

Board Meeting on 7 September 2021

Welcome

Flora welcomed all to the meeting.

Present

Flora Macleod (Chair), Fiona Jefferson, Innes Harrison, Euan MacLeod (Dev. Manager)

Apologies

Domhnall Macdonald

Approval of July Minutes

The minutes are approved.

AGM Preparation

An approach for the meeting was agreed. Euan will prepare a presentation of 2020 activities which will be part of the presentation of the Annual Report. For 'Presentation of plans for 2021 and beyond' we will give out the updated 2021 Development Plan.

Recruitment - Projects Manager

The post that was held previously was not managed well and to facilitate a good start to advertising and hiring then the below points should be noted and discussed.

1. Position should not be a standalone one and should be under a clear management structure being line managed to a certain degree.
2. Job application when it states that Previous Project management is a must, should mean that. It did not previously.
3. Project management training, as advised to previous position holder should not be considered. A candidate being competent is a general condition and all candidates should show that with their previous experience.
4. Salary for position. There was a salary scale which was previously given at the highest increment, which was not correct as it was not experienced based. This was as I see a mistake on Horshader financially.
5. Interviews, were held in an unusual fashion for the last position. I strongly suggest that interviews are performed in a different manner, and we avoid placing 3 people in a room surrounded by directors.

As we are getting close to being able to think of taking on a new Project manager, I agree with comments made last meeting that maybe the Job Title needs to be changed to suit.

I would also like to see a comprehensive break down on what projects we are considering if it is from funding or funds.

We discussed the comments and ways the role, and the interview format, could be modified to better meet the needs of the Trust and community. Additional to the points raised in the update, we talked of giving the PM role a fixed term, instead of permanent contract, to provide the chosen candidate with an incentive to work to a high standard. No decision will be taken as to recruitment until after the AGM.

Issues from the Updates

Draft Accounts and AGM Prep Update (Euan)

We met on Wednesday 18 August to plan for the AGM. The Annual Report has been updated to include sections on the Board of Directors and on HCD Staff. We also agreed to the text for the 2020 Annual Accounts *Future Plans* section.

If the final design of the Annual Report, and the AGM Notice, is decided at the Board Meeting, we will be ready to print all postal copies, and send all email versions, on Friday 28 August.

Proposed Changes to the Governing Document

Two changes to the Governing Document were discussed. The first would alter section 4.03 on the criteria for eligibility for Directorship. The current rule is: *A Member can be nominated for election as an Elected Director after one year of membership.* We discussed proposing a change to the Governing Document to allow all Members to be eligible for Directorship regardless of the duration of their membership.

The second proposed change would see a rule adopted which would require the Trust to consult with the community on any projects estimated at costing over £200,000 - although this was a suggested amount and could be revised. In the current document, there is no mention of a specific project cost which would trigger a consultation or vote by Members. The Trust's approach to projects isn't mentioned either, other than that the Development Plan should be the basis for the Trust's activities, and that the Development Plan should be based on community consultation.

Sections which seem relevant to the discussion -

1.03 - The Trust's Powers

- *Administer funds given to the Trust*
- *Purchase or acquire property*
- *etc.,*
- *Do anything else that is legal*

5.01 - Responsibilities of Directors

It is the Board's responsibility to manage all the affairs of the Trust from a strategic perspective.

The Board can exercise all of the powers of the Trust outlined in '1.04: The Trust's powers'.

(*The piece in bold is an error in the current Governing Document and should read '1.03')

As for proposing changes to the Governing Document at the AGM, in section 5.01 the Governing Document states:

The Board can create new rules, called Bye-laws, as they consider necessary for the proper conduct and management of the Trust. These Bye-laws can cover areas such as:

-The procedures for nominating, but not electing, persons to serve as Directors of the Trust

The Bye-laws, whilst they remain in force, are binding on all Members of the Trust. Consequently, Board must ensure that all Members are aware of them.

New Bye-laws must be put to a General Meeting for approval of the membership.

OSCR require prior notice of certain proposed changes, though these mainly relate to changing the charitable objects/purpose, or changing the charity's name. The two changes we have discussed do not require consent from OSCR, although they must be informed of any changes to the governing Document approved by the Membership within 3 months.

