



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST HELD AT STRATHERRICK PUBLIC HALL, GORTHLECK AT 7.00pm ON WEDNESDAY, 10 JANUARY 2018**

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

**Declarations of interest** None.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Stratherrick Guides and Brownies would not be attending to give a presentation this evening and have invited the Directors to attend their group on 8 February.

The Board noted the Christmas Ceilidh was a huge success and provided the Hall with £200 of income. It is hoped the Christmas Ceilidh will be held again this year. One of the Directors commented that the children's afternoon event was enjoyable, and a great success and it would be nice to see more children next time. The PCO suggested an afternoon event for both children and more senior residents and the Trust should push more advertising for the next Christmas event, however it was noted that there are lots of events for children around that time of the year. A similar event has been suggested for the summer and the annual firework event may also be arranged by the Trust.

The Chair again politely requested Directors who wished to, review their "Bio-pics" and email any changes to the PCO who would update the web site.

The Chair advised the Board that he and two other Directors (Zoe Iliffe and Julie Murphy) will be on leave from the 13th January for ten days.

**Action by**

## ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 2. MINUTES – 6 DECEMBER 2017

Zoe Iliffe **PROPOSED** and Hugh Nicol **SECONDED** and the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 6 December 2017 were thereafter **AGREED** as a correct record and **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair.

#### **MATTERS ARISING**

##### **Corriegarth and Greencoat**

Directors are still making enquiries of Greencoat in relation to the request for individual grant applicant details.

*Action: Contact Greencoat.*

*ZI, FE*

##### **Medical Assistance Grant**

The Directors noted that due to the above the Medical Assistance grant application guidelines will have to include information informing the applicant that their data may be shared.

##### **Student and Sporting Grant Application Forms**

The PCO will pass to the nominated Lead Director the updated grant forms for submission to SSE for approval.

*Action: New forms to Grant Lead Director.*

*PCO*

##### **Apprenticeship**

No update available.

*Action: Urgent update.*

*SF*

### 3. FINANCE

The Finance Director advised the Board that the figures in the finance report were up to date to the end of month due to the timing of the meeting. The figures cover the whole of December 2017. £70,000 had been received from Scottish Canals/Highland Council as a contribution toward Foyers Bay development costs. The Finance Director explained that several invoices had recently become due and had been paid prior to the meeting. The invoices that had been paid were approved by at least two Directors. Since the end of the month the Trust had also paid the first part of the grant to the Seniors Lunch Club (withholding half until

quotes received for the outing element of the grant are provided). The £70,000 Canals funding is in the deposit account and takes the deposit account to well over £100,000. The Chair asked if there was therefore a requirement for a further bank account to be opened. The Finance Director advised this was unnecessary as imminent spend would take the balance below the compensation limit.

- (a) Book-keeping invoice (FE) for December 2017 £165.00
- (b) Administrator Expenses (LWK) for December 2017 £165.41
- (c) Administrator Timesheet (LWK) for December 2017 1 hour overtime
- (d) Project Co-ordinator Expenses (SW) for December 2017 £151.12
- (e) Invoices
  - i. Ord Storage Services, document storage, £1.87
  - ii. A4 Design and Print, £27.40 for posters, Stronelairg Leaflets £79 Reprint of leaflet, £72.00
  - iii. A4 Design and Print, Print of Stratherrick and Foyers News £899.11, Printing of Ceilidh Tickets £35.88
  - iv. A9 Accountancy, Company Secretarial Annual Fee £408.00
  - v. Calico, charge to update Wordpress £24.00
  - vi. Fraser Signs, two signs to display down at the Bay £115.20
- (f) Director's Expenses (PJF) November 2017 £85.93

The Board **APPROVED** the payment of (a) to (e) (i) to (vi) and (f) above.

