

Millennium Farm Trust AGM 2.10.20 4pm by ZOOM

Present

Tina France	Helen Wilson	Tim Freathy
Peter Turner	Jeremy Massey	Mike Jesky
Amanda O'Neill	Andrew Hunter Chairperson	Nicola Hunter Secretary
Louisa Wells Treasurer		

No apologies were received

Chairman's Report Andrew Hunter

Welcome everyone to our annual general meeting. Normally we would be at the farm for this occasion enjoying summer sunshine and a BBQ, and recognising our farm helpers' achievements. However these are not normal times and we must all do our best to reduce the risk of spreading the virus that has and is changing the way we go about life. So I hope that we will be able to complete the annual general meeting procedure satisfactorily via zoom today. The period we are reporting on today is the year to 31st March 2020 and it was only over the last couple of weeks of this period that our activities at the farm were restricted by covid-19 measures.

Farm Helper attendance grew to an average of 11/day Tuesday to Friday and a Monday session started in January bringing the total to well over 200 helper sessions/month.

Our policies and procedures are well developed and documented and our financial monitoring and reporting is healthy and up to date. Our Farm Helpers progress and achievements are well recorded using the RARPA framework and the standards achieved on the farm were recognised by the award of the CareFarm UK kitemark scheme.

Staff training during the year included advanced tractor driving and Makaton. The health and safety audit and risk review found the farm to be well managed with risks appropriately identified.

The farm continued to develop with investment in paths, an extension of the workshop roof over the machinery park, plumbing and worktops in the outdoor kitchen, a field shelter, fencing and a new mower.

Produce , including amazing pumpkins, bulb fennel, onions and garlic sold well from the Veg Shed; Christmas tree sales raised £3k profit; contract work made a good contribution in terms of fund raising and variety; and the workshop produced attractive birdboxes, bird tables and bug houses. Henry Driver, artist in residence, held workshops with our farm helpers and volunteers which were well received.

Thanks to Tim our Director for leading the Trust with vision, energy and care for everyone involved; to our staff Lacey, Fergus, Rhys, Carol and Jayne; and to the team of volunteers particularly Paul, Ann, Simon, Peter and Helen who help out on a weekly basis.

None of this would happen without the hard work and skill of our trustees and a big thank you to Jerry and Lou for the fundraising work, Helen for organising the volunteering and HR; Amanda and Nicky for guiding us through the quality assurance and Lou for being Treasurer which is a lot of work behind the scenes. Welcome to Peter who has joined the trustees alongside his work on the farm.

Looking to the future the big and immediate issue will be staying safe from the covid-19 virus. Social distancing on the farm in the summer is relatively easy – everyone loves being out and about when the sun is shining! For the winter we will need more indoor space and how this is achieved is currently occupying the trustees. We much appreciate the work that Architect Peter Cox has put in towards developing facilities fit for the future, whatever that brings

Treasurers Report Louisa Wells

Louisa requested approval of the accounts for Accounts y/e 2019 and that we continue to use Paul Raven as accountant for next years. This was proposed by Louisa wells and Seconded by Tim Freathy

Louisa also presented accounts for 2019 to 2020 as 2 documents. These were circulated in advance of the meeting. Louisa talked through the figures.

Income

Income from farm helpers was up by 28% Fundraising this year was down meaning our overall increase in turnover was up by 22% to £247,376.

Expenditure

The cost of staff info has increased as we have more farm helpers. We have had a large spend on uniform and marketing as we have done work on the website but otherwise spending was as budgeted.

We now have a reserve of £40,000 which was prudent in terms of coronavirus pandemic. We had made the decision to keep on and pay staff for lockdown, but with furlough payments and continuing payments from clients our reserve was not used. This has meant that we have come out of the lockdown in a healthy financial position unlike other charities who have had to close. Our debtors are well managed and account for around one months fees. We have a financial committee who meet every 4-6 weeks and review the accounts. Big financial decisions are made by the whole board at quarterly meetings

Louisa summarised that MFT is in a very health financial position at the end of the 2019-2020 trading year.

Election of officers

Andrew Hunter stood down as Chairman and Jerry Massey was elected unanimously by the meeting

Nicola Hunter and Louisa Wells continue their positions as secretary and treasurer and this was agreed by the meeting.

Vote of Thanks Jerry Massey incoming Chairman

Jerry said that he was taking over from Andrew Hunter as Chairman into an organisation that was in a strong position. He reported MFT is financially strong had excellent facilities, strong leadership from Tim Freathy, an excellent team of staff and volunteers and strong partnerships with local organisations. This had not been the case when Andrew joined as a Trustee in 2010 and later took on the role of chairman. Andrew's commitment and strong leadership has played a key role in the transformation of the farm to what it is today. It has been an incredible period of transformation and Andrew should be proud of his achievements. Jerry reported that he believed MFT can now offer a well managed and rewarding introduction to the world of work to our farm helpers. Jerry thanked Andrew for all he has done and particularly for being an excellent chairman.

Tim presented a short film made by the farm helpers giving a vote of thanks to Andrew for his chairmanship and presenting him a bird table they had made.

AOB

Mike Jesky asked if MFT has reached its full capacity now

Tim replied that it was currently very close with 10- 12 people Tuesday to Friday but only 5 on Monday but these places were likely to be taken soon. He expects that by this time next year we will have reached capacity for current facilities Tim reported that MFT has a 3 year plan which includes increasing the indoor space so that we can have more farm workers and maintain social distancing while the pandemic is with us. This is particularly important for our less mobile/ wheelchair users as they need to be kept warm in the winter. With the increased capacity and the partnerships we are building with local organisations such as priory school and WS Training, Tim hopes we can realise a vision of providing extended services for farm helpers within a partnership based support system.

The meeting closed at 16.35pm