

Minutes the Board Meeting on 24 June 2021

Present

Flora Macleod (Chair), Fiona Jefferson, Innes Harrison, Domhnall Macdonald, Euan MacLeod (Development Manager), Sarah Fraser (Projects Manager).

Welcome

Flora welcomed everybody to the meeting.

Approval of May Minutes

There was some discussion over the wording of the May minutes. A few changes will be made to the section covering the proposal of the Old Church project. The minutes will be sent to the Directors by email for further discussion, with the intention of having them approved at the July Board Meeting.

Issues from the updates

Draft Accounts and AGM Prep

Draft Accounts are attached to the Board Meeting email. There are a few sections requiring input from the Directors. Calum can come for a meeting to discuss the accounts in more detail. Message from Calum:

“I enclose draft accounts for review and comment.

The trustees report will need to be updated for the activities of 2020 and in particular the impact of COVID on the activities of the charity and your response and the impact of the cable failing.

There are a couple of items to highlight at this point:

Page 3 Related parties The disruption caused by the cable failing needs to be referred to and I have put this text in as a start.

Pages 6-9 Audit report This is now becoming a document in itself as it keeps getting expanded and now stretches to 4 pages. In summary, we plan to issue a clean, unqualified audit report.

Page 12 Going concern The events of 2020 make it necessary to include more detailed consideration of going concern and the directors assessment of it. Again, this text is in as a starting point and can be edited as appropriate.”

As a starting point, Euan will draft the sections requiring input from HCD. The text will be sent to the Directors for comment. We will arrange a meeting with Calum to discuss things further. At the meeting we will discuss the service provided by CIB and how we can improve internal financial management. Recruiting a finance officer was one suggestion.

Insurance Claim Update (Euan)

The claim up to 31 May 2021 has been calculated at **£228,341**. As such it looks likely that we will hit the £250k maximum claim between now and the point where the cable is repaired (est. August). The funds will be paid into the RPG account.

Jordan continues to provide Bakertilly with the requested info. Communication has been straightforward.

Turbine & Subsea Cable (Euan)

Cable repair is on track according to SSE. Due August 2021.

We have received just over £9,000 from SSE as part of the power purchase agreement set up to cover the electricity we are generating for the local grid. This payment covered part of March and all of April. We will continue to submit invoices until the cable is repaired. These payments reduce the overall insurance claim. If we hit the maximum insurance claim of £250k, the payments will provide additional income to RPG.

Power Purchase Agreement (Euan)

The PPA contract is now all signed and agreed. Smartest Energy prepared an additional side letter to ammend information in the contract which had become outdated. The side letter has gone back to our lawyers to sign, it will be sent to Smartest once ready. This will allow Smartest to process the PPA.

As per previous minutes, the amount currently held in the RPG account is around £400k. Once deductions for RPG operating costs, and the £100k equity cure account, HCD should receive 150k-200k. The funds will be released once the PPA is finalised.

Development Plan Meeting Update (Euan)

We have a meeting planned for Tuesday 29th June. Beforehand I'll send out the existing DP document (the 2020 sheet), along with the results of our most recent community consultations (2020 and 2018), and a few examples of development plans by other organisations.

The aims of the meeting: The purpose of the meeting is to review the existing Development Plan - which covered 2020, to discuss projects to add to the DP, and to approve the DP for the remainder of 2021 OR to set out an action plan - with short term actions - with the aim of approving the 2021 DP as soon as possible.

The meeting will be held at 7pm. We discussed the finite life of the turbine and the potential for future energy projects to replace the turbine income. The updated Development Plan will guide our approach to projects and fundraising.

External Funding Update (Euan)

A few new funds have opened – e.g. Island Communities Fund run by Inspiring Scotland. I'm looking at submitting the app for an electric van but need to spend a bit more time on funding over the next few weeks. I've started on an application to the Event Scotland Covid Recovery Events and have planned for a late August fun day date.

CNES recently announced that our application to the UK Community Renewal Fund is being considered as part of the full bid to the UK Government. Last week we returned an updated application form to the CNES fund officers after they had reviewed the original form – they gave advice on the best way to word a few sections. Our application is based on running several project activities under the themes: Skills, Communities and Places, and Businesses. If approved by UK Gov, we will receive £69,000 which will fully fund all activities and cover a percentage core staff costs and overheads.

As per previous minutes, project activities were designed in line with my development plans for the 8-month funded period (August 21 – March 22) and will be possible without additional staff or support. Several funded projects have recently ended or are due to end before August – which means we have sufficient capacity within the staff to deliver the UK CRF project. We should hear the final decision at the end of July.

