

Abridged Minutes of the HCDT Board Meeting on 01 October 2018

Present: Flora MacLeod; Jimina MacLeod; Domhnall MacLeod; Alisdair Wiseman; and Alan Murray (Development Officer).

Apologies: Mairi MacLean.

Venue: Raebhat House.

Strategic business

- **Trust Development Plan:** Alisdair confirmed that we have a substantial amount of work to do to take the Development Plan forward. This is a discussion for another meeting but we will need to consider how we: indicate more precisely what we mean by each of the projects that we have decided to progress in the short to medium term; fully engage the community in these plans; understand the resource requirements for each of the projects; schedule the projects so that we do not place undue stress on the finite resources, human and financial, at the disposal of the Trust. Alisdair will present proposals for addressing these issues at a future meeting.
- **Budgets for 2019 and our future approach to grants and projects:** Alisdair presented a first draft of Trust budgets for the new financial year beginning 01 January 2019. The working assumption behind the creation of this initial forecast is 2018 annualised figures lifted by 2.5% to account for inflation, removing those 2018 costs that will not recur in 2019 (like café and shop costs). Nominal amounts for project expenditure (£50,000) and grant funding to projects outside the Trust (£25,000) have been included. Even with this relatively low level of expenditure on projects and grants, the total Trust expenditure in 2019 would amount to £231,426 against a forecast income of £254,420 (assuming income from the turbine of £250,000). This would leave an annual surplus of approximately £23,000. This is clearly unsustainable in the medium term and will require a fundamental modification to how we see the activities of the Trust. In particular, we will need to consider carefully the extent to which we fund projects outside the community as well as how we might vigorously and proactively seek grant funding for existing and future projects and activities.

Actions from previous meetings

- **Staff holiday entitlement:** Alan confirmed that he had sent a note to all members of staff re holiday arrangements for 2019 onwards.
- **Sharon's position with regard to the Board:** we agreed that we will formally invite Sharon to participate in Board discussions on the basis that she can bring a youthful perspective. She can attend Board meetings in person when she is able and by telephone when she is off the island. She is not a Director and she would not be entitled to vote on any decisions that were put to a ballot.
- **Christmas in the community:** we agreed to stage a Christmas party for everyone in the community on Saturday 1 December 2018, starting at 4.00pm with the lights being turned on at 6.00pm. We will do this in partnership with the local Community Council and the event will be held in the Old School. Jimina agreed to coordinate our support of the event. The Old School has agreed that we can erect a Christmas tree and Alan will ask Jordan to organise the Christmas lights. We will also provide support for a separate Christmas party for the older folk in the community.
- **Additional support to the Grazings Committee project:** Alan confirmed that the Trust will provide the additional funds required to reinstate the old croft road to the loch.
- **Flagship project:** no further work has been done on the flagship project. This will be part of a larger conversation with regard to how we take the Trust Development Plan forward.
- **Governing Document Working Group update:** Alisdair confirmed that the group had had its first meeting and is due to meet again on 3 October 2018. A valuable thing that came out

of the first discussion was that the Trust already has a Volunteer's Handbook which might provide the basis of a more accessible, plain-language governing document. Further updates will be provided as the discussion progresses.

