

Minutes of the Friends of Socotra Annual General Meeting held in Bahrain on 28 October 2018

Present: Kay Van Damme, Dana Pietsch, Miranda Morris, Sabina Knees, Julian Jansen van Rensburg, Hugh Morris, Vladimir Melnik, Marco Livadiotti, Benjamin Carey, Lisa Banfield, Nadine Schneck, Alan Forrest, Dirk van Dorpe, Petr Madera, Fabio Attorre, Peter de Geest, Fared Krupp, Firas Abd Abdelkader, Alfredo Guillet, Wendy Husband, Lura Kasinof, Firas Abd Alkade, Tullia Riccardi, Anton Keuchenius, Anna Paolini, Tarim Contin-Kennedy, Hana Habrova, Petr Vahalik, Salwa Barkwan, Nathalie Peutz.

Apologies: Sultana al-Qu'aiti, Raquel Vasconcelos, Uwe Zajonz, Sue Christie, Isam-Eldin Mohamed Ali, Wolfgang Wranik.

Minutes of virtual committee meeting

The virtual committee meeting minutes were approved. No matter arising.

Minutes of 2017 FoS AGM meeting

The minutes from the 2017 FoS AGM were approved.

Chairman's Annual Report

KVD reported back that the disability project that had to be dropped due to it not being feasible. Cyclone activities in collaboration with ARC WH– Mangrove restoration nursery were ongoing. Partnership agreement with EPA and local associations, west and north. Report by Ismael read by KVD. Information Leaflets: the Arabic version of one leaflet has paragraphs that appear twice, hence longer (MM to check and tell LB). Ismael informed about the Kareefs that were being updated. KVD attended the UNESCO heritage meeting on behalf of the FoS. Vulture day, carried out by the GEF team: FoS contributed by having drawings produced that could be coloured in for kids and this was also put into Tayf. Information leaflets for birds were distributed. All Tayfs were distributed on Soqatra through WhatsApp by KVD. KVD was involved in the preparation of meeting in Bahrain. MOU signed with the ARC-WH to establish a collaboration. Constitution was translated into Arabic thanks to AF and the SHP.

FoS accounts and treasurers Financial report.

HM presented the FoS accounts and financial report (Appendices 1 and 2). The handover to SK. HM reported that there was a need to actively recruit members and for members to pay their subscriptions. Tayf costs are increasing, due to greater length and therefore increased

translation costs. The cost of insurance was questioned and BC has agreed to help HM/ SK to look into whether it is necessary and whether the level of cover is appropriate.

Ongoing and potential projects

Leaflets

MM asked that the printed information leaflets are sent to Soqatra with ISM. JJVR has agreed to ensure this happens. LB stated that now the leaflets are finished. LB also asked to be recompensed for the expense made for their printing (SK to action this).

Decomposable plastic bags

KVD proposed to have a decomposable bag with a FoS logo on sent to the island.

Mangrove

KVD proposed that there be a continuation of the mangrove project to contribute to the nursery. This is to be decided next year.

Vulture Day

KVD proposed to support the 2019 vulture day, printing material etc. \$100 seconded by HH.

Darwin book

The use of the Darwin book for education to be discussed with Ali Mahross (MM to action).

Ecosystem restoration camps.

PDG proposed to set up an ecosystems camp, committee agreed for him to be able to chase up and develop a proposal for acceptance next year.

Soil management project

LB and DP proposed a soil management and growing of fruit and vegetables project. To supply more details for future project.

Tayf

AF to discuss printing costs in Mukalla, for Aa further batch of Arabic Tayf 15 (to supplement those printed for the AGM) with SB and others. (MM to action).

LB mentioned that it may be a good idea to use electronic copies through WhatsApp and other social media. JJVR supported this. LB to action.

JJVR proposed to reduce the contacts page and to have a contents page. DP mentioned an impressum. JJVR mentioned that keeping a kid's page in the centre pull-out would be a good idea. AF mentioned that the design of Tayf cannot have a template to keep it fresh. Ali Mahross to be consulted as to what should be including in Tayf. MM to action. AF proposed a welcome address by the Chairman in Tayf and to have a contents page, with projects. This was agreed. Editorial, AF has been agreed to be editor for 2019. HH to be a chase up for

articles. MM proposed that we get articles in time, end of May deadline, so it is possible to get these to Isam on time for translation. This was agreed by all. JJVR reminded all those who agreed to write a piece for Tayf that this would be again required.

FoS Meeting 2019

Sicily (ML) – Unanimous vote for Sicily. Dates: 28-29 September 2019. JJVR to check this date with ML.

Facebook

LB to give KVD Admin privileges so he can also post and keep the FoS Facebook page updated.

The Executive Committee for 2017 - 2018:

Fabio Attore, Lisa Banfield, Salwa Barkwan, Sue Christie, Peter De Geest, Hana Habrova, Isam-Eldin Mohamed-Ali, Dirk Van Dorpe, Julian Jansen Van Rensburg, Sabina Knees, Vladimir Melnik, Hugh Morris, Miranda Morris, Dana Pietsch, Kay Van Damme and Raquel Vasconcelos

The Election of Office Bearers of the new Executive Committee.

Secretary_DP proposed LB, this was unanimously accepted.

Editor_AF elected unanimously, LB and HH to continue as support.

Vice Chairman_PDG was proposed by JJVR. This was unanimously accepted.

Chairman_JJVR proposed by KVD and seconded my MM.

Honorary President_KVD proposed by MM and seconded HM.