We discussed the approach to fundraising taken by Staff. Euan has had a degree of freedom to design projects and write funding applications since starting in post in 2019. This approach has brought more than £185k as external funding which has been used to run projects for the benefit of the community, and to recruit project staff. 12 staff members have been directly funded through fundraising during this period. The 15 funded projects have all been developed by Euan. Input on projects from HCD Staff and Directors would be helpful – the quarterly projects meetings will provide a forum for additional projects for which we can seek funding. To date Euan has had no strict guidance on fundraising – e.g. no cap on max amount of funding applied for.

Staff Update (Euan)

Derick Maclennan started in post earlier this month. After a few days of induction, and after getting the necessary disclosure check, he has taken over all bus driving duties. Other than the bus, Derick has assisted with Covid Services. Glad to have him on board!

The second Kickstart funded Horticultural Assistant started in post earlier this month. Scott Mackay from South Bragar has made a good start to work at HCD and is enjoying the role. Scott has a chequered past when it comes to employment and will require a closer eye to be kept on him than some of the other junior staff members. In saying this, he seems to be fitting into the team very well and should benefit from having a good group of colleagues to lean on.

I'm getting through the quarterly meetings with staff under my line management and will be finished by the end of the week. I've attached the Quarterly Staff Objectives sheet, though this is subject to minor changes for the staff members I haven't yet met with. As part of the process, we are updating the Disclosure of Interests Register.

As part of the return to basing all staff at Raebhat House – which may be possible from late July – Jordan is reviewing the existing IT. We have several new staff members and need to work out where everyone will be based, and how everyone will get the access to IT that they require. It's likely we'll switch to a hot desking system for part-time staff. Looking forward to getting back to the office!

Don is due to have surgery in August. It's likely he'll be absent for a few weeks. Billy will cover as the coordinator of grass cutting during any absence.

Covid Services (Update) (Euan)

200+ Blasda Meals were delivered to over-65s this month. July is the final funded month of the project. If all goes to plan with the easing of Covid restrictions, we will be in a position to return to running the lunch club as an event. I've started looking for funding to re-start the lunch club.

Prescription Deliveries – see Anna's update.

Horshader Map/Mapa Sgìre Thorsiadar (Update) (Euan)

Alisdair Wiseman has agreed to design the map, which is a good step forward with the project. I'm sure he'll produce something of very high quality. James's contribution to the project – a musical composition - sounds excellent and will be a great way to publicise the exhibition. I've attached James's composition.

The only change to the project plan sent round for the May meeting is the target date for the final map design has been pushed back to end of December.

Security Review – HCD Facilities Update (Euan)

The review is ongoing. I've discussed the Tree Ark and Growing Sites with Chris. For the Tree Ark, we want to install cameras and security lights (motion sensor). I haven't looked up the cost of this yet but will get onto it asap. Chris is also fencing the front entrance to the facility and will have this ready by the end of June.

Don (Monday, Tuesday) and Chris (Wednesday – Friday) will take responsibility for ensuring the barn is always locked, other than when in use. The recent issue of the barn being open is due to a broken lock on the barn door. Don is arranging for the door to be fixed.

Costs for the installation of lights and cameras will be sought as a priority action.

Policies and Procedures Update (Euan)

Document Control Register has been updated. I hope we can discuss the existing policies/procedures at the meeting and identify any new ones that we require, or those that require an update. The existing documents appear in good shape and nothing major springs to mind, in terms of policies we are missing.

We will review the updated Document Control Register and consider if there are any gaps in governance as well as what may need to be updated.

Quarterly Newsletter Update (Euan)

I'm preparing the newsletter for the beginning of Q3. There's lots of good content already – lots of great photos from last quarter's events - but let me know if you have any items for it. I'll send a draft round by the end of the week.

Copies will be put to Shawbost Post Office and Ionad na Seann Sgoile as previously agreed.

Slàn San Dachaigh Update (Anna)

Prescriptions continue every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoon.

Fitness & outdoor sport

- Surf Lewis ran two successful events - paddle boarding session for adults on Loch Raoinnehat on 29th May & Surfing on 5th June for 10-18 years at Dail Mòr. Both events allowed for up to 8 spaces and were fully booked.
- Immerse Hebrides's block of open water swimming sessions on Shawbost beach has been advertised - Friday evenings at 7pm starting 9th July for 4 weeks 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th July. Still spaces available
- Kayaking with Scaladale has been booked for Friday 30th July. They will provide two instructors, kayaks and the kit. Location yet to confirmed but either Loch Raoinnehat or Loch a' Bhaile. This will be open to both adults and children.
- Children's rowing is planned for Monday 21st June on Loch a' Bhaile and for the school holidays on the 5th July.
- A second block of Community Walks is being planned for later this summer

I am developing a Horshader Map pack which will go to each house in the area, aiming to engage with residents – particularly those who are still shielding and staying at home most of the time. Packs will go out in good time before the Map exhibition and will seek the memories residents have of local places.

