



MINUTES of the MEETING of the STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST held in STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK ON WEDNESDAY 8 July 2015

Present	Graeme Ambrose, Frank Ellam, Katie Ellam, Peter Faye, Sharon Ferguson, Zoe Iliffe, Gordon McAndie, Stewart MacPherson, Hugh Nicol
Chair	Zoe Iliffe
In Attendance	Fiona Ambrose (Administrator)
Apologies	Martin Donnelly

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3 June 2015

Peter Faye proposed, seconded by Frank Ellam, approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2015.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2015 were **AGREED** as a correct record, **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair.

3. TIMELINE AND ACTION LIST REVIEW

The Chair talked through the actions from the last meeting. She confirmed that a number of actions were complete, some were ongoing and a number were covered in reports on the Agenda.

The Timeline was reviewed and would be updated to reflect the current position.

4. GRANTS

a) Group – Feis Gleann Albainn Summer Feis (Ref G30/2014)

Grant Requested - £800

Grant Awarded £240

Grant Purpose – payment of transport for children and young people attending the week long Feis Glen Albainn

The Chair reminded everyone of the discussion at the last meeting and the agreement that clarification would be sought from the grant assessors/grant applicant on a number of issues and that these would be circulated to directors to allow them to vote on the application. The additional information was duly obtained. Directors thereafter voted on three options, (a) to approve the grant as applied for, (b) to refuse the grant, or (c) to approve the grant but reduce the amount awarded to a fixed amount per child attending the Feis (suggested £60 per child).

The Directors had unanimously agreed that a grant of £60 be awarded for each child/young person attending. It was estimated that 8 children/young persons

would be attending and the Directors **AGREED** to offer a maximum grant in the sum of £480.

This sum had been offered to the applicant who had subsequently confirmed that only 4 children from the area were attending and that a smaller vehicle had been offered by the transport provider at a cost of £480.

The Directors **AGREED** to make payment of a grant of £240 being the sum of £60 per attendee for the 4 children/young people attending.

b) Sporting Grant – Alex Sutherland (Ref SP2/2015)

Grant Requested - £200

Grant Awarded - £200

Grant Purpose – contribution towards costs of attending the World Masters Athletics Championship event in Lyon, France in August 2015.

c) Hardship Grant (Ref H3/2015)

Grant requested - £500

Grant Awarded - £500

d) Quarterly Grant report / End of year report 2014/15

The Administrator had provided details of the grants approved in the last quarter of 2014/15 and which also outlined the grants awarded for the year.

The Directors **REQUESTED** that the apprenticeship costs be added to the report which would be sent to SSE with the six monthly report on board activities covering the Glendoe and Dunmaglass agreements.

e) NCG – Simon Hargreaves (Ref NCG31/2014)

At the last meeting in June, the Directors had agreed that the application would be deferred to this meeting pending receipt of further information from the applicant.

The Chair advised that this application had subsequently been withdrawn.

The Directors **NOTED** the position.

5. INVOICE & EXPENSES

Administrator – June 2015 (£425.04)

The Directors **AGREED** to pay the invoice in the sum shown above.

6. PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

(a) Update on recruitment

The Chair was pleased to report that Steven Watson would be taking up the position of Project Co-ordinator (PC) on 27th July. Employers Liability and other insurances were in place.

The Directors discussed the purchase of equipment for Steven, namely a laptop, software, printer and mobile phone.

It was **AGREED** that Steven purchase these items on behalf of the Trust and that a budget of £1,200 be set for this purpose.

(b) Projects

The Chair had been giving consideration to the projects which Steven would start work on in the short term.

The Directors considered the suggestions from the Chair and **AGREED** that the initial projects would be

- Inverfarigaig Forestry Centre and Errogie housing site, both of which were already at the early stages of investigation
- Broadband and Community Transport, both of which were highlighted as key projects by the community in the recent survey
- Foyers Toilet Block
- Stratherrick Hall – investigation into the installation of solar heating.

