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STAFFIN COMMUNITY TRUST

Board meeting minutes

SCT office

Tuesday, June 28 2016

7.30pm

1. **Apologies:** Sine Gillespie, Sandy Ogilvie. **Present:** SCT directors Donald MacDonald, Sandy Ogilvie, Angus Ross, Dugald Ross, Ian MacDonald, Roddy Gillies, SCT local development officer Hugh Ross
2. **Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting 31.5.16 were accepted as being accurate.
3. **Matters Arising:** DMcD asked the board if it was content with the proposed AGM date of 30.8.16 as suggested. There was unanimous agreement.
4. **Slipway:** As indicated prior to the meeting, Skye Sea Harvest (SSH) was unable to attend. A short report from SSH's Alister MacKinnon sent to DMcD was shared with the board. AMcK apologised for the lack of updates and said they had to tread cautiously because of client confidentiality. His e-mail report stated that SSH was committed to ensuring the project happens in Staffin. AMcK said that SSH should be in a position to update SCT by the end of August. He added that he was now a director of SSH and thanked SCT for the patience and understanding shown to date.
IMcD said the response was encouraging, DMcD agreed and suggested that if SSH can attend the AGM, it might be helpful if they met the board prior to its start, possibly 30 minutes earlier.
5. **Storr:** HR outlined the tendering process and interviews carried out by DMcD, AR and him with the three consultant teams for the Options Appraisal contract. Following a set of standard questions each bid was scored. The contract was subsequently awarded to a three-way bid from Hazel Allen, of Athena Solutions; Richard Heggie, of Urban Animation and Sam Foster Architects. This team had worked on an options appraisal for the redevelopment of the former Lochmaddy Hospital and a director of North Uist Development Company had provided HR with a positive reference.
HR and AR were due to meet Hazel Allen and Sam Foster next Wednesday (5.7.16). DMcD said it would be helpful for the board to discuss the various issues and options ahead of that.
AR said the key issue was how, and if SCT was going to raise the revenue needed to support a business venture. He did not think toilets were going to provide that income. IMcD said the construction of toilets within an information centre was an option. GH suggested SCT investigate Kyle of Lochalsh Trust's toilets and shower block for an

indication of costs and income. IMcD referred to the encouraging parking income levels generated at the Cairngorm sites HR had visited last year.

There was discussion about income. RG said having a member of staff at the site would ensure the visitors paid for parking. DR thought it could be a large area for one person to monitor.

HR said at Spittal of Glen Muick the parking fee compliance rate was more than 90 per cent, with a local woman employed for a couple of hours a day to encourage payment. The fact it was made clear in the signage that the income was going to a community organisation seemed to have a positive impact.

There was a discussion about the current roadside parking and IMcD said at present it was a hazard, as people were using it to turn their cars, next to the busy A855. DMcD said it had been suggested that the parking strip was reserved for buses and coaches with cars going to a new main car park. DMcD asked the board whether showers and lockers could be provided at the site. IMcD said a biomass septic tank, which could hold up to 8,000 litres, could be advantageous. DR said the presence of springs at the Storr was a big advantage if a water supply was to be accessed.

There was a discussion about the car park access, would it be locked at night or whether a weighted barrier be installed.

DMcD asked the board how big the car park should be as it was important the consultants were talking to the agencies concerned about what is needed. IMcD said an area of about 10 sq. m was needed per car and if that was multiplied by 150 it would equate to a big car park. There was a discussion about whether there should be a day pass or annual rate for coach companies.

HR said he would get the meeting minutes out to the board as soon as possible, and also refer to issues which came up in the local consultation. DMcD said a board meeting with the consultants might also be helpful. With no July SCT meeting HR said he could play it by ear and try and arrange something as required.

- *Action Point - HR to share minutes with board before he and AR meet consultants team
HR and AR to have initial meeting with consultant team and provide a steer from SCT*

- 6. Housing:** HR said the latest draft of the Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association and Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust looked better than the previous version. DMcD said the agreement had been discussed for some time now and the board had set out its preference for the Design and Build procurement approach and the project needed to move forward. HR is traveling to Helmsdale in Sutherland on Monday to meet the development trust there as it delivered four new affordable homes, after a 35-year absence. HR said there were stark similarities with Staffin in that both communities had decreasing, and ageing populations, a falling school roll, lack of employment and few opportunities for families or young people to stay in the area. The Helmsdale Trust generates rental income from the properties and HR was keen to pick up as much information and advice from the visit as possible.

On July 19 HR has a meeting with Labour Highland MSP David Stewart, who is on the Scottish Parliament's Land Reform Group. He has also contacted Staffin's new constituency MSP Kate Forbes to request a face-to-face meeting.

7. **Crofters' Memorial:** HR said he was meeting Emma Nicolson of Atlas on July 21 at her invitation. AR and DMcD said that ATLAS had promised to send a copy of the draft artist's brief to SCT after returning from Germany but it had not yet appeared. HR was advised to ask ATLAS for a copy of the brief. The Kilt Rock was described as a possible location and the board was determined that the final memorial would be an attraction in its own right.

Action Point – HR to get a copy of the brief from ATLAS and share with the board ahead of meeting with EN

8. **Ceumannan II:** HR said the funding application was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund on June 3. DMcD said a lot of work had gone into the application and praised the Ceumannan sub-group's work. HR added that he was grateful to the sub-group members GH, DR, Sine Gillespie and Donald Kennedy and said everybody on the SCT board had provided significant help and advice.

HR said that the platform car park cost had been removed from the funding application so he was keen to investigate other sources to cover the estimated cost. He thought GH might have a good grasp of funding ideas. DMcD said the LEADER fund was now open but it involved a lot of administrative work.

SNH has made a supportive comment to the viewing platform planning application and suggested that SCT should work with it to agree a method statement. HR had received an email objection from a couple in Tote, who claimed it would impact on their view. IMcD said they would not see the platform from their home. They had also complained about a lack of consultation, claimed there no need for parking and suggested the platform would have a negative impact on wildlife. HR had replied to the couple and cited the consultation events in Staffin Hall, the regular website and newsletter updates and fact anybody in the community could visit him Monday to Friday, as others had done.

Action Point – HR and GH to meet to discuss possible funding sources for parking

9. **AOCB:** HR said he had not yet had a chance to discuss the prospect with UHI regarding another archaeological dig in the autumn but hoped to do so ASAP.