

Urras an Taobh Sear – Staffin Community Trust
Geàrr-chunntas na Coinneamh
Minutes of Meeting – 7.3.17 @ Portacabin, 7.30

1. **An làthair/Present:** Sandy Ogilvie, Dugald Ross, Angus Ross, Iain MacDonald, Martin Farquhar, Donald MacDonald, Sine Ghilleasbuig, Hugh Ross

Leisgeulan/Apologies: Gordon Higgins, Catriona Ross

2. **Geàrr-chunntas/Minutes 14.2.17:** DR and AR agreed that the previous mins were accurate.

3. **Gnothaichean ag èirigh/Matters Arising**

SCT Articles of Association/Charitable Status - At the SCT December meeting, the board agreed to revise its As of A, and move towards charitable status. HR had asked Rory Dutton, of Development Trusts Association for Scotland, to look at the As of A, and research what an hour's free legal advice from DITAS would provide. DMCD said that for the sake of cash flow in the years to come, the Articles must permit SCT to borrow money.

- Action Point – SO, GH and MF will meet to review at the Articles, and incorporate changes into a new draft.

The draft As of A will then be brought to the board for the next meeting to discuss.

Once agreed, the As of A require to go to an EGM prior to adoption.

4. **A' Chidhe is Na Tuathanais Eisg/ Staffin Slip and Fish Farms**

European Maritime Fisheries Fund - SCT have been invited to make a full application to this fund for a new ramp/plinth access to the water from the slip after the Expression of Interest submitted by HR was approved. The next deadline is 2.5.17, and the following one is three months thereafter. SCT's plans will require to be fully costed. EMFF could provide a max grant of £75k. Should the application be to the maximum amount, then they will scrutinise it closely.

HR had asked Organic Sea Harvest [OSH] whether a ramp would be suitable for its operations. OSH had provided details of vessels to be used and had not said it would restrict their proposed landings. SCT keen to invite OSH to a board meeting to get an update on their proposed development in Staffin.

5. **Taigheadas/Housing**

Community Open Day 4.3.17 - The plans were [and remain] on display on the wall of the portacabin. Fifteen people had attended the open day. This was deemed to be a decent turnout given the day clashed with several local events. There are six expressions of interest in the new houses from local families.

HR said local people were now asking when the houses would be built and available to live in. SCT had to be aware of that and react accordingly, and once the planning application is lodged, work extremely hard to get the necessary funding in place.

HR said that when the planning application is lodged SCT will seek letters of support and also highlighted the need to lobby the candidates for the forthcoming Highland Council elections in May on the issue.

SCT Cashflow – DMcD strongly advised the board to draft a comprehensive cashflow for UTS for 3-5 years' hence. SCT is pressing ahead with projects and to avoid costs creeping up SCT need to give adequate attention to this crucial aspect.

Action Point – HR to present draft summary of cash flow projections for discussion at next board meeting

6. An Stòrr –

Asset Transfer Request - HR has lodged the ATR [18-page doc], which formalises SCT's request to The Highland Council (THC) to purchase the site. HR would like to release a public statement announcing this progress so that community is kept fully updated about the progress.

ATR processing - It was noted that ATR can take 6 months but SCT and advisers very keen to see it determined far earlier, as it cannot apply for potential funding grants, including Scottish Land Fund (SLF) and LEADER, until a decision is known.

THC £400k– It is essential that THC provides these funds, which are currently allocated to the site, to SCT so that it can secure match funding to deliver a bigger car park, toilets, interpretation and new jobs at the site.

HR has now received permission from SLF to use its small underspend for options appraisal work towards further peat assessments at the Storr by structural engineer/digger hire.

Scottish Land Fund – HR had planned to lodge a second application in April 2017 but SLF will not now accept it until there is a decision from THC.

7. Ceumannan II

Permission to Start – documents required by Heritage Lottery Fund are now finally approved so recruitment process for new job can start soon.

Cashflow and HLF - GH had done a cashflow for Year 1 and allowed a small percentage for unforeseeables. GH's cashflow had gone to Holly Watson who had responded on 6.3.17, to confirm that HLF [who were not going to pay cash upfront] will pay staff costs for a few months in advance, though they cannot pay for capital works upfront. Capital payments will be made via payment request forms, (with SCT submitting contractor invoices) and invoices will be processed promptly.

Contractors' Invoices - IMcD alerted us to the fact that given contractors have a significant outlay, it would be unreasonable to expect a contractor to wait more than 14 days for payment. If the contractor lodged an invoice on the 15th day of the month, SCT ought to pay at the end of that month. IMcD recommended digital banking to assist these processes. Invoices would have to go through a chain, and be made out to SCT.

VAT Registration – SCT is not currently VAT registered. Discussion whether SCT should consider becoming VAT registered, since by doing so SCT would get 20% of capital costs back. In any case, contractors will charge 20% VAT regardless.

HLF will request an audit figure for the accounts.

GISBE/AOCB

- **Rabbie's Buses** – RB had provided £2k grant to Ceumannan II last autumn for its new Maintenance Plan and this was very much appreciated. Staff carried out two days path repair work last autumn at the Quiraing under supervision of Donald Kennedy, Highland Council's Access Officer. It was a good example of a community organisation and business working well together. Rabbie's had come back to indicate that they would like to do additional pathwork repair during spring 2017. HR had consulted DK who thought additional repair work at the Quiraing could be done. This was planned for next week. DK would also like to hire Donald Ross, Marrishadder, for a day to prepare the section.
- **Archaeological Dig scheduled for May 2017** – The board expressed disappointment that a croft tenant had said she did not want the proposed dig going ahead, thereby necessitating it being postponed. Dan Lee of UHI had contacted the Columba 1400 as their clients, from Texas, were due to participate and there were also plans to involve Staffin and Kilmuir school pupils again. The board was all hugely enthusiastic that we continue the groundwork through the UHI partnership in this gem of our cultural and natural heritage.
- **Snaim sa bhasailt – Crofters' Memorial Call to Artists** - The deadline for artists was 28.2.17, and a total of 47 applications had been received.

An Ath choinneamh/Next meeting

- Tue 4.4.17 @ Portacabin @ 7.30 pm