

## **Minutes of the Board Meeting on 26 November 2020**

**Present:** Flora Macleod (Chair), Fiona Jefferson, Domhnall Macdonald, Euan MacLeod (Development Manager), Sarah Fraser (Projects Manager).

### **Agenda**

Welcome to the new Directors  
Issues from the updates: Flora  
Sub-sea Cable Update: Euan  
Funding applications: Euan  
Actions from the last meeting: Flora.  
Membership applications: Directors  
Any other business: Flora

### **Funding Applications**

There were no new applications this month.

The Mountain Rescue Base project grant will be paid out once the full match funding has been secured. Evidence will be sought before payment is made. Staff will keep up to date with the MRB progress.

### **Updates and Proposals**

#### **Update: Turbine and Sub-sea Cable (Euan)**

Firstly, a positive step for the insurance case. Sedgwick loss adjuster came back to us on Monday to say

*'I am pleased to report that Insurers have confirmed policy liability in principle for the subsea cable incident loss. Documentation which has been supplied by you to date has been passed to Insurers appointed Business Interruption assessment experts Baker Tilly, but I will continue to be your point of contact for the claim.'*

Although there is a long way to go with the claim, this is good progress.

During this week's CPOH meeting we found out that all other affected groups had received the same message. There was speculation among participants that the loss adjusters may have opted to challenge SSE directly (for compensation), though it is unlikely, based on previous claims by several of the groups, that the details of the discussions will ever come to light.

CNES and SSE contacted us with details on a fund set up to replace grants awarded by the community generators – more on this in my update on external funding.

CES and CPOH continue to discuss battery solutions with SSE. The plan to have small batteries at each turbine, to allow increased generation, does have merit, but seems to be unlikely – due to very technical energy implications for the grid, I have this info explained if anyone wants to look over it.

The centralised battery option looks feasible, with serious interest from SSE, given the projected saving of diesel.

CES are also looking at local energy projects that could be set up to use more of the lost power. Possibilities include directly heating homes/public buildings, electric vehicle charge points. While there is general support from the community groups, timescale may rule out any large projects.

CNES has invited HCD to participate in a council-led Community Energy Forum. Everyone agreed a representative of HCD would attend the first meeting. Euan will respond to the invitation and update everyone at the next board meeting.

### **Update: Annual Planning Cycle – Projects Meeting, Budget Meeting (Euan)**

Amid the uncertainty over income generated by the Risort Power Group turbine, as well as the Covid restrictions, a full planning meeting for 2021 has been postponed. The board decided it was more important to focus on financial planning and dealing with the inevitable loss of income.

As it's still impossible to meet up in person, Euan circulated a file on 2021 budgets, including a summary of the finances and 2 draft budgets – both cautious in terms of expenditure but differing in degrees of severity for budget cuts. The file is a starting point for further discussion and a separate meeting will be planned. While the work on 2021 finances has been prepared with the best information available, it's highly likely that additional information will be received over the next few months (e.g. insurance claim, emergency funding). The budget options have been drafted with this in mind and can be reviewed and updated as necessary as more info becomes available.

A final board meeting of 2020 will take place on or around December 10<sup>th</sup>. At this point 2021 budgets will be set based on the latest regarding the emergency funding and the insurance claim.

### **Update: Covid Services (Euan)**

The last Blasta Ready Meals delivery is planned for December, as the funding ends at the end of the year, though I'm looking for replacement funding.

There have been no Community Support expense claims by local volunteers.

Medication deliveries for the area continue, 3 days per week. Anna is in charge of the deliveries as part of the Slàn san Dachaigh project.

Virtual Engagement – There are a few talks lined up, but no dates have yet been advertised.

### **Covid Services - Shop & Drop (Sarah)**

Another successful S+D month in November. The service continues to be a welcome support to its users. The current situation is that the service is due to come to an end on the 22nd December but there is scope to continue an adaptation of the service due to the easing of restrictions. Users will be contacted in December to gain feedback and a plan will be set out for the first quarter of 2021 afterwards. A visit to the 'pop-up' Carloway shop has given an insight into how we might do something similar in our area.

### **Covid Recovery Gift Voucher (Sarah)**

The groundwork for this has been carried out. Vouchers will be ready to distribute by 14th December to members of the Trust. However I am aware of current pressures on our income and I would like to highlight that if anyone has any reservations about the extra cost to the Trust in light of recent events and being mindful that Trust members have recently received a 'bumper' winter fuel allowance – I see no issue in carrying this idea forward to a time when we can be more certain of our financial position.

We decided to postpone the launch of the scheme until there is clarity over the income for 2021.

### **Covid Recovery Grant (Sarah)**

Any grant scheme will be dependent on our financial position in 2021.

### **Covid Safety Measures at Raebhat (Sarah)**

Signage has been agreed and sent to GDK Signs for printing, hand sanitising stations are in place and staff are consistent in wearing masks and hand washing.

### **Dalmore/Dalbeg Mobile Coverage (Sarah)**

A meeting between CNES and SRN is being held on the 8th December, which Donnie Morrison at HIE will attend and will raise our concerns however Donnie has said that the meeting is introductory, and they may not go into any great detail at this stage. I have also been in contact with BT/EE and talks are ongoing for their engineers to carry out a remote survey on the areas. Will update as necessary.

