MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BIRKS CINEMA HELD AT 7.00PM, 20 AUGUST 2024

1. Welcome

As Chairman, Brett de Woody, welcomed everyone to the Meeting including Board members Muriel Dunbar, Debs Johnstone, Jenny Minhinnick, John Kirkland, Paul Newman. Management Team representatives Fiona McEwan and Patty Havey Minute taker, Karen Banyard

Apologies were received from Board Member, Kate Isles, and 12 members.

A record of attendees was circulated for completion by those present.

Debs Johnstone and Jenny Minhinnick have tendered their resignation from the Board and had indicated they would step down as from the AGM meeting.

2. Minutes of the last AGM

These were proposed for acceptance by Brian Hawkins, seconded Fiona MacEwan.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that the financial statement presented at the 2023 AGM had shown a poor financial situation. A subsequent local fund-raising appeal had raised £50k, most of which is still available as memberships subsequently increased and a good summer with excellent films reprieved the situation. However this was followed by the cost of living crisis.

Fiona has pursued various fund-raising opportunities and has secured funding from SSE's Griffin Fund for capital improvements to extend the cinema first floor.

The cinema has been taking films after initial release and is now showing a greater variety of films - 220 individual showings. Headphones have been purchased; plumbing and leaks repaired, outdoor seating with parasols acquired and some solar batteries replaced.

The management team has provided stability in 2023-24 and volunteers have played a massive role in the cinema including such areas as building maintenance, finance and café operations. Volunteers have been offered First Aid and Health & Safety training to support these roles.

The number of activities held in the cinema has grown (book club/talking pictures etc).

4. Financial report

Jenny Minhinnik presented the 2024 accounts to date which show only a £7k gap between income and expenditure, much improved on the previous year though there was a 10% decrease in cinema sales (possibly due to a lack of popular new films available) but an increase in café/bar sales.

The cinema operated a five-day week apart from the peak summer weeks when there was seven-day operation. Consequently, administrative costs decreased due to less staffing hours and tighter controls on utilities had proved successful. As a result of these measures expenditure was down 35% and overall profits increased by 23%.

Reserves available at year end: £991,865

Jenny recommended the accounts produced by Morris & Young for acceptance.

Brett stated that an alternative business structure is being researched to ensure that we have the most appropriate legal entity.

He stated that with no outstanding films coming up and the cinema industry being in slight decline, there will be future challenges which the Board must prepare for going forward but that the cinema could not continue operating without its volunteers, staff and Board members, support of local businesses and ongoing sponsorship.

The Chairman's Report was approved by Patti Walker-Booth and seconded by Patty Havey.

5. Board Membership

The Chairman reported that Rebecca Threlfall had resigned as a Trustee earlier in the year. Debs Johnstone and Jenny Minhinnick have registered their resignations as from the AGM. All three were thanked for their efforts as Trustees.

By statute, three Board members must resign each year. John Kirkland had been co-opted to the Board earlier in the year and by a show of hands was appointed to the Board. A show of hands also agreed to the appointment of Ian Henderson (cinema volunteer with experience in banking/finance) and Shonaig MacPherson (cinema volunteer with experience in governance/funding) to the Board of Trustees. The Chairman welcomed the new members to the Board.

6. Appointment of Accountants

The re-appointment of Morris & Young as accountants was approved unanimously.

7. Open Questions/Comments

The contribution to the cinema both during 2023-24 and in previous years by the late former Trustee, Mary MacDougall, was noted with gratitude.

Lilla's recruitment and motivation of volunteers was noted with thanks.

Screenings of rugby/sports events have been well attended though no admission charge can be made. Donations are welcomed and screenings resulted in increased sales revenue. Jenny noted that these screenings generate a community feel-good factor and welcomed more future events. Screenings of the Six Nations/World Cup will continue and the importance of the Book Festival was acknowledged.

TBCL currently enjoys a rent holiday from the Trust for use of the cinema. Were this to have been taken into account then TBCL would be in a loss-making position in FY 2023/24. An application has been made to HMRC and the regulator for one further year of rent-holiday. Plans will be made to increase cinema revenue to enable self-sufficiency and security.

Front of House – Cristina to be congratulated on her strong FOH leadership and maximisation of tourist usage/income to the cinema in August.

Patti Walker-Booth moved a vote of thanks to all volunteers, staff, Trust members, the Trust Chairman with particular thanks to Alison, Fiona, Patty, Lilla and Cristina.

Brett stated that due to other business interests he is to step down as Chairman and thanked his wife for support.

Callum McDiarmid (from a local farming family) has shown willingness to be co-opted to the Board at a future date but was unable to attend the AGM.

The AGM finished at 1946 hours