The way the bye-law relating to Director Benefit (5.03) was proposed to the Members at last year's AGM is as follows:

1. A document detailing the existing rule (5.03), the proposed bye-law, and the rationale for the proposal was sent to all Members along with the AGM Notice and Annual Report.
2. The adoption of the bye-law was proposed as part of the AGM - the vote was held immediately prior to the Election of Directors.

The document with info on last year's bye-law is attached. If the Board want to proceed with the proposal of the two bye-laws, we will prepare a similar document to send to Members. This will be discussed at the Board Meeting and, if approved, we can decide on the exact wording of the bye-laws.

The bye-law proposing the change to eligibility for Directorship was sent out to the Members. The proposal relating to use of funds - that an estimated project expenditure of £100k would require a vote by the Members - was paused to allow more research into appropriate wording.

Turbine & Subsea Cable Failure Update (Euan)

Nothing to report since the last meeting. At the last meeting held, SSE said the replacement of the cable was going as planned and the end of August completion date was likely to be met. We have a meeting with SSE on Monday 30 August, though if there are any important updates before then I'll pass these on to the Board.

The insurance claim hit the max. payout of £250k during June. Bakertilly recommended proceeding with the payment of funds to RPG, which we agreed to. Everything from the RPG end was signed and sent back to Bakertilly.

The July invoice to SSE, based on electricity generated for the local grid, was £3,297.91. This was approved by SSE and we are awaiting payment. This takes the total income generated through this agreement with SSE to £22,616.31.

The turbine is now generating again at full power. Regarding the outage planned for September, continued payment from SSE through the CMZ has not yet been confirmed; however, if this is confirmed, it will be for less than received so far, as the outage covers the southern isles. It's likely we will be allowed to generate at around 5%.

Power Purchase Agreement Update (Euan)

We are waiting for the funds to be paid out by COOP bank. As per last update, £150k will be transferred to HCD, £100k will be placed in the new account, operated by Coop Bank, for the Equity Cure.

Sarah's Handover Update (Euan)

Updates on the projects Sarah was working on -

Tree Ark Accreditation - I worked with Chris to go over the outstanding actions to prepare us for the Woodland Trust's 2-part audit. The records we are keeping are in good order, however we have spent the last week uploading these to the Tree Ark folder on the shared drive - as keeping digital records, in excel spreadsheet form, is best practice. Chris has done a good job of organising everything and will work with Jordan to ensure everything is kept up to date. The first part of the audit went well and I'm confident we'll get the accreditation after the site visit.

Community Space Works - We have completed some of the bits of work which Building Control wanted to see before we'd pass the inspection: a new handrail, and some multi-coloured tape in the toilets (a visual aid). A new handrail has been fitted on the interior of the disabled toilet door has been fitted - this seems strange as there was no mention of it by Building Control. I'm assuming the loft insulation was taken out as per Building Control instruction - Sarah's June update says, 'tidying up in the loft space around the light fittings.' The toilet doors in the male and female WCs were not refitted as planned. Sarah had requested an inspection from BC, we have yet to hear anything from them.

Summer Raffle - We've received another couple of prizes for the raffle. I'll collect the raffle books from Jackies, Shawbost Mill, and the Post Office before the end of August. I think we discussed drawing the raffle at the AGM, but will bring it up at the meeting.

All raffle books have been now collected. Some more tickets have been sold to visitors to Raebhat. Total sales to date: £212.80

HR Audit Update (Euan)

I met with Phoenix Group on two more occasions, providing additional info and discussing the areas of focus for the HR audit. Leona Taylor is leading the audit. During the first stage we gathered info on the existing HR processes. The second stage is for Leona to hold interviews with each Director and member of staff. Lastly, a draft report will be produced by Phoenix, we'll have a chance to comment, and then

a final report prepared. Leona would like to hold all the interviews between 30 August and 24 September - I'll bring this up at the meeting and check if it suits everyone.

I've copied a few bits from the project brief below:

HR Audit Areas of Focus:

Connection to Purpose and Strategy - How clear and connected is everyone to the strategy and purpose of Horshader.