Focal point between FoS and ARC WH, KVD proposed by MM and seconded by PDG.

The meeting also noted that Sabina Knees is the Treasurer of FoS (as voted for at the previous AGM).

JJVR reminded all committee members that they had agreed in the last AGM to write up a short list of responsibilities. To be actioned by all committee members.

The Election of Trustees of the Friends of Soqotra.

Alan Forrest, Lisa Banfield, Sue Christie, Julian Jansen Van Rensburg, Sabina Knees, Tony Miller, Hugh Morris, Miranda Morris, Dana Pietsch, and Kay Van Damme

Any Other Business

LB proposed that it would be good to use Google Docs or Google Questionnaire on votes or questionnaires to reduce the email volume. This was agreed by all. LB to action.

Membership fee increase. DP voted to increase membership fees. JJVR proposed the idea of a standardised fee for one currency seconded by MM. A vote for an increase to 30 GBP was carried with majority agreement. A single date for the renewal of membership was proposed by DP. It was agreed that this may make things easier although HM noted that an earlier attempt to implement this had encountered difficulties. HM and SK to look into this. Soqotri wishing to be members would not have to pay any membership fee.

APPENDIX 1

FRIENDS OF SOQOTRA (UK Charity Number 1097546)

Accounts for **01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017**

BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNTS ON 01/01/17 **£8517.45**

INCOME	[01/01/2016 to 31/12/2016]	01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017
Membership subscription	[£1231.65]	£1082.04 (A)
Donations Cyclone	[£8793.87]	£0.00 (B)
Donations (other)	[£98.94]	£85.00
Interest	[£3.95]	£3.69
Totals	[£10128.41]	£1170.73

EXPENDITURE

Projects	[£9661.75]	£0.00 (C)
Website Domain	[£0.00]	£0.00 (D)
Tayf costs	[£770.01]	£1190.57
	(Tayf 12) (E)	(Tayf 13) (F)
Insurance Premium	[£239.48]	£505.10 (G)
Auditor's fees	[£0.00]	£75.00 (H)
Admin. Costs	[£0.00]	£28.40 (I)
Totals	[£10671.24]	£1799.07

BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT ON 31/12/17 **£7889.11**

Accounts audited and original signed by Jackie Barclay

Notes accompanying the accounts for the year 2017

- (A) £1082.04 is 12% less than 2016.
- (B) No further donations were made to the *Cyclone Chapala Appeal* in 2017.
- (C) None of the sum from the *Cyclone Appeal* (£1918.03) remaining in the FoS accounts during 2017 was actually spent in 2017. Nor were there any other projects funded in the year.
- (D) The Website Domain is not an annual expenditure.
- (E and F) The total for *Tayf 12* had been £877. Thus *Tayf 13* cost 36% more.
- (G) These insurance premiums were for 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- (H) Whilst the Auditor had been paid £50 (for both 2014 and 2015) in August 2016, this was not reimbursed until 2107 – and the £75 includes payment for auditing the 2016 accounts.
- (I) This was mainly for postage and photocopying.

N.B. Although the end of year balance in the account was **£7889.11**, this sum included money still due to be paid out following the *Cyclone Appeal* (see (C) above). Thus the actual sum at the end of 2017, available to FoS, was **£5971.08**.

HCTM, October 19th, 2018

APPENDIX 2

Friends of Soqotra *UK Charity Number 1097546*
FINANCIAL REPORT for the year 2017 – (for the AGM, Bahrain, October 2018)

The accounts relate to actual receipts and expenditure within the year and are presented as in previous years. The opening figure (£8517.45) is that which concluded last year's accounts. Last year's figures are in given in square brackets.

Income: - In 2017 **subscriptions** dropped by 12% compared with 2016 (down to £1082.04). This fluctuation is not new: many members pay for more than one year at a time; however, a significant number of 'active' members are in arrears with their subscriptions. There are currently 38 [30] fully paid-up members with a further 45 'active' members [90] in arrears with their subscriptions. This total, 83, is significantly less than for 2016 [120], because several of those previously deemed 'active' have no longer been included in this category. No further **donations** to the Cyclone Appeal were made after 2016. Other donations included the fees paid to the auditor of the accounts. The bank account continues to receive only a small level of **interest**.

Expenditure: -No further funding of the Cyclone **Projects** occurred in 2017 - the final payment being made in the summer of 2018. Two projects had been voted for at the 2017 AGM. Unfortunately, neither of them led to any actual funding in 2017. The *Disabled Children's Project* proved impossible to support, and *Printing of the Leaflets and Information Sheets* was not funded in 2017. **Tayf costs:** *Tayf 13* cost £1190 (c.f. *Tayf 12*, which cost a total of £877). This increase was due to an increased word count (up 23%), to a poor rate of exchange, and to increased costs incurred in printing and distributing the Arabic version –together with problems involved in transferring the money to Al-Makalla. As previously noted, producing *Tayf* does, however, remain the principal activity of *FoS*. Whilst the **insurance** is paid each November, the premiums for 2016/17 and 2017/18 were both reimbursed in 2017.

Balance at the end of 2017: The balance in the account on 31/12/17 was **£7889.11**. This sum included the final payment still due from the Cyclone Appeal (see above). Thus, the actual sum available to *FoS* at the end of 2017 was **£5971.08**.

At the time of this AGM, in Bahrain, *FoS* has a credit of £6554 [last year, after deducting the sum held for the Cyclone Appeal, the figure was £6041]. It is evident that, in order to fund its core activities, those wishing to support *FoS* should both encourage new members and pay their annual subscriptions.