- **Spreading Trust funds across more bank accounts:** Alan confirmed that he now has the names of other banks that would enable us to spread Trust funds so that no more than £85,000 is in a single group's bank account. Alan will approach as many banks as we need to secure Trust funds and apply to set up accounts.
- **Upgrading the community spaces at Raebhat House:** We agreed that our existing community spaces are what we will have to work with for at least the next 5 years and, as such, it would be good to follow through on the Development Plan project to upgrade these spaces. Alisdair suggested that Lesley Wiseman might create a specification for upgrading these spaces for presentation to a future Board meeting. We could then decide which elements of the specification to progress and then get quotes for the work, preferably from local contractors.
- **An exhibition of Basher's artwork:** we agreed to postpone the exhibition of Basher's work to coincide with a 'grand opening' of the upgraded community spaces in 2019.
- **The turbine insurance claim:** Alan confirmed that he is staying on top of the ongoing claim. He has been in touch with an individual who has been subcontracted by the insurance provider and will provide a further update at the next meeting.
- **Memorial garden at the Grinnivat Road polycrubs:** David Murdo is working on this and will report back when the plan is ready for consideration.
- **Mindfulness workshop:** we agreed to indefinitely postpone our plan to stage a mindfulness workshop. Flora will deal with this.
- **Newsletter name competition:** we agreed that it would be good to put a deadline on the completion of the naming competition at the local school – we agreed on the October half term which is inside the timescale for the next edition of the newsletter. Jimina will take this to the next meeting of the school governors.
- **Museum art project with the local school:** Jimina confirmed that this is in hand.
- **Installing the coffee machine in the Raebhat House kitchen:** Alan will get a quote for this work and advise the Board in due course.
- **Gift for Jim Lister:** we agreed that Alan should get in touch with the Distillery in Tarbert with a view to sending Jim a bottle of Harris gin and a presentation pack of two glasses.
- **Directors and staff event:** we will organise something for Directors and staff, either before or after Christmas.

Other business

- **Signing the minutes:** it has been pointed out that the physical copies of the minutes of our Board meetings are not being signed. Alisdair confirmed, after researching the situation, that there is no legal requirement for the minutes to be signed. However, as it is considered best practice, the Chair will in future sign a copy of the previous meeting's minutes. We will however maintain our current successful discipline of ensuring that all Directors confirm the minutes are an accurate representation of the proceedings within two days of receiving them and then posting the confirmed minutes on the website and placing them in the office. The unsigned copy will then be replaced by the signed copy following the Board meeting. Flora duly signed a copy of the last set of minutes. We agreed not to sign previous copies of the minutes.
- **Fuel poverty:** Flora indicated that she had finalised details of this year's arrangements. The sum of £100 will remain in place for 2018. Alan confirmed that forms have been sent out to all Members of the Trust.
- **Growing project van:** the white van is beginning to reach a point where repairs and maintenance are costing substantially more than the value of the vehicle. Alan will look into the possibility of a 'green' van (an electrically powered vehicle) and what funding might be available for purchase and the installation of a charging point.

- **Loom update:** the loom has not yet been serviced. Alan will continue looking into who is available to do this. Domhnall confirmed that there is little point in offering the loom up for sale as it would not yield its real value. Only one person has indicated a desire to take up the spare loom. We agreed to post a closing date for indications of interest and then proceed with interviewing candidates.
- **Norse Mill request for additional funds:** we agreed to provide the additional funds (approximately £900) requested by the Norse Mill. We also agreed that this would be the last time where we would provide additional funding. In future, we will require every body seeking funding to present final costs and we will make a single grant of funds based on the first application.
- **Update on the Heb Alpha fundraiser:** the event raised a surplus of approximately £400 over and above the £600 grant from the Trust. Over £1000 was given to Heb Alpha after the event. The hire of the Old School for the event cost £120. The event was a real success and it was agreed that it was probable that the Trust would fund future events of this nature, as long as other circumstances did not preclude this.
- **Update on the Governing Document Working Group:** Alisdair confirmed that Angela, Mairi, Gareth and he met on 24 September and had a very productive first conversation. The group is meeting again on 3 October to take things forward.
- **Monthly management reports:** the Directors briefly considered the August financial report when considering 2019 budgets earlier in the meeting. As things stand, the report merely indicates income and expenditure on an ongoing basis. Once we have budgets in place, we will be able to take full control of Trust finances. We agreed that the financial report must always be available by no later than the beginning of the last week in the month so the Board can consider it at the meeting later that same week. Alan agreed to confirm this requirement with CIB Services.
- **Cleaning up the office:** we agreed to give the office area a bit of a spring clean, removing out-of-date notices and generally squaring things up. Alan agreed to organise this.
- **Getting rid of scrap cars in the community:** this is apparently quite challenging to organise. Alan will make enquiries and report back.
- **Driving the minibus:** Alan agreed to find out if it is a legal requirement that a person cannot drive the minibus after the age of 70.

Next meeting: Thursday 25 October 2018, 7.00pm, Raebhat House.

The Board of the Horshader Community Development Trust