The Gaelic talk by Calum MacLeod (minister) is now edited and will be posted online soon. I'm working on the next batch of videos (Gaelic and English) to post on social media.

Finally, I've set up a Horshader Youtube Channel. We will upload all the videos produced over the past 12 months to the channel, as a way of archiving the footage. It can also then be more easily shared from youtube to our social media and website.

Tree Ark Update (Chris)

Pricking out of the rowan is now completed we now have over 4 thousand in cell and growing on

The alder and birch are now at the stage of pricking out and potting on

Aspen shoots are now being processed and this continue for the next few months.

Growing Sites Updates (Chris)

Grinnivat

Plant sale advertised on Facebook for next Tuesday the 22nd June

Dalmore

Rota has been lifted, social distancing and hand sanitizing still in force.

Community tubs

To go out into the community Monday the 21st

Covid Services Update (Sarah)

Horshader Shopper

The weekly town pick up / delivery service continues. Not a great deal to update, only that we will be extending the service to over 65's and circulating info by email / SM

Jordan and I continue to prep the orders and Derick has taken over from James and is carrying out the run to town on a Wednesday morning.

Horshader Filing System – Directors Access Update (Sarah)

Jordan has made the shared drive accessible to everyone's email. I will send an email around detailing how you go about accessing. You can either access the files online via Microsofts website or you can download the OneDrive Application. The RPG files and reports which show the turbines output etc are held in paper format so anything in particular that may be of use, will be scanned and uploaded on a monthly basis.

The following folders will be uploaded to the Directors folder: Finance, Governance, Staff. Sarah will make sure the shared drive is up and running.

Community Space (Raebhat) Works Completion Update (Sarah)

Below is the 'snagging list' agreed upon between Malcolm Crate and Building Control. [I am still chasing O'Mac to set up a meeting or get a start date for works.](#)

- 1. Recessed light fittings need to be adjusted to make a tight fit with ceiling and they need to be shrouded to allow insulation to be laid over in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Donald when he inspected the roof found that the insulation had been either pulled away from the fittings or was covering them against the installation guidance.*
- 2. The men's urinal requires hazard tape to be applied to the white Respatex around it.*
- 3. Doors to WC cubicles need emergency release operable from outside the cubicle, the door to the cubicles needs to be hung outward opening or be altered so that it can be easily removed in an emergency*
- 4. Ceiling hatches need to be insulated and fitted with a flexible seal*
- 5. Roof space ventilation was a requirement but he agreed that we could review the roof space after a significant period of time to confirm whether there were any condensation problems. If there were none he would be willing to sign off without vents being added. We will need to confirm this one once you are on site doing the snagging.*
- 6. A handrail needs to be fitted to the wall side of the ramp which should be continuous, extend as far as practicable 300mm beyond the top and bottom of the flight, be wreathed or scrolled at the ends, have a suitable profile to allow a firm grip and contrast in colour to the adjacent wall*

It seems the exterior finishing (mainly the access way from the fire exit) was not included in the original plans. Some more discussion is needed here, as O'Mac will not be responsible for this. We could potentially get a quote for these works or Chris and team can carry out the work if there is time in his schedule over the Summer.

Malcolm Crate had previously advised to leave the access path as it is until the snagging work is complete and the completion certificate received. At that point, a local contractor could be hired to turn access steps into an accesible ramp.

Tree Ark UKSIG Accreditation Update (Sarah)

The latest update from the Woodland Trust Office is that we are on the list for a Summer audit. The audit will most likely be carried out remotely.

Chris and I are currently working on the implementation of Plant Passports, clear signage and H&S around the site.

Directors Open Afternoon Update (Sarah)

Monday 12th July 12 – 4pm (to be confirmed, please let me know if you are not available)

Would be great to see everyone on the day, even if you can only drop in for a while. I'm hoping to have this set up outdoors at Raebhat (weather depending) with soup, sandwiches, tea and coffee.

The afternoon will be informal, relaxed and most importantly a chance for board members to meet the staff and see what we do.

A number of Directors and Staff are unavailable for the date. Another date will be selected for the event, probably in August once the Covid restrictions have been lifted.

Quarterly Projects Meeting Update (Sarah)

The quarterly projects meeting will be held on Tuesday 27th July. The meeting will be open for directors to come along and sit in if it is of interest.

The agenda for the meetings will be a work in progress as it is the first time we will have had such a meeting. We will start with a general overview of how our projects are progressing and performing. Then open the floor to comments, suggestions or issues. Then, make a plan of action for the next quarter.

