

Minutes of the HCDT Board Meeting on 11 January 2022

Present: Carole Miller, Fiona Jefferson, Innes Harrison, John Gordon, Euan MacLeod (Development Manager)

Venue: Meeting held virtually using Microsoft Teams.

○ **Matters arising from minutes of previous meeting**

- Comunn Eachdraidh an Taobh Siar were delighted to accept the offer of a lunch/dinner funded by HCD. They sent a message of thanks and will decide on a date at their first meeting of 2022.
- The Old New Year online event is going ahead on 12 January, via HCD Facebook page. Carole has arranged the event, which will be led by her, Elsa McTaggart and Gary Lister. Elsa and Gary were pleased to work with HCD to put on the event after the December events were cancelled due to Covid.
- Jordan updated the IT review based on the most recent feedback from the board. Desktop PCs and Laptops will be ordered to replace outdated office equipment. In place of a SmartScreen, two large smart TV's will be ordered for use in the office and community space. Extenders have been used to provide wi-fi in the community space.

○ **Communications:**

- We have received positive feedback received regarding the newly established practice of sending the monthly meeting minutes to members by email or post.

○ **External Funding Applications:**

- * Objectives for 2022 and beyond will be set at the planning meeting (date in early 2022 tbc).
- * Calmac Community Fund approve a grant of £2,000 towards the costs of a monthly lunch club (previously held at Raebhtat House in 2019/20). The board approved the project, which will aim to start in February. There was a discussion of local cooks who could be asked to run the events. The event could tie in with visits by Shawbost School, or Nicolson Institute students participating in Duke of Edinburgh awards.

○ **Staff Matters:**

- * 3 applications were received for the Head Gardener post; however, only one was deemed suitably qualified. A brief interview will be held with one candidate to assess suitability for the role, with a second stage interview planned for mid-February. With office staff taking care of admin needed for the 2022 growing season at Grinnivat Rd and Dalmore, the garden team preparing the growing sites, and Tree Ark workers in place, we will take our time in appointing the right candidate for the Head Gardener position.
- * No applications were received for the Slàn san Dachaigh Officer post despite a few expressions of interest. The post will be readvertised, with the advert being posted in Gaelic and English. Gaelic written skills will be removed from the essential criteria as many native speakers may not be confident in writing.
- * The new Tree Ark Assistants have made a promising start and are busy building knowledge, collecting cuttings, and preparing for this year's seedlings.
- * The draft Office Manager job description and person specification was reviewed. Directors will comment on the advert by Friday 14 January. The ad will be made public after being approved by the board.
- * The Christmas meal for staff and directors will be planned as soon as possible.

○ **Finance Update:**

- * The monthly management accounts for November have now been prepared, with the December accounts expected soon. At the end of November, a healthy net profit was reported, which is welcome after the difficulties of 2020/21 caused by Covid and the sub-sea cable failure. The trust remains in a strong financial position.
- **Business Update:**
 - * Government guidance projects a return to indoor events by Friday 24 Jan.
 - * Staff 1 to 1 meetings will be complete by 24 Jan.
 - * Euan and the team are covering Slàn san Dachaigh duties till a new officer is recruited.
 - * The membership list has been reviewed and updated. A handful of full members living outwith the HCD area remain on the list with no detail of their eligibility. A draft email will be reviewed by the directors before being sent out to these individuals.
 - * The turbine has had persistent problems since November, undergoing regular repair and maintenance work, before breaking down again. We are in regular communication with Enercon, who have provided brief updates throughout. Enercon's updates have not contained enough detail to be of much use; the other island generators have expressed the same dissatisfaction with Enercon, and CPOH has written to them requesting a regular monthly meeting, aiming to improve communication. The turbine is currently operating again.
 - * The island community generators have submitted a collective bid to SSE CMZ tender. If successful, this will enable the our turbine to generate at 10-15% of total capacity during islanded periods – i.e. when the island is powered by the diesel station at battery point. This is around 22 days per year. Currently we are not able to generate at all during these periods.
- **Smoke and Heat Alarms:**
 - * Diane Campbell approached the trust regarding possible funding support for residents installing integrated smoke and heat alarms by February 2022. The board agreed it was worth investigating. We will speak with Diane, as well as contacting TIG to see what type of support they offer – as it appears funding is available for over-60s. We will also speak with the local fire station.
- **Musical and Digital Ideas:**
 - * We will work on establishing a local singing group that will meet regularly and make use of visiting tutors. The group will be relaxed and open to all. Each session will be based on learning a new song, with a focus on, but not limited to, Gaelic and Scots. Carole will take a lead on this and work with Euan to develop the idea.
 - * We will develop a project with an aim of providing residents with laptops/tablets and internet access (possibly provided by dongles) to enable those without internet, and those that are not confident in using IT, to access entertainment and other content online. We are aware that some residents have been unable to access the online events commissioned by the trust, and wish to rectify this. We will write to mobile and internet providers to request donations of dongles or other suitable equipment.
- **Mary Pop Ins Proposal by Angela Macleod and May Smart:**
 - * The Board thought there was merit in the proposal, though much to clarify, and agreed to invite Angela and May to the next board meeting to discuss their project.
- **Electrical Repair Workshop Proposal:**
 - * The board agreed to invite Keith Emmerson to attend the next board meeting to discuss the project. The initial proposal fits in with our charitable objects and is worth investigating.
- **Planning day for directors:**

* This will be planned as soon as practicable. The board will review in line with covid guidance.

○ **AOCB:**

* To avoid HCD meetings clashing with TOST meetings, our monthly meetings will move to Wednesday evenings.

* A newsletter will be sent out at the end of January. This will include latest trust updates on: events, job vacancies, turbine. We will also include more info on existing services that are not well known by the community, e.g. the bulk buying scheme for oil, the loom rental scheme.

* A competition to find a new logo will be launched and promoted in the newsletter. A suitable prize will be given to the winner.

Next meeting: Board Meeting, 7.00pm, 23 February 2022. The meeting will be held at Raebhat House, if possible.

The Board of the Horshader Community Development Trust