The Finance Director asked the Board if the Trust could now make a further payment to Co-Funds to cover monthly fees for their investment service. The Finance Director explained that the Trust pay Co-Funds a lump sum in advance to eliminate the need for more complicated monthly accounting. Last year the Trust made a payment to Co-Funds for their monthly fee of £40 per month to avoid the need to sell small quantities of investments to cover their fee. There remains £100 left from that payment and the Finance Director would like the Trust to make a further top up payment of £500. The Board asked why the Trust did not set up a standing order, the Finance Director explained that this proposal fits with Co-funds procedures and it suits SFCT to pay on an annual basis or top up as and when required.

The Board **APPROVED** the payment to Co-Funds of **£500**.

#### 4. GRANT UPDATES

##### Hardship Grant – Extension of Time

The PCO explained the situation surrounding a particular grant and asked the Board if the Trust would extend the grant offer for a further six months, citing valid reasons.

The Board **APPROVED** the extension of six months.

## 5. **PROJECT DIRECTORS**

The Chair explained the basis of the new structure and how he envisaged the future management of projects and procedures. The Chair felt that the new structure would provide more direct responsibility, simplified logistics and communication and therefore quicker decisions and responses. Lead Directors would be asked for verbal reports at monthly meetings, but written reports where decisions from the Board are required.

The Chair ran through the Lead and Deputy Director positions. Most Directors had already been in touch with their preferences, those remaining were assigned and for further discussion.

- a. **Finance**  
Lead, Frank Ellam.  
Deputy, Peter Faye, as Chair.
- b. **Funders/Benefits Negotiator**  
Lead Peter Faye.  
No Deputy required.
- c. **Communications**  
Lead, Hugh Nicol.  
Deputy, Caroline Mortimore.
- d. **Riverside Field**  
Lead, Garry Page.  
Deputies, Zoe Iliffe and Julie Murphy.
- e. **Foyers Bay Project**  
Lead, Peter Faye.  
Deputy, Hugh Nicol.
- f. **Broadband**  
Lead, Sharon Ferguson.  
Deputy, Ken Sinclair.
- g. **Grants**  
Lead, Zoe Iliffe.  
Deputy, Frank Ellam.
- h. **Apprenticeships**  
Lead, Sharon Ferguson.  
Deputy, Julie Murphy.
- i. **Foyers Units**  
Lead, Peter Faye.  
No Deputy required.
- j. **Energy/Renewables**  
Lead, Ken Sinclair.  
Deputy, Garry Page.
- k. **Community Council Liaison**

Lead, Jim Cameron.

No Deputy required.

**I. Events/PR**

Lead, Julie Murphy.

Deputy, Caroline Mortimore.

**m. CAP Liaison**

Lead, to be discussed.

## **6. COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council and SSE are having a meeting prior to next scheduled Community Council meeting on 30 January. The Community Council have discussed with the Chair any potential questions from SSE in relation to possible conditions SSE may be contemplating, including a Community Action Plan and the allocation of Stronelairg funding. The Community Council have advised they fully support the work of the Trust and will be taking a positive stance to any questions raised in relation to the Trust dealing with the Stronelairg funding.

SSE have not responded directly to the Trust saying they want the Trust to procure a CAP, but it is apparent, given an earlier response to Fort Augustus Community Company, that SSE are very keen that Trusts take these on.

The Board noted that Fort Augustus are commissioning a CAP. The Chair emphasised the need for Trust to discuss this matter in depth but noted vital members of the Board were unavoidably absent as a consequence of illness.

The Board discussed the figures in the documents sent prior to Christmas in relation to a CAP. It was suggested that geographically it did not always make sense to limit a development or action plan by means of a boundary on a map. The Board did agree that an up to date CAP or similar document may be appropriate and such a document was an underlying reason for employing the Project Co-ordinator.

It is understood the principle of a CAP is to ask residents how they envisage the future of the Community and then formulate a Development or Action Plan.

There was a general feeling that the Trust could undertake this exercise, concerns were expressed that it may be necessary to commission an external report to secure the funding. The Board discussed the examples quoted by STAR and expressed concern over the relatively small amount of time actual spent consulting with residents. The Board also expressed concern that a joint CAP with Fort Augustus, as had been mooted (but not recommended by STAR), had the potential to be negative for the Trust area as it may focus more on Fort Augustus and

Invermoriston, especially with that area being much more of an urban area than Stratherrick and Foyers.

