



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST HELD AT STRATHERRICK PUBLIC HALL, GORTHLECK AT 7.00pm ON WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2019

Present Peter Faye (PJF), Zoe Iliffe (ZI), Frank Ellam (FE), Ken Sinclair (KS), Garry Page (GP), Olaf Olsen (OO), Ian Bateman (IB), Margaret Cormack (MC), Gillian McIntyre (GM), Sharon Ferguson (SF)

Chair Peter Faye (PJF)

In Attendance Steven Watson (Project Co-ordinator) (SW)

Apologies Laura Walker-Knowles (Administrator) (LWK)

Declarations of Interest

Bookkeeping item – Frank Ellam – (Bookkeeping Contractor)
Stratherrick Parent Council Grant Discussion and Decision – Olaf Olsen (Grandparent)
Spin and Chatter Grant Discussion and Decision – Garry Page (Family connection)

1. PRESENTATION BY MIKE LAWSON OF COLIN ARMSTRONG ASSOCIATES (Architects) (CAA) | Action by

Mike Lawson had supplied a draft masterplan document which had been available to Directors for the preceding month. He demonstrated using the screen how the plan had been progressed.

The Directors had the opportunity of making comments which had been summarised and reported to Mike ahead of the meeting and many Directors had visited the field to familiarise themselves with the site.

Points raised for discussion included the incremental development of the site, the number of allotments on the draft plan, the possibility of community gardens (including the possibility of polytunnels) and orchards, the nature of a perimeter path and the concept of a covered sports facility. Directors were generally very positive about the work done by CAA and spoke to each of these topics. They agreed that the purpose of releasing a draft document was to stimulate local community debate rather than to present it as a “fait accompli”.

Next Steps

Mike was asked to make some revisions to the draft masterplan and to thereafter produce a range of development options – starting with the path. These materials should be suitable for a public exhibition, possibly at the Wildside Centre. A 3D model and fly-through animation was also possible.

It was agreed the public exhibition would be open to all and would allow local residents to comment. It was also agreed to engage with those households directly affected by the proposals in the Riverside houses adjacent to the site.

In an attempt to encourage people to visit and use the site mowing a path through the grass and marking this with survey poles would give people a better idea of the extent of the site and the distances between the boundaries. Dog waste bins could also be installed.

Action: CAA to refine plan and produce consultation visuals etc. for planned public consultation which CAA would attend.

CAA

2. INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. All Directors were present

The Chair advised the Board that Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company was recruiting a Chief Executive.

The Chair reported continuing progress on the attempts to purchase the Wildside building and site. There was no announcement to make quite yet, but a satisfactory outcome of outright purchase was expected shortly.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING of 9 JANUARY 2019

Matters Arising

Minor corrections were requested to the January Minutes, mainly of a typographical nature.

Subject to these changes, Zoe Iliffe **PROPOSED** and Ken Sinclair **SECONDED** and the Minutes of Meeting held on 9 JANUARY 2019 thereafter **AGREED** as a correct record and **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair.

Minor changes to the minutes, circulate minutes to Members.

LWK

ITEMS FOR DECISION

4. GRANT APPLICATIONS AND ISSUES

Student Grants Discussion – The Board had previously discussed the issue of a succession of annual student grants to individual residents and whether it was appropriate to cap the number of grants a single applicant should receive (3, 5 or 7 was suggested). It is possible for applicants to apply for access courses, Open University study, under and post-graduate and masters or doctorate years of study, or additional years where further study or professional indenture was required to obtain a certificate to practice. These and multiple vocational courses all accorded with the Trust's Objects of furthering education and employment opportunities. It was **PROPOSED** this issue be monitored but that no numeric cap be introduced at this time this was and **AGREED** by the Board.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

NON-CONSTITUTED GROUP

a. Stratherrick Spin and Chatter

(Garry Page left the meeting.)

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in the sum of **£1,000**.

Fund: Glendoe.

Additional conditions: -

- Spin and Chatter will acknowledge the grant and provide information to the Stratherrick and Foyers News.
- The Board recommended that should the Spin and Chatter Group want to submit a further grant application to the Trust that the group should consider forming a Constituted group and opening a bank account in the group's name.

(Garry Page returned to the meeting.)

GROUP

b. Foyers Primary School

(Olaf Olsen left the meeting)

This application referred to the Loch Insh residential course – a multi-school opportunity for pupils leaving primary education and heading for the Inverness Royal Academy.