Hygiene factors – Does Horshader have in place or have access to all the basic hygiene factors to operate efficiently and grow with ambition. This will cover areas like pay, role design, how team is structured, recruitment, etc.

Engaged and Developed Team – How engaged are the team, what development support exists and how does this operate.

The estimated end date for the project is the week beginning 18 October.

External Funding Update (Euan)

The application to extend Support and Connect funding to 2023 has now been submitted and we are awaiting feedback. If successful, this would bring in over £30k of funding across 2022/23.

Linda Cunningham of CNES sent an update regarding our bid to UK Community Renewal Fund. The decision was originally due by the end of July. Given the projects were meant to run in a tight 8-month period (August 21 to March 22), we are already late in starting, and will face an increasing challenge the longer we wait. We have had no other feedback.

Despite the challenges, I am keeping fingers crossed we get the funding as it would enable us to run some great projects, all in line with our development plan and charitable objects, without using Trust funds. Some info from Linda copied below:

“The indications are that UK Govt has punted all 177 Scottish CRF bids to Scottish Govt to give a comment on strategic fit, deliverability and equalities, by the week ending 6 August, therefore there has been slippage. Needless to say, that this is not helpful on a number of levels.

Without a hint of irony, delaying this a week or weeks down the line is going to impact on deliverability. Already challenging timescales will become more challenging unless this is expedited fast (assuming success of course). It may be that Scottish Govt will refuse to comment because of the ongoing acrimony between them and UK Govt on UK SPF.”

A few new funds have opened up - Gaelic Communities Fund (Community Land Scotland), Islands Green Recover Fund - and the CNES Crown Estate fund is due to open in September. I haven't spent much time on funding so far this month, but I'm going to do some research and planning this week.

We're still waiting for another few decisions on funding applications, which I'll update on when I get feedback.

Staff Update (Euan)

Everyone is getting on ok and seem to be enjoying being back at Raebhat. Most staff have taken annual leave during August.

In the new school term, Anna is now working 3 days for CNES at Sgoil an Taobh Siar. She is contracted to do 22.5hrs per week for Horshader, which she is fulfilling by working full days on Monday and Friday, Wednesday afternoons, and by running evening and weekend events. Anna is keeping a weekly record of her hours.

I haven't started recruitment for the Tree Ark Nurseryperson post as I was waiting for a response from the CNES Crown Estate administrators regarding the project. We have around £2500 remaining from the £9000 grant. Using the remainder of the grant, we could bring in a new Tree Ark Nurseryperson till the end of November. I'll bring this up again at the meeting and check everyone is still happy with the suggested approach - if so, we can begin start recruiting at the end of next week.

Sarah still needs to return office keys and laptop. We sent a formal letter last week requesting the items be returned by Friday 27 August; Sarah replied giving apologies for failing to do so by now.

Don has been signed off sick for 2 weeks. Billy is managing the grass rota in Don's place.

The details of the Tree Ark Post will be confirmed after the AGM.

Community Events Programme Update (Euan)

An events plan for the next quarter, plus the christmas events towards the end of the year, is attached to the meeting files. The christmas event dates are not final - I'll bring it up at the meeting and we can try to set a firm date.

We're planning to restart the Coffee Morning and Blasta Lunch Club from October. Outdoor and health and wellbeing events will continue as part of Slàn san Dachaigh. Gaelic classes and music lessons will soon be advertised.

Activities for children will be planned during the school holidays in October. We approached TOST proposing collaboration for the Fireworks event in November. The Christmas events will take place on 11 December.

Slàn san Dachaigh (Healthy at Home) Update (Anna)

Prescription deliveries continue every Monday, Wednesday (Derick) and Friday afternoon.

Ceilidh san Dachaigh - harpist and singer Katie Mackenzie will bring private concerts in the homes of those who are housebound in the Dail Mor - Siabost area. If a Director knows of anyone in the community who would benefit with a house concert, please get in touch with Anna.

Weekly walks will resume on Monday 30 August at 7pm leaving and parking at the Shawbost free church. The walk is open to all abilities.

Surfing for 8–18-year-olds will take place on Dail Mor beach on Saturday 11 September at 2pm with Surf Lewis and Harris.

