

Assynt Development Trust Limited

Minutes of Board Meeting Wednesday 16th September 2020, 11.00am via Zoom

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

In attendance: Adam Pellant (AP), Ewen McLachlan (EM)

Apologies: Sarah Ann MacLeod (SAM), Edwin de Jong (EdJ), Bill Badger (BB)

| <u>Subject discussed</u> | What Decision Required? |
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| 1. Minutes of Board meeting of 29th July 2020 It was proposed by BA, seconded by MH that the minutes of the previous meeting were an accurate record of the proceedings; All agreed. | Agreed |
| 2. Laura Hamlet - Collaborative Communities Project Laura joined the board meeting and introduced herself in her new role as Project Officer for the Collaborative Communities Project. This has been funded by HIE/ SG through the Sutherland Community Planning partnership and is based as the Kyle of Sutherland Trust in Ardgay The project commenced six weeks ago and a starting point was to check existing priorities within local plans such as the Assynt community Plan. The development officers have been joining in the HIE sponsored resilience phone meetings across Sutherland to ascertain priorities and concerns. They will soon start looking at potential projects in each area of West Sutherland to bring in additional community collaborative projects. Within Sutherland five localities including Kinlochbervie have been identified as being deprived using the Scottish index of multiple deprivation, although it has been recognised that this works better in urban areas than rural. The officers' remit is to pull everything together that is required for a project prior to submitting any funding applications. This will entail working with community councils, development trusts and the GeoPark. Success at the project end in April 2022 will be if projects are developed sufficiently so they are ready to be delivered. The project will develop projects that will first identify need and second seek funding to deliver the project. | |
| 3. Matters arising (not addressed elsewhere on the agenda) 12d) Louis Gouveia fund – it was agreed that an updated poster be listed on ADT's Facebook page and then applications for assistance can then be considered. 8a) John Murray from Dornoch was the person leading the idea of a Sutherland Tourist Board and it appears from recent letter in the Northern Times that he has stood down. 7) eBikes – EM updated the board on present activity. | |
| 4 Climate Action Update from MH The climate challenge fund is now closed. Marianne has spoken to Julian at Plastic at Bay and Anna at Planet Sutherland and feels it would be good to do something collaboratively, however Covid and people on furlough makes it difficult to achieve much. Bill Badger is following up recycling in the parish with Highland Council. Marianne has also discussed these issues with Andy Summers and Jane Matheson. | MH |
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| <p>5 Finance & Business</p> <p>a) ADT Ltd and AC (T) Ltd financial update Cash flow actual to date and budget to year end and explanation for information. Four other papers are available on request. The Mission boiler – Aviva Insurance paid out in full (less excess) for repair to boiler.</p> <p>BA said that the reports appear to show that ADT’s finances are very healthy. NG advised that many Development Trusts across the Highlands are in a very poor financial state as many are reliant on rent from village halls and meeting rooms.</p> <p>b) Supporting Communities Fund/ STP and NHI Grants – For Assynt Resilience Update including Income & Expenditure to 8th September 2020 - noted</p> <p>c) Review of Balanced Scorecard from September 2019 Conference call with Catherine McWilliam 31st July with EM & AP - noted Recommendation to review the commitments and expectations made a year ago and start to plan Trust activities post-ICF funding from 1st April 2021 - noted</p> <p>NG feels that the Trust board should review ADT’s business plan now and it was agreed that WJ will meet with BA and NG to progress this.</p> <p>d) Switching bank accounts from RBS: WJ explained that the Trust has been offered an inducement of £1,500 to switch AC(T)’s RBS account to the Co-op Bank or Metro Bank. NG expressed concern if there was a possible complication with our accounting package FreeAgent which is currently free to use at RBS. WJ to review and report back.</p> | <p>WJ/ BA/ NG</p> <p>WJ</p> |
| <p>6 Development</p> <p>a) The Glebe Land, Lochinver Update: 1. HIE grant offer of £6,350 accepted towards feasibility study and business plan 2. Valuation of The Glebe Land received from Savills 3. Letters of support received from AF & CCWT 4. Community survey shows 75% support for project 5. ADT submitted Stage 2 application to SLF by 31st August deadline 6. Cash flow forecast from HSCHT</p> <p>NG feels that the consultation revealed some real nuggets and wondered if it could be presented in a different format. WJ explained that the consultation was carried out by HSCHT and he would enquire as to this possibility. EM raised the possibility of including “Hutting” on part of the land.</p> <p>b) Cludgie Waste Project Update: 1. Agreement reached with AL over work and ADT’s commitment to phase 2 2. Anderson Civil Engineering Ltd appointed as contractor 3. Agreement reached with Highland Council over £15k loan facility 4. Project timescale: Starting imminently with estimated completion by mid November</p> <p>AL Board have accepted the written commitments from ADT to promote phase 2 of the project. Martin Anderson Civil Engineering has been appointed contractor and the tank has been ordered from the supplier. There is the possibility of project completion slipping to the third week of November. AL lease/RBS security - Leona from HC is to send the long awaited document which should come from RTIF/Visit Scotland - HIE may cover legal costs if necessary. MH advised that from AL perspective all was going well with the project.</p> | <p>WJ</p> <p>AP</p> |

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| <p>7. Culag Park Update Update: Stiga lawnmower at Frank Nicol in Dingwall for repair. MH advised that people have been camping in Culag Park although EM explained that this has also happened in the recent past. No problems appear to have been caused by this which is just as well as there seems to be little that can be done to control it.</p> <p>Lochinver primary school pupils are using the park for sport with Lochinver FC training - despite the long grass. It was noted that Highland Council do cut the grass in the Lochinver playpark and Lochinver primary school grounds but not at Culag Park, it was thought due to ownership issues.</p> | |
| <p>8. Discover Assynt Update</p> <p>a) Leave No Trace membership and poster This was discussed within ARG as suggested by Andy Summers; five A2 composite & metal signs have been ordered from Inverness Sign Centre for Assynt 'hot spots' and they will be collected soon along with another five. It was noted that Jenny Grant has been appointed by SNH as a seasonal Warden to cover that area from Knockan Crag north. This is an approach that has already been adopted in Applecross. It was suggested that we need to look at encouraging a more appropriate niche of tourists who will adopt the LNT ethos.</p> <p>b) Website update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interest of ACC in an Assynt-wide website was noted 2. The free to book add on to the DA website is in beta testing and requires more tourism providers to join. | WJ/ AS |
| <p>9. John Muir Trust Proposals Update:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WJ has agreed with Rich Williams for JMT to employ EM to work part time on the "Collective Vision for the North West Highlands" project | WJ/ EM |
| <p>10. Development Officers Reports</p> | |
| <p>a) Report from Adam - report for period to 4th September The work that BT are undertaking at Stoer exchange was noted. The Trust has not heard from Cameron Warren since before lockdown. WJ to follow up.</p> | WJ |
| <p>b) Report from Ewen - report for period to 4th September HIE have announced a £3M investment on developing tourism destination management organisations in the Highlands; EM has followed this up with Martin Thomsen at HIE.</p> | EM |
| <p>10. AOB EM advised that the Loius Gouveia fund notice has been posted on the ADT Facebook page</p> | |
| <p>11. Proposed date of next meeting Wednesday 28th October 11:00am</p> | |