One of the two pupils detailed in the application was not resident within the Trust's area of benefit and the Board agreed this element of the grant could be not supported. The Board did however support the element of funding to help with staff accommodation at the activity centre.

The amount approved was made up as follows. Pupil £260.98 plus share of teacher £172.99 Total £433.97

The Board **APPROVED £433.97**

Fund: Glendoe

(Olaf Olsen returned to the meeting.)

c. Foyers Primary School Parent Council

An application for a grant to meet 50% of the cost of bus transport from Foyers and Stratherrick to swimming lessons in Inverness. The bus cost is £250 per trip.

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full in the sum of **£1,000**.

Fund: Glendoe

STUDENT GRANT

d. Chris Finlay

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full in the sum of **£500**.

Fund: Green Highland

e. Anna Yeats

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full, in the sum of **£500**.

Fund: Green Highland

f. Hannah Burgess

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full, in the sum of **£500**.

Fund: Green Highland

g. Iona Macpherson

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full in the sum of **£500**.

Fund: Easter Aberchalder

Additional condition, the Board requested the applicant to provide a graduation photograph for the Stratherrick and Foyers News on successful completion of her studies.

h. Lisa Haston

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full in the sum of **£500**.

Fund: Easter Aberchalder

i. Roma Yeats

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full in the sum of **£500**.

Fund: Easter Aberchalder

ENERGY SAVING GRANT

j. Mrs E MacDougall

Application for assistance with the purchase and installation of a modern replacement heater.

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full in the sum of **£500**.

Fund: Easter Aberchalder

GRANT APPLICATIONS – LATE APPLICATION

Kilchuimen Academy

This application related to the cost of an extra-curricular trip by a pupil resident in Stratherrick and Foyers. The cost to attend was £92. The parental contribution was £40. The balance was requested from Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust.

The Board **APPROVED** the grant as requested in full, in the sum of **£52**.

Fund: Glendoe

PREVIOUS GRANT APPLICATIONS – UPDATES

Hannah Slater

The Board had previously considered an application by Hannah Slater for a Student Grant, who was also the subject of an apprenticeship proposal. The Joint Apprenticeship Grant Panel had decided that an Apprenticeship grant was not appropriate in this instance and Hannah will be invited to re-submit her Student Grant application.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council (CC)

The CC submitted an application for grant funding which was considered in December. The discussion and decision was minuted in full and was published on the Trust website. The CC was advised of the Board's decision to award £3,915 of the sums requested. More information was sought on three elements of the application, namely, land ownership and Highland Council liability at the Cemetery, the removal of old fencing and the reasons for requesting additional funds for their administration costs.

The CC subsequently raised several issues with the Trust during January and representatives of the Trust, the CC Liaison Director and CC Chair met on 6 February 2019. The points regarding land ownership and the need for additional administration and project management resource (to manage the Cemetery fencing and toilet project) were clarified. The fencing contractor had confirmed to the CC that his costs included the removal of the old fencing.

As these issues were now clarified, the grant requested for all three elements, Toilet Architect/Admin/Project management (at £15/hr self-employed rate) and the Cemetery fence could now be reconsidered.

The Board **APPROVED** the balance of the grant as requested in December in full in the sum of **£19,538**.

Fund: Dunmaglass

Action: Draft new approval.

LWK

Two additional points were addressed, namely the late issue of a grant decision letter following the December meeting and the published minute. The CC was disappointed at the length of time it took for a grant decision letter to be issued detailing the outcome of the December Board Meeting. This delay was caused in part due to the Christmas holidays, and the Trust has apologised to the CC for this delay. In an attempt to mitigate against this happening again, the Trust has reviewed the assessment and processing of grants over the festive period.

The CC advised that, due to the detail contained within the published minute of the December Board Meeting, some offence

had been taken locally. The Board agreed that, to ensure compliance with our transparency policies, the published minutes of the Board meetings had to be an accurate reflection of decisions made. The Board also agreed that it is inappropriate for a published minute to be adjusted but that it would be appropriate to clarify the intent of the decision taken at the time to avoid any misunderstanding. The Board further agreed that there was no intended criticism of any individual and the Board regrets any upset caused.

