

## **Horshader Community Development Trust**

### **General Meeting Minutes**

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023**

Board: Carole Miller (CM), Flora Macleod (FM), Fiona Jefferson (FJ), Donald Murray (DM), Jimina Macleod(JML)

Staff: Donna MacLennan (DML)

Carole Millar opened the meeting with an introduction of the current situation with regards to the financial situation of the Trust. There is currently a cash flow issue due to the delays with the agreement for the new PPA. This has now been signed off and implemented, however, the increased funds will not be received by HCT until the next waterfall payment, due April/May 2023. We only received one waterfall payment last year and have had huge increases in electricity costs together with increased insurance, VAT and operating issues. For instance, the electricity monthly payment has increased from £700/month to over £2K/month, our VAT payments (based on the higher agreed PPA) has risen with the highest VAT payment being £33K at the end of 2022. The Trust is therefore currently running at a loss.

Donna explained what the PPA was and how it impacted on the running costs currently. However, the good news is that now the PPA has been agreed we should see an increase in the waterfall payments to the Trust.

The Board have implemented a moratorium on all grant and bursary awards until the financial situation has resolved and reserve funds replenished.

The meeting discussed lots of options for reducing costs, including looking at the grass cutting service. This is currently open to areas outwith the Horshader area at reduced rates. The prescription delivery service was also discussed. All agreed that it was a great service and the Board agreed, however, due to staffing issues as well as rising costs the Board had made the difficult decision to stop the service. It was suggested that there is nothing stopping the community forming a rota for providing the service? It was also suggested that once the cash flow issues and staffing levels improved the service could be revisited. There was discussion re the Bursary scheme, the last financial year saw a rise in the bursary awards. This was due to a temporary change in the terms and conditions, opening the scheme to all of Shawbost. This has now been reversed back to the original scheme.

It was agreed that it would be beneficial for the Trust to reintroduce the PEG (project evaluation group) to assess and evaluate any grant applications. Kathleen Murray and Chris Morrison both agreed they would be willing to be involved in the PEG group. A meeting will be arranged to see if we can enlist other members for the group and organise an initial meeting.

Carole thanked everyone for coming out and for their support during this difficult time for the Trust. As always, there is an invitation for any applications for new directors.