

Assynt Development Trust Limited

Minutes of Board Meeting Thursday 23 January 2020, 7.00pm, Community Room, Lochinver Village Hall

Present

Willie Jack (WJ), Marianne Hutchison (MH), Nigel Goldie (NG), Boyd Alexander (BA),

In attendance

Adam Pellant (AP), Ewen McLachlan (EM), Clare Hawley Minutes Secretary, Roz Summers, Kat Dickson, Andy Summers, Greg Allen, Roy Champion, Carol Champion, Jane Young, Louisa Potter,

Apologies

Sarah-Anne MacLeod (SAM), Edwin de Jong (EdJ)

Item	Meeting	Action
1	<p>Climate Change Conversation / Climate Action – Open meeting</p> <p>WJ welcomed all to the meeting and explained to the group that climate action was to be on the agenda of every ADT meeting going forward. ADT want to facilitate the conversation on climate change and hope the community will take it forward. The meeting was open for the public to discuss matters and make suggestions.</p> <p>House heating – The meeting asked if the Highland Council (HC) are encouraging solar energy on domestic properties or whether it comes under the Energy Saving Trust? Highland Council have a ‘Carbon Clever’ department that looks at insulation etc. and it may come under their remit. It was suggested that there might be schemes/grants available for people over a certain age to have their houses fully insulated and EM confirmed that there are not any grants but interest free loans are available. These loans may not be widely known about and it was suggested the information should be made available to the community. The meeting also discussed other ways households can save energy and heating such as switching off lights, only boiling water that is needed and wearing warmer clothes in the winter rather than relying on heating systems. It was proposed that educating the community on energy saving matters could be helpful.</p> <p>Recycling – The meeting was told about the company TerraCycle that recycle hard to recycle materials. Could a community project be set up to collect and send off these items? There is a link on the TerraCycle website as to what can be recycled and where these items can be sent or collected. Currently one member of the community is collecting used crisp packets for recycling. MH is collecting clothes for Highland Refugees and old clothes are always welcome by them.</p> <p>Carbon – How can Assynt as a community reduce its carbon footprint? Two main points arose, how can we reduce our carbon emissions and secondly how can we take in more carbon? Due the rural nature and widespread locations of housing in Assynt, reducing transportation and using public transport is not a viable option for most. The organisation Adaption Scotland based in Edinburgh was recommended and has a Scottish Climate Challenge Programme looking at the consequences for Scotland through climate change. Their website has suggestions for communities to reduce their carbon footprint. It was also suggested that protecting our peat bogs would be a way forward for Assynt. Damage to peat bogs can cause more carbon than transportation. Tree planting schemes are not fit for Assynt as this can damage peat bogs and causes more problems than it solves.</p> <p>Transport – It was asked if the power points for the electric cars in the Village Hall car park are working and it was thought not. Because of how the parish is laid out it is hard to become carbon neutral transport wise and not practical. Can we use transport more</p>	

	<p>intelligently like using lift share? There is a Facebook page that is widely used to offer car sharing. It was also asked if we can have signs in the shop windows asking patrons to switch off their engines while they are in the local shops.</p> <p>Lobbying – ADT is to look at joining climate change lobbying groups for the Highlands and will connect with Planet Sutherland.</p> <p>Tourism – The meeting asked if we can have a way of educating tourists and visitors to Assynt about looking after our environment. Although this does not necessarily effect climate change, it is part of the larger conversation on Environment.</p> <p>Lighting – We have a lot village lighting such as the harbour and the meeting discussed if they are all necessary? The lighting the harbour is necessary for the health and safety of those working there during the night.</p> <p>The Next Step - What do we want to do going forward? ADT wants to keep the Climate Change Conversation at the forefront of its work and would welcome the opportunity to work with other organizations in the area. A forum meeting with a structured agenda and guest speaker would be a good way of going forward. MH will get in touch with Planet Sutherland and talk to them about collaboration. ADT have an AGM on 18 February 2020 and the forum could be raised under AOB to take it forward. There is also an active group at Ullapool High School that involves Lochinver young people and it would be great to involve them.</p>	MH
2	<p>Minutes of the Board Meeting of 20 November 2019 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be an accurate record of the proceedings. This was proposed by MH, seconded by AB</p>	
3	<p>Matters Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting (not addressed elsewhere on the agenda)</p> <p>None</p>	
4	<p>Finance and Legal</p> <p>A) ACA Ltd and AC(T) Ltd finance update Bank statements circulated and financial report circulated. All agreed</p> <p>B) Draft Annual Report and Accounts Year ending 30 June 2019 Tim Wright has not completed the draft accounts yet but they should be ready by the end of January. WJ's draft annual report was circulated with the agenda and this was approved by the board. The aim is to be as transparent as possible about the work of the Trust.</p> <p>C) Investment in Communities Fund Lena Hutton from DTAS and Carol Hutchison at SG have been in contact to give advice about the procedures for financial years 19/20 & 20/21. The SG have agreed to fund Q4 19/20 and 20/21 although we are waiting for receipt of Q4 funding. A supplementary information form has been received from SG which has to be completed prior to the receipt of funding.</p>	WJ/ TW WJ
5	<p>Cludgie Waste Project</p> <p>In early December WJ & NG took the decision to instruct QS's from Inverness to produce a Bill of Quantities and Specifications. This formed the core of the tender process and the Cludgie tender brief was published on 6th January on the Public Works Scotland website. The tender deadline was today 23rd January, and two tenders were received. Both were significantly over our budget and both had similar costs so it is likely they are at the market price. As a result it has been suggested that the Trust split the project into two phases, the first this year using grant money already agreed and the second next year if or when further</p>	

