



southern uplands partnership
living land, living community

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 2.30 PM
ONLINE, ZOOM PLATFORM

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Approval of Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting on 17 November 2020
3. Matters Arising
4. Report by the Convenor on the Activities of the Partnership
5. Report of the Auditor / Independent Financial Examiner and
Receiving of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021
6. Retiral, Re-election and Election of Trustees

Retiral	None
Re-election	Standing for a Second Term
	Cllr Katie Hagmann Ms Sarah Macdonald Dr Joan Mitchell Prof Dave Roberts Cllr Mark Rowley
Election	None
7. Appointment of Auditors / Accountants
It is proposed that the current arrangements are continued –
JRW Group, 19 Buccleuch Street, Hawick, TD9 OHL
8. Any Other Competent Business

The formal business of the meeting will be followed by presentations by

Morag Paterson on 'Communities and Forestry Plans'

Nic Coombey on 'PLACE (People, Land, Art, Culture, Environment) in the Biosphere project'

**The Southern Uplands Partnership
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on
Tuesday 17 November 2020 at 2.00 pm
Online, Zoom Platform**

Present – Members

Sheila Adams	SUP Finance and Office Manager
Catherine Barlow	SUP South of Scotland Golden Eagle project
Anne Brown	NatureScot
Jamie Carruthers	
Niall Corbet	NatureScot
Emily Cropton	SUP Destination Tweed Connecting Threads project
Ed Forrest	SUP / Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere
Barnaby Fryer	SUP / Loch Ken Trust
Anna Gardiner	
Leys Geddes	
Donald Greig	SUP Talla Hartfell Wild Land Area Initiative
Anna Johnson	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Judith Johnson	Langholm Initiative
Sarah Macdonald	Trustee
Chris Miles	Trustee (Convenor)
Karen Morley	Trustee
Joan Mitchell	Trustee
Simon Pilpel	South Lanarkshire Council
Mark Rowley	Trustee (Scottish Borders Council)
Mary-Ann Smyth	
Charles Strang	Trustee
Pip Tabor	SUP Partnership Manager
Emily Taylor	Trustee (appointed at meeting)
John Thomas	
John Thomson	
Marion Thomson	
Nicola Toneri	
Will Williams	Trustee

Present – Trustees

Bridie Ashrowan	Trustee
John Esslemont	Trustee
Claire Pencak	Trustee (appointed at meeting)

In Attendance

Richard Baines	Logan Botanic Garden
Nick Halfhide	South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) (Speaker)
Rachel Hunter	SUP Destination Tweed Connecting Threads project

1. Apologies

Katie Hagmann	Member and Trustee (Dumfries and Galloway Council)
Oliver Mundell MSP	Member
Peter Pitkin	Member
Dave Roberts	Member and Trustee

Dr Chris Miles, Convenor, welcomed everyone to the online meeting and advised that the session was being recorded.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting and last Annual General Meeting of 2 October 2019 and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting of 2 October 2019 were agreed as a true record and were moved for approval by Dr Joan Mitchell and seconded by Mr John Esslemont.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 2 October 2019 were agreed as a true record and were moved for approval by Dr Joan Mitchell and seconded by Mr John Esslemont.

There were no Matters Arising.

3. Report by the Convenor on the Activities of the Partnership

Dr Miles referred to the Annual Report, which had been produced some months ago and was summarised within the Accounts and also published as a separate document and available electronically on SUP's website. Hard copies are available on request from the SUP office. The document was not read at the meeting to allow more time for the Guest Speaker and discussion, but questions or feedback on the report were invited by email to Pip Tabor (piptabor@sup.org.uk).

4. Report of the Auditor / Independent Financial Examiner and Receiving of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020

The Auditor's Report was included in the Accounts and a detailed Audit Report had been provided to Trustees. This was the second year that an audit had been undertaken, due to turnover being over £0.5M during the financial year to March 2020. Due to Covid restrictions, this had largely been carried out electronically, requiring the Finance Manager to email numerous documents and evidence to JRW, Accountants.