The sea swimming block in July on Shawbost beach with Immerse Hebrides was a great success. Immerse Hebrides have now continued to run 7am dips every Monday and 6:30pm on Friday, both of which seem well-attended.

Anna has been working on the map exhibition and editing together drone footage for advertising.

If the board have ideas of other activities they would like to see happening in the area, please contact Anna.

Covid Services Update (Euan)

The last funded Blasta Ready Meal delivery takes place on 27 August. Just over 200 meals delivered in August. We are planning to return to the monthly lunch club model from October.

Jordan and Anna have taken over Horshader Shopper. A few changes will be made to the service to bring it back to the way it was originally designed, this should make the process simpler for users and HCD staff, encouraging more users.

Prescriptions - Slàn san Dachaigh update

Horshader Map/Mapa Sgìre Thorsiadar Update (Euan)

The Map exhibition which will open at Raebhat House from 24 September to 22 October. Exhibition content includes current and historic maps of the local area, Lewis, and the Hebrides, drone footage of the Horshader area, and related archive material provided by Comann Eachdraidh an Taobh Siar. We are aiming to gather information (memories, placenames) which will be used as part of the design of the Horshader map.

The Board thought the Mapa Sgìre Thorsiadar video was excellent. The video has been shared to social media to promote the upcoming exhibition.

Dail Mòr & Dail Beag Beach Facilities (Euan)

After various conversations and consultations over the last few years regarding the facilities at the beaches in Dail Mòr and Dail Beag, a meeting has been set up for 7 September to discuss a joint approach to developing the beaches.

The stakeholder groups invited to participate - Horshader Community Development, Dalmore and Dalbeg Common Grazings, Carloway Community Council, Carloway Community Association, Damore Estate, Dalmore Cemetery Committee. I plan to attend representing Horshader.

I think arranging the meeting is a sensible way to look at the kinds of facilities that may be needed, discuss how consultation should be carried out, and consider how the stakeholders will work together.

To give a little context, Horshader conducted a short consultation on beach facilities (Dail Beag, Dail Mòr, Siabost) in summer 2020. The intention was to identify and progress development of facilities which were supported by a clear majority of respondents. We received useful feedback from residents, however the wide range of opinions regarding developments led us to reconsider the original approach and plan to return with a more detailed consultation when we had the resources available. One lesson to be learned from the 2020 consultation was that we failed to directly consult with stakeholders like the village grazings. The 2020 project ultimately resulted in the repair of a bridge near Dail Beag beach and the adoption of the access paths to each of the beaches being added to the Support and Connect grass-cutting rota.

Euan reported back from the virtual meeting of stakeholders (7 September), which was useful as groups were able to share info on proposed developments – research already carried out, funding secured, etc. Consultation feedback gathered by Horshader will be anonymised and shared with the group of stakeholders. The Board recommended continued attendance at the meetings.

Security Review – HCD Facilities Update (Euan)

The Tree Ark security work (installation of cameras and security lights, erection of entrance gate) is in progress, with an estimated completion date of end of September.

The estimated completion date will be reviewed.

Tree Ark Update (Chris)

We are now in the final stages of accreditation for the Ark. Having completed the online part and now we await the on-site inspection in October. This enables us to sell trees as part of the Woodland Trust grant scheme. The requested documentation has been forwarded to the auditor, who is satisfied with our processes, and has been very helpful so far.

Growing Sites Update (Chris)

Grinnivat Rd

Over the past month crops are growing on and most crub holders have already been harvesting some produce.

However, some holders are not using their outside beds. The main reason cited is time, now that most are back to work full time

Also, Mrs Fiona Knap has unfortunately had to leave the allotments. We do however have others on the waiting list ready for next season

Dalmore

Herbicide applied; mares tail still a problem will be treating it again in the next few weeks.

Community Gardening Update (Chris)

The tubs are being fed and watered weekly.

The gardening work at Shawbost Mill is complete.