*Action – Contact SSE to discuss likely conditions and the possibility of the need for a CAP. Chair to request a meeting with SSE between the meeting with SFCC and the Trust's next Board Meeting.*

PJF

The Board resolved to discuss the matter further following the above meetings and would decide on the commissioning and form of a CAP following clarification and discussions with SSE and agreed they would undertake such an exercise in an appropriate and effective manner if it was a requirement of SSE.

## **7. RIVERSIDE FIELD**

The PCO has requested a detailed breakdown of the invoice received from HRI prior to Christmas. PCO updated on the access and parking tenders for the Riverside Field. The estimated cost is £40,000, including a significant sum for removal of spoil from site. Discussions occurred around retaining the material on site for use later in the project, which was felt to be a sensible and economic approach.

The Chair asked the Board for their opinions of the tenders received. The Riverside Field Team felt they were quite high as the work was relatively straightforward and could possibly be achieved at a lower cost.

It was then asked if the likely deduction for none removal of spoil, would make the quotations more acceptable? Although the proposed surfaced entrance is of a high standard, the surface proposed for parking is a type one aggregate, so it was still felt the quotations were a little high.

The Board suggested approaching alternative contractors and Forestry Commission management (they install many bell-mouth entrances) to get additional names of other contractors.

*Action - Contact Alec MacLeod.*

*Action - Contact Brian Love and David Miller.*

*Action - Agenda item for next Board Meeting.*

SW  
GP  
LWK

## **8. LOWER FOYERS UNITS**

The Chair stated we continue to wait for information from solicitors acting for Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The outgoing tenant of Unit 1 has undertaken certain works on the units and we have this week received the certification for the gas sand electrical installations.

*Action – Email certification to GP.*

*PJF*

The Trust have agreed a sum of £13,800 including VAT for the benefit of the HIE lease. Solicitors fees are likely to be £1,500 including VAT and there will be Head Landlord legal costs, estimated to be £500, giving a total of £15,800 including VAT. This leaves £9,000 available in the budget for the acquisition. The Chair has asked three local tradesmen for quotations to undertake various works, mainly of a decorative and cyclical maintenance nature. Two local tradesmen responded, submitting very similar quotes. Both are broken down into internal and external works. The Chair asked the Board if they would be happy to split the tender between the two bidders, one to undertake internal works and the other external works.

The Board asked if contractors will keep the cost the same if only awarded a partial contract. The Chair agreed to discuss with the contractors and has agreement to award slightly more funding to each to cover overheads and fixed costs. Primarily however, the aim is to give work to both contractors, as they are local firms. Secondly, it may also speed up the process, as they may be able to work concurrently. A Minute of Variation to amend the terms (number of years), rental and subjects of the current BCC lease is to be discussed with Trust solicitors, with the objective of avoiding unnecessary legal cost.

*Action: Contact bidders re splitting works.*

*PJF*

## **9. HARDSHIP GRANTS/KNOCKIE TRUST**

One of the Objectives of the Trust is to prevent or relieve poverty. This occasionally takes the form of hardship grants which are usually the remit of the Chair and Vice Chair with input from the PCO to assess and award. These are delicate matters that can be hugely personal and intrusive for the applicant and take up a lot of time. Further, the Trust are only allowed to make one hardship grant per eligible applicant every twelve months. Following a recent urgent Hardship Grant application, the suggestion of a joint venture with the Knockie Trust had arisen. It was suggested that the Knockie Trust are given a fund by Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust which they can then allocate as Hardship Grants where appropriate. It was suggested that this would be much more aligned with the objectives of The Knockie Trust with their ability to move quickly and their expertise and experience in such matters. The Chair asked for the thoughts of the Board on ring fencing a sum of money (as with FIRA) that the Knockie Trust could call off and deal with what are usually urgent hardship grant applications.

