



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST HELD AT STRATHERRICK PUBLIC HALL, GORTHLECK AT 7.00pm ON WEDNESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2017**

**Present** Peter Faye, Zoe Iliffe, Sharon Ferguson, Ken Sinclair, Frank Ellam, Stewart MacPherson, Garry Page, Hugh Nicol  
**Chair** Zoe Iliffe  
**In Attendance** Steven Watson (Project Co-ordinator), Laura Walker-Knowles (Administrator)  
**Apologies** Julie Murphy

**Declarations of Interest** None

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that Sharon Ferguson and Steven Watson would be in attendance later as they were attending a Rural Communities Convention at Drumnadrochit.

**2. MINUTES**

Subject to the amendment of item 12, the words "*section 58*" should read "*section 56*" Frank Ellam **proposed** and Ken Sinclair **seconded** and the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 4 October 2017 were thereafter **AGREED** as a correct record and **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair.

**Matters Arising**

**Grants Team Review**

The Grants Team review remains ongoing. For the new large grants application documents, the amendments discussed at the last meeting have been made and the documents are ready for circulation as required.

**Knockie Trust**

The Finance Director has responded to the Knockie Trust.

**Amendment to Articles**

The Resolution and amendments to the Articles have been drafted and circulated to members with the Notice of AGM and forms.

**Action  
by**

### 3. FINANCE

- (a) The Finance Report was noted and the Finance Director updated the Board. A total of £9,355 grants had paid out in October. Two student grants remain outstanding but are accounted for.

There will be approximately £175 interest for October in addition to the balance of £610,782.12. The Finance Director ran through expenditure vs budget for the first quarter. The group grant expenditure is slightly overspent, however, there remains a substantial budget. There has been very little spend in relation to the larger projects, but there remain provisions for Foyers Bay, the Riverside field and the broadband project.

- (b) Administrator's expenses £94.50
- (c) Administrator's timesheet 2 hours over-time
- (d) Project Co-ordinator's expenses £119.84
- (e) Director's Expenses £67.05
- (f) Book-keeping October 2017 £256.00
- (g) Calico, £24.00
- (h) Metal Foundry, plaques £135.96
- (i) A9 invoice £1,534.00, preparation of accounts, payroll fees and advice

The Board **APPROVED** the payment of the invoices (b) to (i) above.

The Finance Director took the Board through the Management Accounts. The accounts covered the first quarter of the financial year. Grant income has been accrued over the year, with provision for any grants received in advance and accruals for those yet to be received. The grant income is index-linked and therefore the Dunmaglass payment will be higher this year, by almost £2,500. Inflation is running at 3% which is to the Trust's benefit.

Interest for the quarter is slightly lower as the Trust has now gone through the peak amount of cash reserves for the year and the amount receivable is starting to reduce.

As previously explained, dividends are reinvested as income in the management accounts.

The Finance Director then ran through the comparatives for the same period last financial year. The grant expenditure for first three months was less due to last year's successful lightbulb scheme and the Community Council's purchase of the defibrillators. Administration and other expenditure was similar.

The funds had a surplus for the period of £29,000 and the balance sheet shows the land at original cost and depreciated value for

printers and equipment. The Legacy Fund investment cost to end of September was £191,334. The debtors are higher than this time last year as the Dunmaglass payment has not yet been received, it was expected in October but SSE had some IT problems and have indicated the cheque should be with the Trust during the first week in November.

The Board asked about the Glendoe payment and the Finance Director explained it was spread evenly over the year.

The Board then reviewed the Project Co-ordinator's current situation and salary. It was noted that, in November, it would have been one year since Steven went on sick leave and seven months since a phased return to work. In July the PCO had returned to work four days per week. It was noted that the PCO was still undergoing some treatment, which had started in October, which meant that there were some days that he was not available to work. However, it was also noted that, based on recent time-sheets, Steven was actually now working full-time hours around his treatment days. The Board were reminded that, as permitted by his contract, his working time is not evenly spread over a standard five day period and he is required to work some evenings and weekends. The Board were concerned however to ensure that Steven was not working too many hours against his doctor's advice and also discussed whether an occupational health assessment ought to be organised, as it was understood that these assessments were undertaken to assist both employer and employee. The Chair agreed that she would review the situation and discuss the matter with the PCO and report back to the next meeting of the Board.