	<p>grant money can be found. There is no way to re-design the scheme to minimise the costs but it was put forward that there could be scope to ask Scottish Water to reduce their requirements or contribute to the costs. It was agreed to ask both contractors to re-price on a two phase project. Then Scottish Water should be approached and if there isn't any movement from them on their design requirements or possibly offers of funding then the Trust can lobby the SG either via Roseanne Cunningham, Minister for Scottish Water or Fiona Hislop who covers Visit Scotland.</p>	AP
6	<p>The Mission Freehold</p> <p>WJ circulated a draft application proposed for the CAT of the Mission freehold. WJ thanked all those who had contributed to the process especially Liz Howard of HIE. WJ will send it to Rory Dutton of DTAS / COSS for his opinion. The final SLF funding deadline is 31st August 2020 so the CAT application needs to be submitted to HC before the end of February along with letters of support from the community. AP commented that there would be a need for a business plan to show the proposed up-keeping of the building. ADT has invested in the building over the last few years so can prove a commitment to the maintenance of the building and show ADT has the funds to continue this up-keep.</p> <p>Following recommendation from TNL Community Fund (formerly Big Lottery Fund BLF) the Trust were advised to instruct our solicitors to request a discharge of the BLF lease security from their solicitors. The board agreed on this action. Proposed by NG and seconded by AB.</p>	WJ
7	<p>The Glebe Land, Lochinver</p> <p>On 11th December 2019 Assynt Foundation agreed to the Trust taking over as lead on this project.</p> <p>In early December the Trust published the tender brief for an SLF stage 1 application for a feasibility study and business plan towards the development of the Glebe Land for affordable housing. The brief was sent to seventeen business consultants and three submitted tender bids by the 6th January 2020 deadline. AP created a data matrix to compare and evaluate the bids and the preferred consultant selected by BA & AP and overseen by WJ was HSCHT. The stage 1 funding application was then submitted to SLF on 7th January.</p> <p>Positive feedback was received from Neil Moir at the Rural Housing Fund on 17th January: <i>"(Highland) Council are supportive in principle of an affordable housing project in the area. We are not aware of your organisation having a direct track record of affordable housing delivery, but HSCHT are both experienced in affordable housing delivery and management and may be able to offer support / advice for the proposal. Scottish Government also support the project in principle"</i></p> <p>In the meantime the Church of Scotland has instructed their solicitors to challenge a neighbours title claim to a small strip of Church owned land within their Glebe title. BA asked if there are any reasons why stage 1 wouldn't go ahead and WJ answered not at the moment all is looking positive and we should hear back from SLF by end of February.</p>	AP
8	<p>Governance</p> <p>Last September Catherine McWilliam and Rory Dutton from DTAS assisted the Trust in producing a governance "balanced scorecard" to help provide focus to the Trust's activity. WJ is now looking at taking the information and putting it in to a document format which could be developed into a conventional business plan.</p>	WJ