Horshader WindBreak / Woodland Update (Sarah)

We met with Viv Halcrow who is the rep from the Woodland Trust, to re-start discussions around how the Tree Ark and the Woodland Trust can work together to help community members plant trees on their land. The partnership between ourselves and the Woodland Trust is important as they provide a grant to crofters to help them buy and plant trees. What is holding things back a little is the Woodlands grant does not include cover for fencing costs (deer fencing is important to have to protect seedlings) so it may prove too pricey for people in the community to see the benefit of the grant. We are looking into ways of bridging this gap, perhaps by seeking funding for the fencing element from another source. Will update as things progress.

In the case of the larger woodland aspirations, Viv was given the most recent land survey completed by Mick Blunt in November last year which she will study and come back to us to hopefully pin point an area of ground suitable for planting. Viv is due back up on the island next month so we will continue to meet with her, and set up a focus group in due course.

Tree Ark Project Development Update (Sarah)

In addition to the accreditation for the Tree Ark I am identifying areas of the project/business that require development. Chris and I will work together to create an operational business plan for the short to medium term (3 – 5 yrs) including policies, budgets, growth and sales projections, H&S around the site, staff training folders, uniforms, website, SM, stock control etc

Domhnall can offer support to Sarah in developing a business plan.

Dalmore and Grinnivat Growing Site Improvements (Sarah)

The growing site improvement project was put on hold due to Covid/Subsea cable failure and we decided not to prioritise it last year. However, the improvements to the growing sites are necessary. I will work closely with Chris to create a project brief/charter to put to the Board during next quarter for both sites.

Suggestion (Sarah)

Whilst thinking about how the Projects Meeting would work, I came to thinking it may be of use to hold a regular Trust Development Meeting as well. This would be in tandem with the Projects Meeting and Board Meeting. The idea would be the Quarterly Projects Meeting would follow on from the Quarterly Development meeting, then we would report back to the Board once a quarter with our progression. This would mean the monthly Board Meeting could be shrunk right down and would prioritise official board business rather than being swamped with project updates and lots of different information coming at once.

For the projects side of things the idea would be I would continue emailing round once a month with a short update on what is going on, then I would come along in person to the 3rd Board Meeting in the Quarter to give a more in depth update. The Development meeting could take the same sort of process so that both areas of work are progressing together. This is just a thought at the moment so will welcome any discussion on the night.

We agreed to trial the suggestion. Sarah will arrange and run the suggested meetings. The Trust Development Meeting will aim to increase capacity across the organisation, identify skills gaps, etc.

AGM Preparation

A date of 7th September was set. We hope that the community will be able to attend. We will invite Calum Macdonald for a meeting to go over the 2020 Draft Accounts and will ask him to attend the AGM.

Funding applications

During the discussion of funding applications, Innes declared an interest regarding an application and didn't participate in the discussion following.

The Board approved a £2,000 bursary award to Daniel Harrison, 46 South Shawbost, who has been accepted to City of Glasgow College.

Actions from the last meeting

Flora was satisfied that the actions had been progressed.

There was further discussion of the proposed village clean up of scrap, machinery, and old vehicles. Sarah will develop this project and research what can be done to tidy up the villages, particularly where there may be environmental hazards.

Membership applications

Ordinary Membership Applications were approved for: Innes Harrison; Christopher Marron; and John Gordon.

Any other business

Staff Training

Sarah is undertaking training on Fundraising and intends to start a qualification in Project Management – e.g. PRINCE2. The application to the UK Community Renewal Fund includes a budget for training for the period of August 2021 to March 2022, as such we will wait to hear whether the application has been successful before Sarah enrolls in a suitable course. The final decision is expected by the end of July.

HR Audit

Innes has arranged the agreed HR Audit by Phoenix Group. The audit will be carried out between Phoenix and HCD staff. Everyone is looking forward to the process.

Casual Staff for Summer

The Board agreed that £500 of the Additional Staff budget should be used to provide some young people in the community with paid work. The hours of work will mainly be used for grass-cutting, deliveries, and leafleting. Hiring young people on a casual basis will enable the team to cover holidays of HCD staff – core and project.

Welcome Packs

HCD Welcome Packs will be delivered to the new residents in the community.

Governing Document -Quorum

Fiona thought that the meeting may not have the required number of Directors. The Governing Document states that 4 Elected Directors are required for a quorum, however it also states the minimum number of Directors as 3. We will investigate this as an urgent matter. In the long run, efforts will be made to recruit additional Directors.

Actions from the Board Meeting on 27 May 2021

Be vigilant regarding Covid rules: All Staff

Keep on top of annual leave: All Staff

Arrange quarterly projects and trust development meetings: Sarah

Maintain Procedure for Projects Reporting: Sarah

Develop new projects: Village clean-up: Sarah

Arrange HCD Welcome Packs for new residents: Jordan

Complete security review across HCD facilities: Euan

Deal with any required updates to Governance: Euan

Progress applications for external funding: Euan