*Discuss hours with Project Co-ordinator.*

ZI

#### **4. GRANT PROCESS – LARGE GROUP GRANTS OVER £20K**

The Chair reminded the Board that the Trust has the facility to award grants over £20,000, subject to SSE approval of individual applications. The Board discussed documents recently drafted by the Grants Team. These documents were necessary to formalise the previous process whereby, had a request for funding over £20,000 been received, the Trust would simply seek SSE's consent. As SSE were revising their own governance procedures, it had been necessary to create a more formal process for grants over £20,000. The draft documents comprise a Stage 1 Proposal Form, Stage 2 Grant Application and new Group Large Grant Guidance Notes. The forms and notes have been drafted based

on existing SSE forms and it is therefore expected that SSE will agree them as drafted. The Board also needs to ratify the process.

The Board discussed the documents. The Chair confirmed the “list of unable to support” were specific to the large grants and not the other types of grants offered by the Trust.

The Chair ran through the process. A completed Proposal Form would be received from a constituted group and a three Director panel (or an independent assessor) would then review the proposal and decide if it is something the Trust (a) can support and (b) want to support. The proposal is then forwarded to SSE for comment. If SSE agree then the group would be advised that they may proceed to the next stage and submit a full Stage 2 Application. The Application will then be assessed by the same panel of the Trust and the draft Assessment Report would be submitted to SSE. SSE would then need to approve the grant following which it would then to the Trust Board for approval.

The Board asked when the situation may arise that an independent assessor would be required. The Chair explained that if in the future there was no one on the Board with the necessary experience to make the assessment an independent assessor would be required and it also leaves the option open if the Board did not have time to undertake an assessment.

The Board discussed closing dates and whether this process should follow the usual deadlines for grant submissions, given that there may be few proposals for projects of this size the Board decided closing dates would not apply.

The Board **AGREED** and **APPROVED** the new large grant process.

*Circulate final grant documents once SSE approved.*

ZI

## 5. **AGM**

The Chair reminded the Board that the deadline for receipt of nomination forms is 15 November 2017.

An Independent count verifier is required at the AGM to count the members’ votes on the amendment to the Articles. A count will also be required if there are more Director Nominations than vacancies. It was suggested that on the night a non-member present could be asked to perform the count. There was also a suggestion to ask someone from Fort Augustus to come along or Dr Jim Cameron before he is co-opted as Liaison Director.

*Ask Jim Cameron to do the independent count.*

ZI

For the final item on the AGM agenda, to elect/re-elect can be handed over to the Vice Chair as the Chair will have stepped down.

The Board discussed when it would be appropriate to have the questions and answers section and decided that it should take place immediately after the election, but before the Post AGM Board Meeting. This would ensure any current Directors not re-elected would be available for discussions relating to the previous year and the new Board would also be available for those relating to the future.

## 6. UPDATE REPORTS

### (a) Project Co-ordinator

In the PCO's absence the Chair ran through the update report. The Project Co-ordinator has been advancing the new process for grants of over £20,000 and has assisted with the conclusion of one Hardship Grant and is supporting another. PCO is assisting applicants with grant applications and grant questions. There are ten grant applications for allocation in the new round which closed on 23 October 2017, over a range of grant types. PCO attended at the slipway/bay for the first visit by the Marine Consultant, he attends the Community Council meeting and responds to action as required. PCO is producing further written scheme options for the Energy Team to aid discussion. There is limited progress on the road access plan for the Riverside field but the architects have been pushed. PCO has been available for drop-in sessions at Stratherrick Public Hall and continues to keep a profile for the Trust at public events and places and is in the process of drafting articles for use in the forthcoming December edition of the Stratherrick and Foyers news. The Chair reminded the Communications Team that they needed to meet to agree the December Issue's content and to assist the PCO with its production. The Comms Team agreed to meet as soon as possible in this regard.

***Steven Watson and Sharon Ferguson joined the meeting.***

PCO updated on the purchase of Trust woven badges and/or branded clothing. The cost was £48.50 for one branded t-shirt/sweatshirt or £112.50 for fifty woven badges (exc. £12.50 postage and VAT).

The Board agreed to the purchase of 50 badges at a size of 9cm.

PCO is arranging the purchase of a wreath for the Remembrance Service.

*Articles and information for the news to PCO as soon as it is available.*

*Communications team set meeting date.*

*Board  
Comms  
Team*

## **(b) Broadband Team**

The Broadband Team is constantly working on the project and provided an update as to the current position. In light of recent comments received from an Inverfarigaig resident the Board discussed its current working with CFWN and the question of Connected Loch Ness who also advertise a broadband technology known as Whitespace. The Board discussed the Trust's current choice of technology for the project using 'line of sight' technology. It was considered the more economic option and remained the proven technology. It was noted that Connected Loch Ness had some test houses up and running around Loch Ness and were advertising for customers, but so far all were line of site. The Broadband Team were satisfied, and the Board agreed, that CFWN was a tried and tested local company, currently operating their own successful network and therefore this was and remains the preferred choice for the Board and we will continue the roll out across the area.