It was **NOTED** that a number of Directors and individuals within the community held a wealth of background knowledge on these projects or information on work already carried out which Steven would be able to draw on to quickly get up to speed.

Directors **AGREED** that each would put together any contacts, background information, previous research, etc. they held so that this would be available for Steven when he took up the role.

(c) Induction checklist and Who's who

The Chair referred to the draft induction checklist and the who's who list which she had circulated to all Directors at the end of June.

The Directors **NOTED** the lists and the actions required of the named individuals.

(d) Employee Handbook

The Chair referred to the Employee Handbook and after some discussion the Directors **APPROVED** the Handbook without any amendments.

It was **AGREED** that within the health and safety documentation, the PC be asked to submit a weekly work plan which would include times when he was away from his home office so as to ensure that there was an awareness of his location in case of any accidents or mishaps occurring.

(e) Health and Safety

Peter Faye would identify the health and safety responsibilities of the Trust as an employer and a report would be submitted to the next meeting.

7. FINANCE

Frank Ellam reported on the payments made since the last meeting and advised that at the end of the month there was £208,345 in hand spread between Santander, Virgin, Aldermore, Shawbrook and Cambridge & Counties Banks.

The Directors **NOTED** that the application to open an account with Teachers Building Society needed to await the Dunmaglass receipt in view of the minimum deposit amount for Teachers and **AGREED** to open an account with Hampshire Trust Bank.

The Directors also **NOTED** that the Government were reducing the guarantee to individuals and small companies from £85,000 to £75,000 from 1st January 2016 and that there might therefore be a need to open a further additional bank account.

15/16 Cashflow

Frank Ellam advised that the cash flow was projected forward to September 2017 and included the Dunmaglass and Corriegarh benefit monies. It had been assumed that payments would be made in December each year and that 25% of the income for the year (£140,000) would be placed into a “legacy fund”.

The budgeted expenditure had been set by the Finance Team before it was known that the Dunmaglass payment would be advanced. It was clear from the month end balances that the Finance team and the Project Co-ordinator would be able to budget for a much higher spend on grants and this would be adjusted once the PC had starting working with the community.

Management Accounts

Frank Ellam reported on the management accounts for the year to June 2015. They showed that the grant income increased from £35,309 to £50,819 due to resumption of the Glendoe “variable” payment. Bank deposit interest increased from £1,135 to £1,636. Grants awarded fell from £38,231 to £21,985 due entirely to the lower energy grants. Overall the administration costs fell from £14,234 to £13,725 but some of the costs within this heading increased or decreased by significant amounts. The overall result was a profit of £16,745 against a loss of £16,021 in the previous year.

“Legacy Fund”

Mackenzie Investment Strategies had confirmed that they would be able to make a short presentation to the Board and answer questions at the August meeting. Frank Ellam was still speaking with Clarendon Financial Planning who would be attending the September meeting. He had also had a meeting with John Home Wealth Management who would also like to submit a proposal for consideration, possibly at the October meeting.

Charitable Status

Frank Ellam reported on a meeting with A9 to consider the advantages and disadvantages of registering as a charity. Their advice was:

1. The threshold for a charity requiring an audit is a turnover in excess of £500,000. That would apply to the Trust this year. An audit would cost an additional £2,000, more than the potential tax saving on the investment income. As a “small company” the Trust was unlikely ever to require an audit because to do so it would have to exceed 2 out of the following 3 thresholds:

- a) Turnover in excess of £6,500,000
- b) Assets in the Balance Sheet in excess of £3,260,000
- c) Employees in excess of 50

The Trust was never likely to exceed a) or c).

2. In looking through the list of projects from the community survey, A9 were fairly confident that improved broadband would **not** be a project that the Trust could support if it was a charity (and this was second on the survey list). A wood/coal store was the same and it was also very likely that providing land for allotments would not be allowed.

3. Paul Capewell of A9 had also confirmed that, to the best of his knowledge, Revenue and Customs had still not challenged the tax free status of any non-charity registered community trust. It was only if the Trust built up reserves, (which would apply in the future) that there was potentially a profit that could be taxed.