<p>9</p>	<p>Discover Assynt Update</p> <p>a) Website Update Before Christmas donors/ subscribers to the DA website were sent a summary of what the site has achieved so far. The reach and engagement of Discover Assynt's social media is out performing other similar community groups and both Facebook and the website are performing well. EM wants to use Gaelic place names in posts as there is a lot of current interest in that. The Gaelic place name website is ongoing and Claire Belshaw is running very successful workshops at Glen Canisp Lodge. BA suggested a map on the Coiagach and Assynt app incorporating the Gaelic names and walks on the map.</p> <p>It was mentioned that Discover Assynt subscribers / donors will soon be receiving their reminders to pay for the 2020 season</p> <p>b) Tourism Forum Last year's Tourism forum was hosted at the Kylesku Hotel and around 40 people attended. Heather McDonald at Tarradh guest house is happy to host this year's meeting and supply soup and sandwiches which ADT will pay for. EM is in the process of inviting speakers and is considering Monday 23rd March</p>	<p>EM / BA</p> <p>EM</p> <p>EM</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Highland Wireless Update</p> <p>In mid December WJ spoke to the Reay Forest Estate factor, Dougal Lindsay from Galbraiths in Inverness. Dougal told WJ that Reay Forest have asked their contractor MonsterNet to provide a fibre connection to an appropriate site near Kylstrome which the estate will pay for - this will then allow Highland Wireless to connect into the fibre to provide a service to Kylesku & Unapool. Cameron Warren is still working on the Scourie connection to Stoer. The SG has announced publicly that high speed broadband that was meant to be in place by 2021 will not be delivered to the NW highlands until possibly 2026.</p>	

<p>11</p>	<p>Culag Park update</p> <p>The Culag Park grounds person's role was advertised on FB, AN and by direct email to interested parties at the start of December. There were two applications for the role by the Christmas deadline and both applicants supplied references. WJ interviewed both applicants and he advised the board that he had appointed Duncan and Clarke Hutchison to the role. The mower is due to be serviced soon by Frank Nicol in Dingwall.</p> <p>EM commented that deer are being let in to the park through the large gate at the Culag River end by dog walkers. EM has used a band to secure the gate and since then no deer have entered the park.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p>Assorted</p> <p>a) Consultation: Proposed Remote Rural Communities Bill The online consultation to the proposed bill is best completed by individuals and WJ would encourage everyone to do it. It could be advertised on Facebook and emailed again to ADT members. If there is a good level of support for the bill, it will go through to the SG for consideration.</p> <p>b) About ADT WJ asked Board members and staff to provide a biog & photo for the website</p> <p>c) Litter bins Initially raised at ACC in Feb 2019, "It was suggested the ADT and ACC might consider supplying two recycling bins within the village for the coming tourist</p>	

	<p>season”, ADT agreed the following month to provide a waste & recycling bin similar to the ones in Ullapool (which were provided by the Harbour Trust). At the time the cost agreed by the ADT board was around £400. No more has been heard from ACC on this matter.</p> <p>EM has investigated the cost and availability of the “Ullapool” bins. ADT is still waiting for confirmation from HC that the bins will be emptied on the usual HC refuse route. The hope is to put one in Lochinver and one in Drumbeg. The meeting advised that EM should contact the HC ward manager for Ullapool Robbie Bain. EM has also been in contact with NHI with a view to them match funding the bin that ADT has agreed to provide, thereby obtaining two bins for the cost of one.</p> <p>d) Assynt News Update An update went in to Assynt News and there has been no feedback as yet.</p>	EM
13	<p>Development Officers Reports</p> <p>a) Report from Adam Pellant Report circulated. AP helped CB at Assynt Foundation to apply for an SSE grant to upgrade Canisp Road. On the archive, BA asked if the archive could be moved before the AGM. WJ to contact Carol Anne Macrae</p> <p>b) Report from Ewen McLachlan Report circulated A water fountain was first looked at besides the public convenience but is now looking at locating by the village hall front door. Highland Pottery could be asked to do a back drop for it. Scottish Water say Lochinver is too small and they are just looking at cities at the moment.</p>	WJ EM
14	<p>AOB</p> <p>a) The deadline for the CALL grant scheme is 2nd March.</p> <p>b) AGM - At the forthcoming AGM WJ and NG are to stand down and are able to stand for re-election. EdJ will need to stand for election as he was co-opted last time; BA needs to stand down and can be co-opted again by the Board. MH & SAM can continue as directors as they were re-elected at the last AGM. Papers now on the website include nomination papers, notice and proxy papers. The AGM notice will be emailed out to all members and posted on FB/ AN. The Annual accounts will also be ready in time.</p>	AP
15	<p>Proposed Date of Next meetings</p> <p>AGM Tuesday 18 February 2020 7.00pm Thursday 19 March 2020 2.00pm</p>	