



CULTURE, HERITAGE & ARTS ASSEMBLY.

ARGYLL & ISLES

Annual General Meeting

29.09.2020 via Zoom

MINUTES

Present: Alasdair Satchel, Alex Mcewan, Anne Cleave, Arlene Cullum, Brian Barker, Caitlin Hegney, Claire Mackay, David Ross (Independent Examiner), Eleanor MacKinnon, Ellen Potter (Trustee), Giles Perring, Iain Johnston, Councillor James Anderson (Trustee), James Coutts (Communications Co-ordinator), Jen Skinner, Jill Bowis, Jo McLean (Chair), Joe Traynor (Trustee), Kathleen O'Neill (Development Manager), Lesley Burr, Linda Battison, Liz Gaffney-Whaite, Mary MacCallum Sullivan, Morven Gregor, Naoko Mabon, Seymour Adams (Secretary), Steve Eccles.

Apologies:

Karen Dick

Willie Orr

David Price (Trustee)

1. Introduction

Jo McLean welcomed all attendees to this, the first AGM of the organisation.

2. Zoom meeting housekeeping

James Coutts explained how the virtual meeting would be run.

3. Annual Report outline

Jo McLean said that CHARTS had run as a SCIO for a year, but that had been preceded by four years of development work which had resulted in a much fuller understanding of the sector. However, the knowledge base was always expanding and she urged members to share information and perspectives with the Board. She extended her thanks to Board members - in particular to Lesley Burr and David Price who had left the Board during the year – and the Kathleen O'Neill and all those

who had contributed to projects. Networks were being strengthened all the time, and the year had seen successful partnership working with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, AITC, ABMHF, Calmac, Sustrans, Glasgow School of Art, and – very significantly, with Argyll and Bute Council and Creative Scotland.

4. Accounts

David Ross (MacKay & Co) presented the accounts, which were stored in Zero as part of the organisation's virtual office. The accounts were straightforward, as all income had been in the form of grants (though the presentation of these had been updated to reflect the split between the Council and Creative Scotland contributions). The scale of what had been achieved within these resources was set out in the Trustees' report. Overall, it had been in his opinion a good first year.

5. Development Report

Kathleen O'Neill said that, initially, her remit had been to help embed the new charity (to set in place firm foundations), and this included to develop a suite of policy guidance with Trustee, now Vice-Chair, Seymour Adams. There were now 16 policy documents in place which took into firm account best national practice, covering all potential aspects of member support, Conflict of Interest and working with communities, to strengthen, cultural outputs with members across Argyll and Bute.

The sector-recommended vision of the CHARTS charity was greatly ambitious and to meet objectives it was continually reliant on funding - and ever more-so in such an increasingly, challenging, economic climate. The organisation was nonetheless committed to developing *innovative* organisational infrastructure, to connect, promote and support arts, heritage and culture, through working closely with our members.

During the first year:

- 1) CHARTS had managed to strengthen operational communications and support, by implementing a paid, Steering Group, comprised of invited professional leaders in the cultural field and geographically spread across the four Council Community Areas.
And with the focused addition of Islands representation, to affect joined-up thinking at local development level and aiming to meet objectives of the Scottish Government National Islands Plan.
- 2) It had also managed to support the linkage of Dunoon Burgh Hall and Screen Argyll, based in Tiree, through funding from Youthlink Scotland (Cashback for Creativity) to increase communications and skills building through film and

other related media; this brought together young people from the mainland and islands to share creative and community interests. A live streamed exhibition-preview event at Dunoon Burgh Hall attracted around 2,500 viewers in virtual attendance. For this project, CHARTS worked closely with Alex McEwan of Albatross Arts which gave -Bronze leading to Silver -award status- to some young people. This project resulted in CHARTS becoming an Arts Award Centre, for accreditations in arts and cultural leadership, from Trinity College. A service we can now offer ongoing, with Alex, funds permitting.

- 3) The organisation had continued to work closely with Argyll and Bute Council, and was able to bring a **'first'** to the region earlier this year: CHARTS worked with the Council and Creative Scotland to manage, and provide artists support for, the Visual Artist and Craft Makers Award Scheme – becoming newly acquainted regionally, with a strong national initiative.
- 4) Building the profile of members had been prime concern during the year: Wander Argyll, a visitor attraction campaign, was carried out with Sustrans during the summer of 2019. Orchestrated as a pilot scheme this was recommended by the Steering Group for development as a year around brand building, pan-Argyll, initiative. The consumer interface otherwise encouraged collaboration with Cal Mac, inviting artists to Glasgow's, Royal Exchange Square, Art on the Square Market, with take-up from Cowal and Tighnabruaich artists and makers, and dedicated attendance from a visual artist travelling to take up the opportunity from Jura.
- 5) Building on potential for outward facing work CHARTS had been invited by the Council to be part of the Argyll and Bute Integrated Tourism Group – building relationships with colleagues across the transport and economic tourism sector including the Argyll and Isles Tourism Cooperative and looking forward to the potential of some strong close working with AITC in the future.

