

Assynt Community Association

Minutes of Board Meeting held in the Archive room, Lochinver Mission
Thursday 21 December 2017 at 10:00am

Attendance

Willie Jack (Chair)
Nigel Goldie
Madeline MacPhail
Marianne Hutchison
Boyd Alexander

Apologies

None

Conflicts of interest

None

1. Minutes of meeting of 16th October 2017

It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the past meeting was an accurate record of proceedings.

2. Matters arising

None

3. Assynt Community (Trading) Ltd Update

Financial balance from NG £4,460 after transfers

WJ explained and presented the draft budget up till end 2018; there will be quarterly updates through the year

4. ACA Ltd Financial Update

Financial balance from NG £2,949 and after liabilities £2,099

WJ explained and presented the draft budget up till end 2018; there will be quarterly updates through the year

BA asked if ACA had insurance cover for the 'Loo at the light' – WJ **AGREED** to check with HC

5. DTAS Meeting

Update on ACA name and Articles of Association.

WJ and NG explained that they had discussed the changes proposed by Rory Dutton of DTAS and submitted these to him. He had just this morning come back with a few changes. The board **ASKED** WJ & NG to finalise the details of the new Articles and report back to board members by email in the New Year.

WJ suggested that the list of possible new names for ACA be put to those attending the mentoring meeting in January

6. Affiliates

a) MM proposed Seconded MH, the board **AGREED** not to use the terms 'affiliate' or 'umbrella' again in describing other groups with a relationship to ACA

b) Draft Memorandum of Understanding between ACA and all affiliate groups

Paper presented by NG - there was a general discussion on the paper presented. MM suggested that most but not all issues are one-issue projects of limited time. WJ advised that Rory Dutton had for example suggested that ACA can initiate a project then develop it but when it becomes substantive and functions then that is handed over to another company possibly ACA's trading subsidiary. MM asked about grants being applied for through ACA such as the Cludgie/ Waste group; NG advised that ACA was responsible for the money received. MH suggested that meetings be diarised so that all members of the board and other associated groups could be aware of them. NG offered to tidy up the Memorandum and the board **AGREED** to agree the detail by email.

c) Loo at Lighthouse

Leigh Sedgley has advised WJ that we are still waiting for Robbie MacKenzie to agree on the lock. LS has not yet passed on the final balance to WJ and ACA; WJ **AGREED** to follow up

d) Lochinver Play Park Group

WJ reported on his meeting in Lochinver on 20th December with Jess Thomas and Liam Taylor. With the boards previous consent he had agreed with the LPPG proposal to pass on the remaining funds to Lochinver Primary School and Play Group. NG advised that there two cheques still to clear with a value of £78.52 and the final account balance would then be £1,257.35. BA proposed and MM seconded the proposal which the board **AGREED** to disperse the final balance split 50:50 between Lochinver Primary School and Lochinver Play Group. MH advised that she would find out the actual names for the cheques. As the LPPG has now completed its work and closed their bank account the board of ACA now draws a line under its relationship with LPPG.

7. Culag Park

a) Fencing project

MH gave an update on the fencing project:

Mike Sutherland from SSE will only be in Lochinver by March so it is hoped that progress can soon be made with plans to fell trees along the fence line. It is hoped that there will be volunteers to move out the timber to clear the ground; it could possibly be used for firewood

No quote has yet been received from David MacPhail; we will need at least two quotes for funders and are waiting to hear from Donald MacLennan

We will need to meet with the eventual contractor to 'firm-up' any quote especially for gates e.g. the side gate by the main road could be a pedestrian access rather than for vehicles

We will need to be clear that ACA will not cover accommodation costs on top of the quote price

Possible funding:

"LEADER" may be a good source for funds

HC Ward discretionary budget may be useful

CALL project – BA advised that it the next round of funding be advertised in Assynt/ Ullapool News by 15th January.

ACC will be updated on 25th January with a judging of projects by 5th March

Sport Scotland was also suggested as a potential source of funds

MH advised that Angela MacLeod is content that funding applications state that they are important for the primary school in relation to sport and wildlife watch

Timescale: It was stated that we would like to see the fence completed by the end of April 2018.

b) Culag Park Management Group

MH advised that Stuart Gudgeon and Joe MacKay are content with the arrangements for the new lawnmower. WJ needs to check on insurance cover for those using the mower.

No money has yet been received from "Team Challenge". Ally MacLeod had asked for £300-400 and MH has been told by Nick Gorton that we should receive the money.

c) Meeting with Gary Cameron (HC) and Liz Howard (HIE/ Scottish Land Fund) in Lochinver 7th December was postponed. BA **AGREED** to rearrange the meeting.

8. Tourism and related issues

a) Visit Scotland proposals for the Mission lobby

Board members have already **AGREED** to this previously by email

b) Tourism

There was a general discussion on all tourism issues including Discover Assynt, The Mission Building, The old TIC building, ACA's role or otherwise in tourism. The following summarises the main points discussed.

The old Lochinver TIC building is for sale for offers over £200k. Uncertainty was expressed as to the reasons for buying and running the building. Some felt that ACA is the only body in Assynt that can look into this; also the 'community' may feel that ACA should do so. Others felt that it should be left to the market & private entrepreneurs to take this on.

