limited company. As there was good representation from volunteers at the meeting, discussions took place about the value that volunteers bring and the need for BS to better promote its charitable aims more generally especially in their dealings with the public (e.g. when collecting donation bikes) and for us to find better ways of stating our charitable work (rather than just the commercial activities)

Also there seemed to be a sense of disconnect by the volunteers from the core communications at BS. KH mentioned high value donations & the need to get gift aid sign up by donators –this may also serve as an opportunity for BS to promote its charitable aims. As there is a planned Development day on Mon 21 Jan (10-4pm at EBS) it is hoped that there will be good representation from all BS stakeholders including volunteers to help raise these issues. A staff member mentioned difficulties in the sharing of Directors minutes & difficulties due to not having access to Bike Station email & shared drive. ST agreed to explore ways in which the information can be routinely cascaded to all of those interested.

A volunteer mentioned some inconsistencies in protocols about scrapping bikes (i.e. on some occasions they are scrapped and on others they are kept) RB explained that we are subject to the vagaries of space to accommodate bikes. Paul Cooper mentioned that as an 'outsider' he felt that it was challenging to 'sell' BS to his colleagues & so we need to better ways to communicate with the outside world. ST responded to say that this is an important issue and we need to agree the future direction (to be explored further at the Development day)

SB agreed that minutes would go to all of these that requested them in the attendance sheet that was passed around. AB then closed the meeting with the attendees having social time.

Minutes taken by Shane Buckeridge

13/1/19