5. FINANCE / INVOICES / EXPENSES

BOOKKEEPING COSTS

(Frank Ellam left the meeting)

Further to the discussion at the January Board Meeting the Chair had reviewed the arrangements for remunerating the Bookkeeper. The Chair clarified that all the work undertaken by Frank Ellam as Finance Director (FD) was as a volunteer Director co-opted to the Trust Board. Frank also then fulfilled the role of bookkeeper for the Trust as an independent contractor.

There was a clear financial and operational advantage to the Trust as a result of this arrangement. No time was wasted on briefing an individual bookkeeper and no fees were incurred through A9 Accountancy or the complexity of a further contractor or member of staff. Frank was qualified for this role and had undertaken it most satisfactorily, ensuring bills were paid promptly and bank payment runs (BACS) were executed.

As the Trust's activities have grown the transactions and sums involved have increased. The Chair proposed that the new arrangement to be agreed with Frank as a private contractor would be as follows:

Per invoiced hour as bookkeeper £20. Per mile travelled as bookkeeper 45p (per HMRC Guidelines)

The Board **AGREED** that these amounts be paid subject to Frank's detailed monthly invoices.

(Frank Ellam returned to the meeting.)

FINANCE REPORT

The FD provided an update on recent transactions and balances. Salient points are, £200,000 had been transferred to Macleod and MacCallum, Solicitors, Inverness to put them in funds to complete the purchase of the Wildside Outdoor Centre.

Community benefit payments from renewables generators had been received. These came from Stronelaig (SSE), Green Highland Allt Luidhe and the Easter Aberchalder Partnership.

In this month, bank interest of £251.98 had been received.

The cumulative amount held by the Trust in its bank accounts was now £762,173.77

An invoice from Cromarty Firth Wireless Networks was expected shortly, along with the final accounts from local contractors engaged to upgrade the Foyers Units.

The Trust's legacy fund now stands at £280,673. This figure is the current cost of the investments to date plus re-invested dividends. The Trust now has just over £1million in total reserves.

The FD also informed the Directors of the implications of the Inland Revenue's move to require firms to make their accounts digital. 'Making Tax Digital' rules are likely to apply to the Trust.

Directors agreed the following limits for the approval of expenditure and signing off invoices

Chair alone, Invoices of up to £250
Project Lead Director and Chair together over £250

The following payments were approved: -

- (a) Administrator Expenses/Reimbursement (LWK) for January 2019 £168.62
- (b) Administrator Timesheet (LWK) for January 2019 1 hour overtime
- (c) Project Co-ordinator Expenses/Reimbursement (SW) for January 2019 £175.54
- (d) Bookkeeper's Invoice (FE) for January 2019 £410.00

6. AGM 2019

The Directors agreed to move the AGM date to Wednesday, 30 October 2019 at Stratherrick Public Hall. 7.30pm.

Action: Update timeline.

Chair

Action: Update website.

SW

ITEMS FOR NOTING

7. BROADBAND TEAM UPDATE

Work was progressing and the purchase of Wildside Centre could be a benefit to the network. Negotiations with other landowners about accessing towers around Stratherrick were continuing. A draft lease had been offered to the Trust for one site. The document to be reviewed and comments returned to the Broadband team.

Action: Review lease and respond to Broadband Team.

ZI

8. PROJECT COORDINATOR'S UPDATE

SW ran through his update. Salient points were the recent receipt of a finalised Stage One Proposal from Boleskine Community Care for a four year grant for operational costs.

Membership forms circulated in December received limited response. The March edition of Stratherrick and Foyers News is in preparation and OO has agreed to proof-read.

The Trust website has undergone some initial improvements to user experience. A Security Certificate is now in place. Work is ongoing.

War Memorial upgrade costs finalised and project complete.

Lunch Club Outing decided and costs obtained (Inverewe).

9. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM UPDATE

Wildside Centre, if purchased is an ideal venue for the community consultation on the Riverside Field proposals, Foyer's Bay and the Centre.

Directors' Biographies updated, others awaited.

10. WILDSIDE UPDATE

See item 9.

11. AOCB

SSE Stronelairg Agreement

The Chair reported that this had been received and that certain revisions had been suggested to SSE. These did include a suggestion for a mechanism whereby the support of "Enterprise" might be considered, although this would require a new approved process and the likely need for a partner organisation.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 6th March 2019, 7.00 p.m., Stratherrick Public Hall, Gorthleck unless otherwise advised of change of venue to Wildside Centre.

The Meeting closed at 10.50 p.m.

Signed by Chair (PJF) _____

Date _____