Does Discover Assynt have sufficient financial support from local tourism operators to provide the backbone for a business in the TIC building? There was concern that ACA should not accept any liability if DA will not step up. Are DA are collecting their financial dues from their members? What is their potential income? Could DA generate a reasonable income? The board was advised that DA wish to be subsumed into ACA, but some members asked why? It was said that if we tell DA that we can take on their role then they will walk away from theirs. The DA website is thought by some members to be a good resource. Some felt that ACA should be wary of closer relations with DA as they have already lost committee members from the organisation

Is ACA becoming what GALE is or is it helping someone else do so? Is there a possibility for a group to be nudged into existence separate from ACA. Possibly ACA could provide support in administration and business services – if there are groups that need help, ACA could provide this. To run a tourism service it may be worthwhile thinking of the financial cost in units; this would add to our knowledge of any proposal and will help decide on the way forward. Should we bring in someone from outside to advise as Helen Houston from Kyle of Sutherland had advised? Scottish Community Finance Ltd (through DTAS) can offer low interest loans for Development Trusts. Ullapool Visit Scotland TIC is proposing to sell local craft items – possibly Lochinver should consider the same. It was suggested that we could 'reverse engineer' the tourism remit from examining successful models.

The board **AGREED** that tourism was a key development issue for Assynt and for ACA. The board **AGREED** to a joint meeting with Discover Assynt as soon in the New Year as possible to discuss these issues more fully. MM was asked to liaise with DA members to arrange a date. Most members could make Friday 5th January – MM is to report back.

e) The Mission building

NG presented a paper outlining options for tourism in the Mission Building.

d) DTAS job application

NG spoke about the DTAS funding application that had been circulated to board members by email since this meetings agenda was circulated. He suggested that it be not for a specific project but possibly a job share with both internal & external focus. The board **AGREED** that NG should submit the job application/ proposal to DTAS by the deadline of 22nd December

f) Highland Sustainable Development Fund – 3rd round of SSE programme

Last year this was 12x over-subscribed. WJ **AGREED** to look into the pros & cons of applying & inform board members by email

9. Waste Disposal

Update from MM: The land at the Glack opposite the pumping station may be available although at present it seems that HC have sold/ transferred it to Scottish Water. Gordon Robertson is discussing this with SW. It sounds promising with an uncertain timescale. BA asked if it would more likely happen in the 2018/19 financial year and MM replied that it would hopefully be this year

10. Broadband update

WJ handed out an email, gave a report and updated the board as to discussions with BT Community Fibre Partnership and the Scottish & UK governments announcements on their "R100" (reaching 100% coverage) programmes. WJ **ADVISED** that he would ask AN to publish an update

11. Archive

A report was received from Stevan Lockhart and the board discussed it in detail. BA **AGREED** to send WJ a list of projects which use the archive and which CALLP has supported.

12. New ACA board director

Madeline MacPhail proposed Sarah MacLeod from Achmelvich as a co-opted member of the board, BA seconded and Sarah was unanimously voted on the board. WJ **AGREED** to write to Sarah advising her of the boards decision

while MM **AGREED** to bring her up-to-speed and invite her to the DA meeting on 5th January and the mentoring meeting on 6th.

13. AOB

a) Glencanisp Road Glebe Land being purchased by AF – discussion introduced by NG

The Church of Scotland is proposing to sell the Glebe land it owns to the Assynt Foundation (AF) for £75k which would be funded by the Scottish Land Fund. Included is the plan for AF to allow/ sell/ lease the land so the Highland Community Housing Association could build houses on the Glebe land. NG is also on the board of AF. The AF Articles of Association are similar to ACA and are that of a Development Trust but NG feels that possibly buying & developing the Glebe land could be better made by a community body such as ACA rather than a wild land body as is AF. Part of the SLF conditions are that AF has community support for the endeavour. MH said that the land could be expensive to build on as it is very wet. ACA members wished to know how far the discussions have gone and what are the plans for the land. It was suggested that the boundaries of the Glebe land should be checked to establish the owners of the neighbouring land and any restrictions. MM suggested that ACA could work with AF after the land has been transferred. BA suggested that ACA should meet up with AF to discuss land and any other mutual issues. He also suggested that SLF should raise this with AF as they will need to consult. It was **AGREED** to defer any decision on action.

b) EDIE: the film will likely be released by April and it has been asked of NG “What are ACA doing about it to maximise the films impact & benefit Assynt”. It was suggested that ACA put up posters on the new fence round Culag Park

c) Governance costs

WJ introduced the idea that the ACA should reimburse board members for expenses incurred while carrying out ACA business. All board members **AGREED** with the idea and WJ will bring forward a proposal to the next board meeting.

d) Social Enterprise academy

The SEC have a series of whole-day workshops around Scotland in January to March and board members are encouraged to attend if possible. The topic for the workshop is “Strategic Planning for Trustees”. WJ will be going to the workshop on 7th February.

e) Fish tanks in the marine room at The Mission

WJ and NG updated the board on Urban Catch from Edinburgh & Glasgow who Ewen McLachlan had contacted. They may be able to remove the tanks and NG has already suggested to UC that they should consider doing this in January.

14. Forward Agenda Items

None

15. Dates of Next Meetings

Joint meeting with Discover Assynt Friday 5th January 1:30pm-3:30pm

Mentoring day with Janet Miles from GALE Saturday 6th January

Board meetings:

Thursday 1st February 2:00-5:00pm

Friday 16th March 2:00-5:00pm

Monday 16th April 2:00-5:00pm