The Directors **APPROVED** the recommendation in the report that there be no change in status to a charity at this time.

Investment in a Wind Turbine

Frank Ellam had been approached by Alex Catto, Easter Aberchalder to see if the Trust would be interested in investing in a second wind turbine which he was planning to erect. An initial discussion on this request had been held with Zoe Iliffe and Graeme Ambrose.

After further discussion the Directors **AGREED** that the Trust would not make an investment in a second turbine at Easter Aberchalder. The Directors wished to continue to take a neutral stance concerning turbines. They existed with government approval and it was the role of the Trust to distribute benefit monies amongst community projects.

Invoice from A9

An invoice in the sum of £540.00 + VAT had been received from A9 for the quarter to June 2014. The total for the year was £2,028.40 + VAT which was within the agreed sum quoted in July 2014.

The Directors **AGREED** to pay the invoice in the sum of £540 plus VAT.

Invoice from Calico

An invoice in the sum of £144 had been received from Calico for the website domain and hosting.

The Directors **AGREED** to pay the invoice in the sum of £144.

The Chair, on behalf of the Directors thanked Frank Ellam for the considerable amount of work he had undertaken on the financial matters of the Trust, particularly over the last few months.

8. IT MANAGEMENT

The Chair referred to the discussions at previous meetings on IT Management and cloud storage. The Knowhow option discussed at the last meeting offered backup only. Dropbox offered a potential solution but it would cost in excess of £1,100 per annum. It appeared that the only way to ensure that all documents were both accessible by all and backed up would be to establish a network, the cost of which was prohibitive.

It was **AGREED** to continue with the individual arrangements for back up at the present time and to ensure that all the important Trust documents were uploaded to the Directors secure area on the Website.

9. FUNDERS TEAM

Graeme Ambrose provided an update on the following schemes:-

Corriegarth – the MoO had been approved and signed by the Community Council. The MoO was signed by the Chair on behalf of the Trust and witnessed by Hugh Nicol.

Stronlairg – an update had been requested from Graeme Keddie at SSE but no response had been received to date.

Knockie – A reply had been received from Green Highland Renewables. They had not moved on the offered 10% discount rate in the event of a sale. However, FCS

were trying to put pressure on Green Highland to relax this rule. The agreement should not be signed until the outcome of the FCS talks were known.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Katie Ellam advised that she had investigated the potential of a facebook page for the Trust and if set up it, the requirement of a named administrator. However, she was concerned that it would replicate the established Stratherrick Community page.

The Directors **AGREED** that it would be more beneficial to make use of the existing Stratherrick Community facebook page.

Hugh Nicol confirmed that he would circulate the list of groups by the end of the week.

11. PROJECTS

(a) Community land purchase – Foyers

Peter Faye reported that a disappointing response had been received from the Agent acting on behalf of the vendor. Despite earlier discussions around the subject of restricting the circumstances under which any clawback would apply, i.e. community uses, the vendor had now stated that they “did not wish to consider amendments to the clawback clause”.

This was very surprising, given that in depth discussions had occurred both verbally and by e-mail around the type of uses that would prove acceptable.

The Directors **AGREED** that Peter Faye should press for a fuller explanation on the apparent “U turn”.

An invoice had been received from Allied Surveyor for the land valuation which had been carried out.

The Directors **AGREED** to pay the invoice in the sum of £250 plus VAT.

Gordon McAndie left the meeting

(b) Inverfarigaig Forestry Centre

Graeme Ambrose and Peter Faye had met with Jack Mackay and Jim Higgins of the Forestry Commission (FC) on 17th June. The purpose of the meeting was to establish the attitude of the FC toward a possible transfer of the Inverfarigaig facility and some surrounding forestry to the Trust as it was understood that the FC were looking to divest themselves of certain assets.