The draft accounts had been available to view on SUP's website for more than 21 days. Dr Miles advised that the Accounts had been discussed in detail at the Board meeting earlier in the day. The annual accounts showed a surplus in 2019/20 and the Company being in a healthy financial position, with cashflow due to grants in arrears being the only issue of concern. Trustees and the Auditors were comfortable that SUP continues to be a going concern. There were no questions or observations from members. Mr Tabor was pleased to receive a clean bill of health from the Auditors and recorded his thanks to Ms Adams for her hard work in managing the very complex accounts and grant claims. Dr Miles echoed the thanks of the Board.

The Accounts for 2019/20 were formally approved by Directors and proposed as such by Mrs Karen Morley and seconded by Dr Mary-Ann Smyth.

5. Retiral, Re-election and Election of Trustees

Mr Charles Strang had completed two three-year terms on the Board. Dr Miles thanked Mr Strang for his valued contribution to SUP over the last six years. His questions from left-field, challenges, ideas and sense of humour would be missed on the Board.

Dr Mitchell took the Chair for the re-election of Directors.

Dr Chris Miles and Ms Bridie Ashrowan had completed one three-year term and were standing for a second term. Both had indicated their willingness to serve a second three-year term and this was approved by members.

Dr Miles resumed the Chair.

Nominations for election had been received Ms Claire Pencak and Dr Emily Taylor. No objections were received to the nominations, which were approved by members and the nominees were duly elected.

The new Trustees have a wealth of experience in their fields and were welcomed to the Board. Other Directors can be appointed throughout the year, where there are vacancies.

6. Appointment of Auditors / Independent Financial Examiners

It was proposed that the current arrangements with JRW Group as Company Accountants and Auditors, are retained for the forthcoming financial year, which was approved.

7. Any Other Business

Mr Fryer thought it would be interesting for the following year to see how the organisation is responding to the climate emergency. Dr Miles noted this suggestion and advised that Trustees had approved a Strategy for SUP at the Board meeting. Discussions will be taking place with project staff to take forward an Operational Plan arising from this.

Reflecting on the year since March 2020, Dr Miles noted that it had been dominated by Covid but that SUP had managed to steer its way through. On behalf of the Board, he acknowledged the hard work and goodwill of staff, working through this difficult period. He was also grateful to have come through it without losing staff and continuing to operate relatively unscathed. The Strategy is a positive way forward for the organisation.

Mr Tabor congratulated Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere on becoming fully independent, thanks to a significant funding investment from South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE). Dr Miles echoed this good news for the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership, which SUP was instrumental in getting off the ground and had supported for many years.

Following the formal business of the AGM, Dr Miles introduced the Guest Speaker as Mr Nick Halfhide, Interim Chief Executive of South of Scotland Enterprise.

Mr Halfhide gave a short presentation on the work of the new Enterprise Agency covering:

- South of Scotland Enterprise Act 2019
- Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway – population of 264,000
- Operational Plan for 2020/21
- Action / Corporate Plan 3 – 5 years
- Consultation Strategy
- Regular Review of Plan
- South of Scotland Opportunities
- Working in Partnership Building Relationships
- SOSE – Unlocking Opportunities
- Contacts
- Questions

Dr Miles thanked Mr Halfhide for his informative presentation. He noted that SOSE was the result of many years of campaigning and hoped that Southern Uplands Partnership would form a relationship going forward.

Topics raised in questions and observations from the audience included:

Jamie Carruthers – private housing and working with landlords

John Thomas – land area and Rural Land Use Strategy

Bridie Ashrowan – Community wealth building

Leys Geddes – Windfarms

Barney Fryer – Inclusive Growth

Joan Mitchell – Sustainability agenda

John Thomson – Operation of SOSE

Emily Cropton – Cultural activity

Mark Rowley – SUP's involvement in getting environment and amenity enshrined in SOSE

Chris Miles – Looking ahead 5 years to difference in South of Scotland

Dr Miles thanked Mr Halfhide for his interesting talk and discussion with members and thanked the audience for their questions and input to discussion.

The meeting closed at 3.23 pm.