

ASSYNT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Note of Board Meeting held in The Lochinver Mission Meeting Room on 16 January 2017

Present:

Nigel Goldie (Chair)
Boyd Alexander
Trish Bangor-Jones
Madeline Macphail
Brendan O'Hanrahan
John Ventners

1 Apology for Absence

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Marianne Hutchison.

2 Minutes of Meeting 21 November 2016

The minutes of 21 November 2016 not yet available.

3 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Governance – New Board Members

As the meeting was not quorate, it was not possible to approve the formal appointment to the Board of Madeline Macphail, John Ventners, Trish Bangor-Jones and Brendan O'Hanrahan. It was proposed that the Chair would undertake to raise the matter with existing Board members.

5 Governance – Other Matters

The Chair spoke to his wide-ranging paper Development Plan for ACA with New Development Functions.

During discussion attendees provided a brief summary of their skills and experience. It was **AGREED** that the Chair would contact new Board members in relation to Companies House requirements.

6 Work Programme for New Body

Various issues were discussed including: a review of Development Plans; a planned meeting with HIE; the concerns of the probable lack of a VisitScotland presence in Lochinver in 2017 and onwards; and a possible Away Day to consider a future development agenda.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the usefulness of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act with regard to the current visitor centre building in Lochinver. It was **AGREED** that Boyd Alexander would investigate the possibility of registering a community interest in purchasing the building. The appropriateness of a visitor centre in the current location was debated;
- following on from the above, it was highlighted that good relations with both VisitScotland and the owners of the visitor centre building was vital. It was **AGREED** that the Chair would draft a letter to be sent to the owners of the building, highlighting the concerns of the Assynt community at the prospect of the potential closure;
- the need to keep the appropriate MSPs informed of developments with regard to the ongoing difficulties between VisitScotland and the visitor centre owners. It was suggested and **AGREED** that Trish Bangor-Jones and Madeline Macphail would draft a briefing note which would be sent to all identified MSPs;
- whether a statement should be prepared for publishing in the Assynt News which would outline the current position of the ACA; and
- the expectation that the community would be looking to the ACA to play a positive role in the delivery of a future successful visitor centre.

7 Communications

There was circulated at the meeting a paper relating to a possible ACA website. During discussion the following points were raised:

- it was important that that the ACA and its successor body, the development trust, had a voice in the community;
- it was essential that there was a website;
- the way forward was for an incremental build of the website;
- possible funding streams should be explored;
- following further discussion, it was **AGREED** that Boyd Alexander would take forward the website project and update the board on progress at the next meeting.

The Board discussed possible alternative names for the new Development Trust. It was **AGREED** that Members' suggestions would be considered at the next meeting.

The relationship between the ACA and the Assynt News was discussed in depth and it was noted there were issues to be resolved.

8 Assynt Community Association Matters

The Chair apprised the meeting of the recent history of Lochinver Mission and provided an update on the latest financial position. It was noted and welcomed that the Mission was now in a much-improved financial position and that the new tenants were re-investing in both the café and bunkhouse.

Members noted the other assets owned by the ACA which included Culag Park and the Loo at the Lighthouse.

With reference to local community bodies that claimed to be affiliated to ACA, it was unclear how many organisations were formally connected to the ACA. It was **AGREED** that Trish Bangor-Jones would investigate the matter further and report back to the next meeting.

Members discussed the Mission Archive and it was **AGREED** that Boyd Alexander would contact Steven Lockhart to try and establish ownership and working practices.

In relation to Community Grant funding the meeting agreed the need for a co-ordinated approach to applications.

9 AGM and Board Meeting Date

It was **AGREED** that the next meetings would take place in the Meeting Room, Lochinver Mission at 5.30pm on 13 February and 13 March.

10 AOB

The Chair thanked attendees for their contributions.