

Scotland's International Development Alliance Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 29 November 2023

DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting was held online at 13:00 GMT

Attendees:

The minimum quorum of 10% of full membership was met.

Amy Blake, Benjamin Carey, Brian Baldwin, Cathy Ratcliff, Chad Morse, Chris Hegarty, Christopher Mutawali, Elizabeth McKernan, Geoffrey Care, Jamie McIntosh, Jamie Morrison, Jo Vallis, John Nelson, Keeley Hazelhurst, Lesley Torrance, Mark Langdon, Martin Rhodes, Moira Dunworth, Philippa Ramsden, Rachel Tainsh, Samantha Ross, Yulia Nesterova, Zoe Hopkins.

Alliance Staff – Ashley Taylor, David Cunningham, Deirdre Muldowney, Frances Guy, Francis Rodgers, Louise Davies.

1. Introduction

Cathy Ratcliff, Chair of the Board of Trustees welcomed members to the AGM and provided outline and rationale for the meeting. Attendees were informed that the meeting would be recorded for minute taking purposes and that there would be a number of polls throughout when items needed to be voted on.

2. Minutes Of Previous AGM

Minutes of previous meetings were approved by the AGM;

2022 AGM minutes were proposed by Geoffrey Care, Bressay Outreach; seconded by Rachel Tainsh, Mellow Parenting.

3. Trustees Report

Cathy introduced the Trustees report noting it technically covers year 22/23 and the full report can be found in the annual accounts.

She shared the main points of the report and shared some updates for the current financial year.

Cathy reminded the AGM of the charitable purposes of the Alliance:

- To contribute to international development by encouraging communication amongst people and organisations in Scotland committed to the elimination of inequality, poverty and discrimination worldwide;
- To increase understanding of the international development sector in Scotland;
- To build the strength and capacity of the international development sector in Scotland; and
- To provide a forum to discuss and present opinion on key issues of international development with decision-makers within Scotland, the United Kingdom and beyond.

Cathy noted that period marked a return to in person meetings and that the Alliance have sought to deliver quality hybrid events, to enable the best of personal networking whilst also encouraging diversity in participation including alternative views from elsewhere in the world. The Annual conference last year, and indeed this year at Dynamic Earth are good illustrations of this commitment.

During 22/23 the Alliance started a specific strand of work to encourage active and responsible global citizenship which has included outreach and work with diaspora communities.

The Alliance carried out a programme of webinars and peer sessions on a wide range of issues including; equitable partnerships, decolonising monitoring and evaluation, inclusion and diversity, communicating climate change. In the period the new members hub on mighty networks was launched. While most members have joined the hub it has not (yet) proved to be the vibrant place of communications hoped for. Staff will be continuing to seek to re-energise the space so that we can all share ideas better. Hopefully members will all be able to help in this endeavour.

The Alliance has continued to provide the secretariat for the Cross Party group on international development, The Alliance has also continued work to influence a potential wellbeing and sustainable development bill as part of ongoing work to promote policy coherence including work to influence the review of the National Performance Outcomes.

The monthly newsletter continues to increase its reach.

Staff participated in a global pilot of a 4 day week which essentially involves doing the same amount of work in 80% of the time. The board have endorsed this approach the learnings from which are available to be shared with members.

The Alliance also partnered with the Scottish Council for Global Affairs to run some stakeholder workshops for the Scottish government on what their proposed feminist approach to global affairs might entail. This helped bring in some extra income.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report was presented by the Treasurer, Keeley Hazelhurst.

Key take aways from 22/23 are that it was a challenging year, funders have been reluctant to commit to long term funding.

Due to membership changes and cost controls, we have managed to end the year with a small increase to our unrestricted reserves. We continue to hold more unrestricted reserves than required by our reserves policy, and are not holding any restricted reserves. There were no queries from the Independent Examiner, the CEO and finance manager have continued to manage finances well and there are no concerns about financial sustainability or financial management.

The most challenging area is continued reliance on Scottish Government and FCDO/ BOND grant funding which represent the majority (and restricted) income sources. . Unrestricted income has increased over the period. The majority of unrestricted is from membership fees, followed by advertising and events income.

The key cost to the Alliance is staff costs, which had been increased as a result of a new position fully funded by additional resources from the Scottish government. Other management and programme costs were being kept under control.

Unrestricted reserves have increased mostly due to increased income from sponsorship.

There remain challenges in the short term nature of grants and lack of unrestricted income. Some actions to tackle these challenges are: planning to diversify income, increasing consultancy work and identifying corporate sponsorship.

5. Presentation of Annual Accounts 2022-2023

The annual accounts were approved by vote.

Geoffrey Care queried what consulting work might entail. Frances Guy explained that the Feminist Foreign Policy funded work was the example that demonstrated potential options.

6. Appointment of Independent Examiner

It was proposed that Paul Clelland be appointed again to examine 2023-2024 annual accounts. Paul's appointment was approved by the AGM.

7. Approval of draft changes to Articles of Association (acronym and staff eligibility for board membership)

Benjamin Carey asked about the period of time required between staff member joining Board. The Chair explained it was to allow a cooling off period between staff moving from operations to Board level.

The proposed amendments were approved by the meeting.

8. Confirmation of membership fees (no change)

FR confirmed that membership fees will remain the same with no increase for 24/25 planned.

9. Election of trustee(s)

CR thanked all Trustees for their work and commitment during the year, in particular Jon Novakovic and Amy Blake (who are standing down this year). The two candidates for this year's two available vacancies on the Board: Benjamin Carey and Chris Hegarty introduced themselves. There were no objections so both were welcomed onto the Board.

10. Election of Chair

Members gave approval for trustees to elect the Chair at the next Board meeting.

11. AOB

There was no other business raised.

The meeting was then concluded.