### **Kids Christmas Stocking Gift Sarah)**

I thought a re-usable advent calendar would be a good sustainable option. These cost between £15-£20 each. If everyone is happy with the cost I will order and arrange for the school to distribute to the kids.

Everyone agreed to the idea, that a Christmas gift is bought for each child at Shawbost School, including the cròileagan – around 50 children.

### **Proposal - Horshader Windbreak (Sarah)**

As the 'Horshader Woodland' idea has drawn to a conclusion for the time being. I think it is a good idea to revive the 'Horshader Grow your Own' project. The Windbreak Report from Dr M Bradley in 2017 is attached for your reference. I have had initial discussions with Chris, and he agrees by targeting individual residents of the area and supporting them in creating small pockets of shrub in and around their land is the best way forward. As this project has been in the background for some time, I am proposing we pick it up, review and progress it on to its next phase.

The proposal wasn't discussed at length during the meeting.

#### **Update: 2020 Community Consultation (Euan)**

There has been a reasonable response rate to the consultation paper so far. The responses I've read have been full of interesting points. As we carried out the phone survey, it became clear many households would rather participate by phone interview. We've got a long list of households to phone and are working through this at the moment.

Once the exercise is complete, all responses will be collated in a source spreadsheet, as well as being circulated to directors and staff as a report.

#### **Update: Staff Performance Reviews (Euan)**

Staff 1to1s were carried out during the final quarter of 2020. Euan has written a short report for each staff member based on the meetings. A follow-up meeting was held with Flora to discuss a few issues that came up.

Euan's review will be carried out by Flora, at a suitable time.

#### **Update: Gaelic Plan (Euan)**

The draft plan will be presented to the board at the November board meeting. I feel there's already been too many files sent round, and the Gaelic Plan is better to share during the meeting as a power point.

Euan shared a presentation on the development of the Gaelic Plan, with a proposal to adopt it formally before sharing with the community.

The board acknowledged that the majority of the plan's aims are already being achieved, if not being exceeded by HCD activities. The plan will be proposed for formal approval at the next meeting.

### **Update: External Funding (Euan)**

CNES contacted us with announcement of the SSE Community Turbine Fund, established as an emergency fund to cover grants that would be made by the community groups that have lost income due to the subsea cable breakdown. We have replied with all the requested information – details of the annual HCD funding schemes (HCD Community Fund, Bursary and Training Grants scheme) and awards already made in 2020 - and expect to hear an announcement before the end of November.

As per previous update: I'm working on applications to CalMac Community Fund, Climate Asset Fund, Maoin Ealain na Gàidhlig, The Robertson Trust, and CNES Crown Estate Fund. These will all be submitted during the final quarter of 2020.

### **Update: Community Space (Euan)**

No further update. No indication of a date for events to recommence has been given.

### **Update: Slàn san Dachaigh (Healthy at Home) (Anna)**

Slàn san dachaigh launched Wednesday 14th October with a circuits video.

Dr Rachael Allan's mental health video was posted on the 2nd week of the project.

Anna has set up outdoor circuits on Shawbost beach on Saturday mornings with max number of 15 people attending. Personal trainer Joshua Morrison is leading the class. The 1st class was full.

Professor Richard Cox has agreed to do an online lecture about placenames along the coast between Dail Mòr - Siabost.

2 wild Swimming taster session on Shawbost beach have been postponed due to the swell. Norma MacLeod Immerse Hebrides is running 1 pre- work sunrise swim and 1 mid-morning swim. 5 max per session. HCD board more than welcome to sign up!!! The new dates are 11th and 12th December,

An Eathar - Lightweight set of oars are being adjusted on the Yackydoola to accommodate school aged pupils for Spring rowing on Loch a' Bhaile.

Prescriptions - Monday and Wed afternoon & Friday morning.

Brian Macleod PHD student / piper living with 45 South Shawbost has agreed to do a piping video. Waiting for a sunny day to film.

Elsa McTaggart has written the tune for Horshader inspired by the local coastline. It is a march, and they hope to send a recording this week. A date for filming will be set once I have the tune. The board would like to launch a competition to name the tune, to which locals can enter suggestions.

Am Ministear, Callum Macleod has agreed to do an online about his book 'Echoes of an Era' "The book covers the historical context of the origins of the congregation from around the 1820s and then focusses in on the emergence of the congregation of Shawbost from the congregation of Barvas to the North and Carloway to the south.

### **Update: Support and Connect**

The grass cutting has ended but Don is busy assisting Chris with growing site and tree ark improvements, as well as his regular bus runs. Dan and Ruairidh have both continued to be called in for certain jobs but have stopped their regular grass cutting shifts.

The minibus has had a few repairs over the last month – the sliding door, which is an ongoing issue, being the main one.

An incident which saw the side of the bus scratched over the weekend of 6 + 7 November has been reported to the police. It seems likely that a car reversed into the bus causing minor superficial damage. A repair isn't necessary though the bus will be parked back in its usual spot – next to the barn – rather than in one of the car parking bays.

### **Any Other Business**

#### **Urras Dualchais Shiaboist**

UDS are winding up and intend on selling the old museum privately. Sarah proposed that HCD review the decision taken by the board in 2019 to decline the transfer of ownership of the building. The directors requested a full proposal to be submitted by the December meeting.

### **Communications**

We will look into setting up a what's app group to send reminders of board meetings, and other important updates.

30/11/20