

## Minutes of Horshader Community Development Board Meeting on 23 April 2018

Venue: Raebhat House, 7.00pm

**Present:** Flora MacLeod; Mairi MacLean; Sharon MacLeod; Jimina MacLeod; Alisdair Wiseman; Alan Murray (Development Officer).

**Apologies:** Richard Macdonald; Iain MacArthur; Domhnall MacLeod.

### **Actions from last meeting**

- Flora took the Directors through the actions from the last meeting.

### **Presentation from Calum Macdonald, CIB Services**

- CIB will be picking up the bookkeeping for the month of April onwards. Angus and Calum are coming over to the office on Wednesday to work out the logistics of doing this work. Initially, they thought they might take everything over to the Stornoway office but now believe it would be best to do the work at Raebhat House.
- They intend to provide a monthly management report at the end of the third week each month including income, expenditure, balance sheet and 'interesting items'. They will provide easy to understand commentary to help all the Directors up the learning curve. And there will be every opportunity to get more information and greater detail as time passes.
- The annual accounts for the 2017 financial year, which ended on 31 December 2017, will be available by the end of May.
- There is an RPG quarterly report that must go to the Co-op Bank by the end of April for Q1 2018. CIB will get this to us by the end of this week so that Alan can pass it on to the bank.
- The quarterly VAT return is due in early May and will be worked on shortly.
- Calum committed to send on the consolidated accounts for RPG and HCDT up to December 2016 in the next week or so.
- He confirmed that around £250-300K is passed from RPG to HCDT on an annual basis – this obviously fluctuates according to the amount of energy generated and the profile of loan and interest repayments.
- In 2016, the Trust essentially broke even. Income from RPG and other grant sources was £655K and total expenditure was approximately the same. Total expenditure, excluding that associated with the turbine, was £438K. This included £56K grants provided by HCDT to other bodies, staff costs of £150K, repairs and renewals of £61K and depreciation of £57K.
- There was £600K in various bank accounts at the end of 2016. The Trust continues to have more than £85K in a single account and it would therefore be prudent to begin setting additional bank accounts to spread the funds so that no single bank account (or no sum of funds in accounts operated by related banks) exceeded £85K.
- Calum confirmed that there was no conflict of interest in CIB Services doing both our monthly management accounting and our annual audit. The audit firm is a separate enterprise from the bookkeeping company, staffed by different people.
- He also confirmed that he would bring any unusual transactions to our notice, should any become apparent.
- The primary applications that will be used to do our bookkeeping will continue to be Excel and Sage.
- CIB Services bookkeepers will probably visit the HCDT office on a two-weekly basis.
- Calum brought to the Directors' attention a letter dated late 2016 from the Co-op Bank relating to their desire to move away from funding renewable energy projects. As HCDT is not looking to raise any additional funding through the Co-op Bank, the letter is of no immediate interest. However, it would be prudent to begin exploring what we might need to do if the Bank decided to pass the HCDT debt onto another provider. Calum confirmed that this is not something we should decide to do unless we have no alternative, as the

associated fees are extremely high. It seems that nothing has been done about this letter to date.

- We agreed that it would make sense, once Board meetings have stopped being weekly, that the monthly meeting should take place in the fourth week of the month so that the Directors have access to the latest financial information.
- There was a brief conversation about the current problems with the turbine. We agreed that we needed to understand if there was any insurance policy in place to cover periods of turbine downtime.
- The Directors thanked Calum for meeting them at short notice.

### **Training for new Directors**

- We agreed to try and get as many of the Directors together as possible for a Friday or Saturday in June for Trustee Training. Alan will liaise with everyone to establish the date and confirm our requirements with Arts & Business Scotland, the company that did the training for the Féis.

### **Bank signatories**

- We agree that the Trust will proceed with the signatories that are in place now and then add the other Directors when they are available to sign the paperwork.

### **Communicating with the community**

- We agreed that we will get a newsletter out to the community in the near future. Content might include: Mairi's baby, Donnie; Alan's appointment as the Development Officer; an introduction to the new Board; the community meeting in June; a request for volunteers for the growing activities etc.; a call for Midas drivers; the 2018 growing plan; the idea of setting up a gardeners' corner; grass-cutting services; and any grants that have just been approved.
- We have not yet finalised the venue for the community meeting. It is between the old school and Raebhat House. The café might be able to provide catering.
- We will ask about communications preferences in the next newsletter.

### **Growing plan**

- Gareth Watson, Flora and David Murdo will meet shortly to develop a short-term growing plan for 2018. This will let David get on with planting and provide the time to consider the longer-term future of the Trust growing activities.

### **Talking to the Stornoway Gazette**

- We agreed to keep a low profile on this at the moment. We're happy if they don't come back for more information. However, there might be renewed interest once the EGM minutes are posted on the website.

### **Staffing**

- We confirmed that there is a pressing need to provide administrative support to Alan so that he can get to grips with the requirements of being the Development Officer. In the short term, we will try to get a student placement for the summer, starting mid-May to early June, while we consider the longer-term requirements for administrative support. We will place an advert on Facebook and offer the living wage. We need to find a way of saying that we are specifically looking for a graduate – or perhaps we can just place the ad, be specific about the requirements and eliminate any school students or school leavers when the applications come in.
- Alisdair has developed a job specification for the role of Trust Secretary – this could be followed as a template for the role spec but will need to be supported by a person spec (the personal attributes of the ideal candidate).

- We still need to understand what getting external bookkeeping support from CIB is costing the Trust so that we can make a judgement about bringing this activity in-house again.

### **Governing document**

- The governing document working group will be Mairi, Gareth Watson and Alisdair. Flora will ask Angela if she would like to participate in this group given her extensive recent experience of the workings and governance of the Trust.
- Alisdair will circulate the task brief for this group.

### **Continued support to the museums group**

- We agreed to continue enabling the museums group to use office facilities available at Raebhat House. Alisdair will advise Di Hesketh.
- Mairi and Alisdair will attend the Museum meeting in the Old School on Tuesday evening.

### **Funding applications**

- We agreed to approve the application for grant funding from Clann an Latha De (£4K) and Scaladale for a new minibus (£2.5K). We might approve further small grant applications in the short term but we really need to understand the overall financial position before making many further commitments. We certainly will not approve substantial grant applications without knowing the overall financial position, especially those coming from outside the community.
- It would be beneficial to let the other pending grant applicants know officially that no decisions will be made in the short term.

### **Live project activity**

- Alan has had feedback from David and Don regarding potential live projects. He will go through this and forward it to the Directors when ready.

**Next meeting:** Monday 30 April 2018, Raebhat House, 7.00pm

The Board of the Horshader Community Development Trust