It was established that an approach to acquire the facility could be made and the FC suggested this might be done under the auspices of the National Forest Land Scheme, which set out the processes through which eligible community bodies could apply to acquire/lease land and/or buildings from Forestry Commission Scotland. They also suggested that they would be interested in working in partnership with the Trust to enable FC related activities and services to continue in and around the centre.

Subsequent to the meeting FC had informed two further colleagues, Malcolm Wield (NFLS administration and advice) and Donald McLellan (Head of Acquisition and Disposals) of the discussions which had taken place.

The Directors **AGREED** that a further meeting be held in August once the PC was in place.

(c) Errogie housing site

The Directors **AGREED** that a further meeting be held in August once the PC was in place.

12. APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

Stewart MacPherson had provided a short update report. A joint meeting of the three community companies had been held and a number of issues had been discussed including the fact that it was getting increasingly more difficult to find young people as apprentices as they were encouraged to either continue their education either at college or at university. Although the scheme was open to all age groups, it was more costly to employ someone over 18 as an apprentice. The costs could be closer to £40,000 over 4 years.

There were currently apprenticeships available for a joiner and a chef in the combined area.

The Directors **AGREED** to further promote the apprenticeship scheme both in the Chairs bulletin and on the website.

13. LIAISON DIRECTOR

Katie Ellam advised that

- The SFCC had approved the Corriegarth agreement and had allocated the community monies to the SFCT.
- The SFCC welcomed the appointment of Steven Watson as the new Project Co-ordinator and looked forward to meeting him.
- The SFCC returned the grant of £1200 awarded in February 2014 for the Transport Survey as due to time differences in groups and forums being organised determination of funds had been restricted. It was hoped that a later grant application would be submitted for this project.

14. GRANTS SYSTEM

What we do not fund

Sharon Ferguson advised that the Grants team had met to discuss the list of items/activities which the Trust does not fund. The Team had considered the Glendoe MoO which set out clearly a number of activities which SSE had stated could not be funded, had considered some items which had been included historically and had recommended a number of changes.

The Directors **APPROVED** the list of items/activities which the Trust does not fund and **AGREED** that the website and each of the grant application forms, as well as the grants handbook would be updated accordingly.

Group Applications

It had been recognised that it was difficult for groups to identify the full range of activities which they might require funding for throughout the year, all within one application.

The Directors **AGREED** that Groups be allowed to submit two applications per year as the advantages were seen as follows:-

- Allows groups to fully consider the funding required for projects early in the year and then turn their attention to what else they might like to seek funding for in the second half of the year.
- Easier completion of application forms, concentrating on providing information for just one or two projects/activities
- Easier assessment
- Potential for the Trust to award greater sums to Groups – up to £20,000 (covered by the £10,000 limit on each application).

15. MEMBERSHIPS

The Administrator advised that two new membership applications had been received.

The Directors **AGREED** to accept the two applications for membership.

The Administrator advised that two members had resigned from the Trust. No reasons had been given.

The Directors **NOTED** the position.

16. ENERGY/RENEWABLES

It was **AGREED** to carry over this item to the next meeting.

17. DTAS CONFERENCE – 30/31 AUGUST 2015, INVERNESS

The Directors **AGREED** that it would be beneficial for the Project Co-ordinator to attend on at least one day.

18. GRANT APPLICATION

Reference was made to an application which had been received for a grant for the Doctors retirement party in the Autumn. It appeared that many members of the community believed that the application for the grant had been refused by the Trust.

The Directors who had been assessing the application confirmed that every assistance had been offered to the applicants to progress the application. Regrettably, it had been withdrawn without explanation before the grant could be submitted to the Grant Meeting for consideration.

19. BOLESKINE COMMUNITY CARE

The Chair advised that she had been contacted by the Secretary of the Boleskine Community Care Group as they hoped to seek funding from the Trust for premises they were considering leasing and wished to know whether the Trust would be prepared to fund this.

The Board **NOTED** the interest from the Group and agreed that it would be prepared to consider a grant application for such funding.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
Wednesday 12th August

The Meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.

Signed by Chair	_____
Date	_____