Turning to the present, it would be clear without saying, that since Lockdown CHARTS had been presented with a very different ball park. These pandemic times had signalled a new stage of development – and one to which board and staff were wholly committed to moving through and had adjusted our programming accordingly-

- 1) Wander Argyll, becoming impossible as planned for the summer of 2020, to grow as a pan-Argyll brand with support to a myriad of live events, had been required to be transformed through digital development, which began to strengthen prospects for Argyll's branding and member profile building – given public health safety guidelines. Our Comms Coordinator James, thankfully with us since early this year, has been helping members develop improved profiles, creating regular member articles, and providing one-to-one social media support sessions. Adding to resources available

on the website James was currently developing a 'cookbook' addressing member needs –in response to all feedback as a long-term resource.

- 2) Since lockdown CHARTS has also offered weekly online meeting sessions (primarily with me) to discuss member's immediate issues for address – these are still available twice weekly, during the day or evening to suit.
- 3) In support of Gaelic arts and heritage CHARTS had recently implemented a national awards scheme working in partnership with Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Two awards had been offered to date, through a project which celebrates and commemorates the life of St Columba – linked to the breadth of the Bòrd na Gàidhlig campaign: Colmcille 1500. This scheme would run until the end of 2021 in tandem with the development of a Gaelic Policy for CHARTS, already underway.
- 4) Further, building network benefits CHARTS had secured funding from the Creative Scotland Create: Networks fund, to enable the development of micro-networks across the region, to provide support to local creative and cultural collaborations, or 'micro-clusters', to essentially deliver projects for places and communities. This was being supported by Dr Michael Pierre Johnson, an Arts and Humanities Research Council, Innovation Leadership Fellow, in the Creative Economy, at The Glasgow School of Art's Innovation School through his research project The Value of Creative Growth. Michael was currently delivering one-to-one mentoring sessions with members using approaches which have been providing guidance for next stage development for their enterprises, as well as heightening our organisational insights on members' needs, ambitions and situations.
- 5) The Objectives of CHARTS as set out in its Business Plan were similar as between the Arts and Heritage sectors, but its analysis and activities in relation to the latter were so-far less advanced. This was not to say that nothing had been achieved in relation to its Heritage remit: 26 museums and heritage sites were covered in the Wander Argyll pilot exercise during 2019, and over 20 such organisations were signed up as members. Plus, the Colmcille Legacy Award currently running with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, included a specific award for a Heritage-related project, in addition to overall heritage emphasis, by nature of commemorating St Columba across the arts-awards.

Nevertheless, it was true to say that the Heritage remit of CHARTS was at present underdeveloped and, recognising the potential it holds, a Trustee Heritage Support Group had been recently established in support of the Development Manager's role, thus extending capacity of a very small staff

team, and with the key objective of strengthening and deepening our partnership building role in relation to Heritage in Argyll and Bute - first by improving its mapping of the sector and quantifying its contribution to the tourist economy, and then by improving the effectiveness with which it is promoted and marketed, to the benefit of those working in the sector.

- 6) Fundraising for long-term strategy was now of pressing priority, to maximise ongoing potential and continue to support the CHARTS vision. By examining the wealth of evidenced progress and develop a targeted and strategic fundraising plan for CHARTS was in preparation – this would aim to gain, and re-gain, ground as needed, particularly in areas of Heritage, Youth Arts and regarding risk ongoing to Steering Group sustainability, as an essential and paid communications infrastructure model for members, with excellent area representation and results to date.

6. Special Resolution: To adopt the Constitution of CHARTS, as amended

Seymour Adams outlined the proposed changes to the constitution:

Para 6: This had previously excluded the possibility of making payments to members under any circumstances, which produced perverse results when applied to initiatives such as the VACMA and Year of Colmcille award schemes. Following legal advice, it was proposed to exclude payments to members “...except where this is done in direct furtherance of the organisation’s charitable purposes.”

Para 13: The requirement for a member to be “a member of any of the geographic or cultural hubs in Argyll and Bute” was to be replaced by a simple residence qualification.

Para 14: The exclusion of employees from eligibility for membership was being removed.

Para 70.1: A requirement to keep a record of trustees’ contact details was being added.

Seymour Adams moved the Resolution, which was seconded by Anne Cleave. 21 voted in favour. As this represented more than two thirds of those virtually present, the changes were duly made.

7. Election of Trustees

Jo McLean stood down as Chair. Seymour Adams proposed her reappointment, which was seconded by Ellen Potter, and carried. Seymour Adams, Ellen Potter and Joe Traynor stood down as trustees. Jo McLean proposed their reappointment *en bloc*, which was seconded by Anne Cleave, and carried

8. Questions and Answers from the Floor

Alex McEwan questioned the age qualification of 16 in the new para 13 of the constitution: persons younger than this might have a significant contribution to make, possibly via a youth reference group. He suggested the Argyll and Bute Youth Forum might have ideas here.

Jill Bowis drew attention to the opportunities currently presented by the UK Government Kickstart scheme.

Jo McLean said that the Board would give further consideration to both suggestions.

9. AOCB

There being no other business, Jo McLean thanked James Coutts for his facilitation, and closed the meeting.