Support and Connect Update (Don)

Grass-cutting continues to run smoothly. We have 30 households on the fortnightly rota, along with some non-domestic sites around the community. Billy, Adam, and Ruairidh have done the bulk of the cutting along with Don. We've used other young locals, like Daniel Harrison, to cover when regular cutters are on leave. As Adam and Ruairidh are leaving HCD at the end of August, we're trying to arrange another couple of casual workers who can help with the project until the cutting seasons ends in October. The requirement for additional support is heightened as Don will be off sick, after undergoing surgery, for the first half of September.

Derick is managing the bus runs very well, with support from Jordan. Over the past month there have been hires by Shawbost School, Sgoil an Taobh Siar, individuals travelling to Carloway surgery, and parents of pre-school children travelling to Shawbost school.

HCD Welcome Packs Update (Jordan)

The rest of the welcome packs have been delivered - to 3 new houses in South Shawbost - while Fiona Knape was given a gift (but not another governing document) as a welcome to her new home.

Email regarding Beach Safety at Dail Beag (Euan)

A resident of Dail Beag, and HCD member - Alisdair Wiseman - contacted us, CNES, and Alisdair Allan regarding beach safety at Dail Beag. Alisdair was extremely concerned after seeing one incident of sea swimmers finding themselves in difficulty - the coastguard was called, though fortunately the swimmers-in-trouble were helped by a family member. On a separate occasion Alisdair spoke to another visitor who reported rescuing another group of swimmers. Both incidents occurred this summer.

Colm Fraser of CNES responded with some helpful information, though ultimately said that the CNES committee with responsibility for beach safety signage was 'in transition' and was not likely to act on the request.

I looked into the matter, seeking advice from members/volunteers of the Coastguard and RNLI, and found RNLI guidance on the design of safety signage. CNES also provided info on where responsibility lies - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/931295/Review_of_the_legal_responsibility_for_beach_safety.pdf

The responsibility seems to lie with the land-owner and the local authority, however I can't see either acting anytime soon. Do the Board think this is a project for Horshader to investigate?

We will contact the ward councillors and CNES regarding the lack of action to date.

Email regarding HCD Project Expenditure in 2020

Received Monday 6 September, HCD member Neen Mackay asks for an investigation into HCD project expenditure in 2020, on behalf of the Dalbeag and Dail Mor Grazings Committee. Message copied below. I've started gathering info on the work referred to, but haven't done much as I've been really busy.

“Regarding the recent work paid for by Horshader giving access to the Wiseman’s Croft at the road end.

We would like a full enquiry as to how this money was granted to what appears to be one person and that the committee were misled in granting this money. This access is not for the Dalbeg walk, no where near it, and appears that only one person is benefiting from this access.

I also note a sign on the Croft gate encouraging visitors to pop into their art gallery. This goes very much against the policies of how Horshader money is spent. We would all like a private access to our crofts.

And a question, possible suggestion is that Mr Wiseman is asked to reimburse Horshader for this work.”

The bridge repair mentioned by Neen Mackay was carried during the Coasta Walk Upgrade project – commissioned in January 2020 and completed in September 2020. Project work included: replacing waymarkers and styles, gps-mapping the route, and replacing 2 bridges in Dail Beag. The two bridges do provide access to crofts, and are not on common land, however both are useful in that they provide access to the coast. It was noted that the bridge referred to was not part of the coastal walk route, however the area of the coast that it connects to is popular with walkers and was therefore an important part of the project. A letter of response will be drafted detailing the circumstances of the work.

Actions from July Meeting

All the actions were completed.

Membership Applications

There was one membership application from Christina Finlayson which was approved.

Any other business

Flora announced her resignation as a Director and Chairperson of the Trust. She plans to attend the AGM as a Member and does not intend to stand for election. Flora spoke of the successes and challenges the Trust had faced in recent times, and of her belief the Trust is in a better position than it was when she became involved, due to the hard work of Directors, Staff, Volunteers, and community. Everyone thanked Flora for her contribution to the Trust since joining the Board in 2018.

Actions from the Board Meeting on 7 September 2021

Be vigilant regarding Covid rules: All Staff

Communicate AGM details with Members: Jordan

Arrange HCD Welcome Packs for new residents: Jordan

Prepare presentation of 2020 activities for AGM: Euan

Develop events plan: Euan

Progress applications for external funding: Euan