



Staffin Community Trust Board meeting minutes

Tuesday 29.11.16
SCT office
7.30pm

1. **Apologies:** Sine Gillespie, Martin Farquhar and Gordon Higgins. **Present:** SCT board members Sandy Ogilvie, Donald MacDonald, Dugald Ross, Kerry Lyall, Roddy Gillies, Angus Ross, Ian MacDonald, Catriona Ross; SCT development officer Hugh Ross.
2. **Minutes:** The minutes from the last SCT board meeting 30.8.16 were approved by AR and seconded by DMcD.
3. **Matters arising:** None.
4. **Storr Project:** HR distributed a hard copy of the revised Storr site layout. It was the second draft and followed the presentation by Hazel Aitken of the consultant team at the last meeting. The layout had been seen by approximately 30 people at the recent community drop-in event and shared with Highland Council, SNH, SGRPID, Police Scotland, VisitScotland, HIE, Skye Mountain Rescue Team etc.

The SMRT had asked for its access and base to remain in the north end of the site (it had been at south end at current car park) where there was better communications signal. There was a reference in the layout to a potential mountain rescue hut but HR said this was not part of the project. DMcD asked if the MR team needed a hut at the site. HR said he did not know but local team member Greg Walters had said it could help them shelter a casualty whilst waiting for an ambulance. HR presumed the bulk of their call-outs was in the Cuillins although the increase in Storr visitors may have also impacted upon the number of incidents. DMcD said there could be a benefit to the local community and visitors if a mountain rescue hut was built. SO suggested HR ask SMRT if they required a hut at the site and seek the reasons why.

- **Action Point** – HR to seek further information from the MRT leader Gerry Ackroyd

DMcD asked how SCT could deter camper vans from using up the proposed parking space (the recently tarred verge) for coaches and buses. He said it would be an attractive site for camper vans and they could use up the space.

HR handed our hardcopies of the draft business plan from Hazel Allen.

KL asked if the toilets would be open 24/7. The board also highlighted the working hours of the parking attendant and cleaner. It was suggested that different models could be presented by the consultant team with extended hours and the uplift in costs. KL said four or

five different projections with increased working and opening hours of the toilet/car park would be helpful to SCT.

There was discussion about VAT on the car parking revenue. The Storr project team was trying to get feedback from a VAT expert on the capital works situation. DMcD said he had spoken to Fred Kelly, the solicitor, to get the SCT's company status changed to that of a charity, as agreed by board at last SCT meeting.

There was a discussion about the projected parking charge. It was suggested that various income projections were included in the final Business Case.

SO asked whether test pits had been carried out, IMcD said that ground excavations, possibly two days' work, could assess the ground, the different layers and types of materials. Getting the grid point of those holes would be important.

HR said that the council had carried out ground investigations for its car park plan and that report had been shared with the consultant team.

Action Points – HR to ask the council if test holes were made at the site and if that information had been shared with the Storr Project team and what were the grid locations.

5. **Housing:** HR said that a Scottish Land Fund grant had been awarded which would help pay for site investigations, traffic assessments, etc. He hoped that he would hear back in the next fortnight whether a separate application to the Rural Housing Fund, had been successful. HR reported that there had been four local expression of interest in the proposed commercial space/business unit. He had also asked Alistair Danter of Business Gateway and David Richardson of the Federation of Small Businesses to promote it to their contacts. HR had also been provided with an official's name in NHS Highland who he intended to speak to and enquire whether a space for a service, such as a weekly or monthly dentistry, podiatry etc might be attractive.

KL asked whether facilities for children such as a play park may be included. HR said he did not know at this stage, but it was important to canvass expression of interest first.

6. **Ceumannan II:** HR said the sub-group had met recently to discuss the project's 'permission to start' from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A separate bank account for Ceumannan II was in the process of being set up by AR. HLF had said that payments would need to be made by SCT and then claimed by back, possibly every month or every three months. That could cause cash flow problems given the project's size and HR had asked HLF how they dealt with other community organisations which did not have large cash reserves.

The Ceumannan job, which was previously titled Project Manager had been changed to Programme Manager by the sub-group to better reflect the job spec and so it was not confused with the capital works.

HR said he was trying to get the permission to start from HLF next month so that the recruitment process could commence in January. HR said the sub-group suggested it would hold the interviews, with perhaps DMcD, because of his extensive recruitment experience, and SO, as chairman, also involved. HR said he could sit on the panel but in an advisory

capacity - if there were any question about the project - as he did not think he should be making the decision about who should get the job given he was not a SCT director.

HR said he and Gordon Higgins had started discussing the Coastal Communities Fund application to pay for the Lealt platform car park, as it must be submitted on January 9.

DMcD said the Aros Centre, which he manages, was working on submitting a funding application to Creative Scotland, the national arts agency, and is keen to have a tie in with SCT's activities programme in Ceumannan, particularly with young people, which would not incur a cost for SCT. The board was supportive of the suggestion.

There was a discussion about a possible expression of interest to the LEADER fund.