It was noted that the Trust's initial three 'phase one' base stations were now up and running. There are currently 60 residents who have expressed interest in the scheme with 20 fully connected and using the system.

It was also noted that no real update had recently been distributed to the community and this was a little remiss of the Trust. It was therefore agreed that an article should appear in the next Stratherrick and Foyers News so that the community were aware of progress.

*Publicise local resident interest in the Trust's BB scheme and number of successfully connected residents.*

*BB  
Team*

## **(c) Energy Team**

The Board discussed the pros and cons of a proposal for a new whitegoods scheme. The suggestion was a scheme similar to the energy saving lightbulb scheme. Trust residents with old and/or damaged whitegoods could apply to the Trust for up to £500. The Board requested a more detailed proposal for a future meeting.

*Draft whitegoods scheme proposal.*

*PCO*

## **(d) Foyers Bay Team**

The Bay Team advised the Board that the draft lease has been received by the Trust's solicitors and some proposed amendments

returned to SSE's solicitor. It was noted that the target completion date is 29 November 2017.

The first drawings of the slipway had been received that day. The drawings illustrate a 30m long slipway made with pre-cast concrete. A track and loop design to follow. The Team have been measuring on site for fencing/gate specs.

Scottish Canals have still not released the funds promised. Charles Stephen has been contacted to try to resolve the situation.

*Speak to Scottish Canals in relation to release of the funds.*

The Board also noted that the SSE Sustainable Fund has recently re-opened and submission of bids close in late January 2018. The Team suggested an application be made to the Sustainable Fund.

*Foyers Bay Team to meet.  
Application to SSE Regional Sustainable Fund to be drawn up and submitted*

*Foyers  
Bay  
Team  
(PJF)*

*Foyers  
Bay  
Team*

#### **(e) Liaison Director**

The Community Council had not asked for any items to be discussed at tonight's meeting.

Dr Jim Cameron will be nominated by SFCC to be Liaison Director for the Trust at the AGM.

The SFCC had recently been considering the question of the public toilets at Foyers and whether SFCC should continue to run them. If SFCC require any assistance from the Trust they are aware they can approach as required.

### **7. AOCB**

#### **(a) APPRENTICESHIP**

It was noted that we had received information from Fort Augustus Community Company that a local Company, McInnes are looking for two apprentice plumbers.

*Publicise apprenticeship vacancies.*

*SF*

#### **(b) MEDICAL ADAPTATIONS GRANT APPLICATION**

The PCo is currently assisting a resident with an application under the new scheme. The value of the application is not yet known as detailed information is yet to be compiled by the applicant.

The Board noted that the Highland Council's disabled grant maximum limit has raised from £20,000 to £25,000 so applications received under this scheme may not be as high as previously anticipated.

**(c) UNITS AND LAND AT LOWER FOYERS**

It was noted that CALA has stripped out the unit and completed the work that was required of them. HIE has been slow responding on the Trust's offer, but has been in discussions with the Trust. It has been pointed out to HIE that their Community Asset Transfer literature does state they will consider community benefit in an open market disposal so the Trust awaits a response from HIE.

**(d) LOCAL FOOTPATH MAPS**

The Chair advised that a letter and draft local maps had been received from a Trust member suggesting a more detailed map be created to show the footpaths to the falls, Craigdarroch Hotel, Cameron's Tea Room, toilets, burial ground and other local spots. The Board discussed whether this was something the Trust could support as it was mainly for the benefit of tourists rather than the community (although it would of course assist some community businesses). Directors believed however that one of the local organisations, possibly the Heritage Group, had recently issued a similar map and that there were already maps with the suggested footpaths available locally. The Board also felt that, as the production of a map was mainly for the benefit of tourists, this was not something that the Trust could fund.

**(e) CEILIDH**

The Chair advised that the Cask Strength Ceilidh Band had sent a contract for the provision of a Ceilidh and their travel expenses on 22 December 2017. It was noted that the Band would provide a children's ceilidh from 4pm to 5pm and thereafter an evening ceilidh from 7.30pm to 11pm. Due to the Hall's maximum permitted numbers under their insurance policy, it is expected the Ceilidh should be a pre-booked ticket event with a max of 100 tickets available.

The Board **APPROVED** the quote of the Ceilidh Band of £1,000.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

AGM Wednesday, 29 November 2017, Stratherrick Public Hall.  
Wednesday, 6 December 2017, Stratherrick Public Hall.

*The Meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.*

Signed by Chair

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Date

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