The Board discussed and asked if Knockie Trust would impose the same conditions as the Trust do on hardship grant awards (council tax benefit/universal credit evidence, low income, no

assets, no savings etc), so that the Trust is still meeting funders requirements and its own Objectives.

The Board noted that not all applicants are on universal credit, but some receive personal independence payments e.g. pensioners, a minimum income guarantee. There are also applicants that may be in dire need that do not receive benefits for a variety of reasons. The Chair asked for the Board's opinion on utilising these measures and what is and is not appropriate as a measure of need. The Board also discussed whether the Knockie Trust would have time to administer these types of grants and if the Trust is permitted to allocate funds in such a manner. The Trust can support any other charity that follows the Company's Objectives. Given this is possible, it was therefore suggested that the Knockie Trust be asked if they are willing to deal with all hardship applications received by the Trust. It was noted that earlier discussions had suggested that Knockie Trust had considered passing a degree of responsibility for their work over to the Trust. The Board discussed and hoped that this would no longer be the case if there was the increase in work and help the Knockie Trust was available to offer the Community.

The Board discussed the Trust limits of £500 per application in any twelve months, subject to conditions and approved a proposal be put to the Knockie Trust for the provision of a rolling £2,000 per annum fund for them to call off.

A request attached to this proposal to Knockie Trust would be acknowledgement of the Trust funding and increased publicity by the Knockie Trust of their work in the Stratherrick and Foyers News and more widely.

*Action – discuss proposal with Knockie Trust.*

*PJF/PCO*

## **10. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM QUARTERLY UPDATE (HN)**

The "*We can do it with Stronelairg and SSE*" leaflet has been re-printed and passed to the Chair at the Community Council. The noticeboards are installed with a clear view of all Trust information. Two signs ordered and obtained for Foyers Bay, displaying the Trusts status a Lessee.

There will be an article in the next Stratherrick & Foyers News about the Ceilidh and the Board gave thanks to Steven as he did 90% of the work on the last edition. The next edition of the News will feature an article about the background to the need for, and operation of, the Trust's legacy fund.

The Board discussed the option of a PO Box for mail, along with a change in the Registered address for the Trust.

The PCO was asked to obtain quotes from local contractors for suitable post boxes to be located at the Village Hall.

Stratherrick and Foyers News has been shortlisted for the Highlands and Islands Press Awards on Friday 2 February. Strathnairn News and Westword are the other contenders. The Chair will attend the awards dinner.

## 11. BROADBAND TEAM UPDATE

There have been further subscribers connected. The Hotel has received a quote for an internal system, yet to reply. There is a site meeting on the ground w/c 15 January to look at network expansion toward Errogie, Torness and Inverfarigaig.

The Board discussed the BBC programme and its erroneous information in relation to the difference between "White Space" technology and "line of sight" technology. It was felt that this should be corrected

*Action: Contact the BBC.*

HN

The Finance Director asked what was the useful life of the Broadband infrastructure equipment. This was still unknown, although five years could be a reasonable assumption, given the speed technology becomes obsolete.

Discussion in relation to the Trust assets of the new Noticeboards and the possibility of transferring ownership, for accounting purposes, to a third-party body.

*Action: FD to further investigate accounting principles.*

FE

## 12. GRANT QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Administrator ran through the number of grants received in the quarter to the end of December 2017. The spreadsheet of recent grants will be available on the secure area for Directors to note.

## 13. ACTION LIST/TIMELINE

This has been updated for January.

*Action: Amend timeline for new team structure.*

PJF

## 14. AOCB

The Board asked if there was an update on a potential whitegoods scheme. The PCO said there was nothing further drafted but other ideas discussed were dry wood and solid fuel

maintenance, portable lamps and torches and community fuel schemes.

The data projector required for old photographs show next Wednesday.

Ken Sinclair gave apologies for the next meeting.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday, 7 February 2018 Stratherrick Community Hall, Gorthleck.

*The Meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.*

Signed by Chair (PJF) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_