



Urras an Taobh Sear (UTS) – Staffin Community Trust
Geàrr-chunntas na Coinneamh
Minutes of Meeting – 14.2.17 SCT office
7.30pm

1. **An làthair/Present:** Angus Ross, Dugald Ross, Gordon Higgins, Donald MacDonald, Sìne Gillespie, Hugh Ross
Leisgeuan/Apologies: Sandy Ogilvie, Ian MacDonald, Catriona Ross, Roddy Gillies
 In the absence of SO, DMcD agreed to chair the meeting.
2. **Na Geàrr-chunntas mu dheireadh/Previous Board Meeting 29.11.16:** DR and AR accepted the previous minutes as being correct.
3. **Storr project:** UTS had discussed the quantity surveyor's estimated costs of construction at December meeting. HR had gone back to the Storr consultant team requesting that a locally-based QS should cost the project. Revised costs had duly come back and were considerably less than the first QS estimate. HR has started work on the Asset Transfer Request (ATR), the formal document which will be submitted to the council seeking to purchase the site from The Highland Council (THC).

HR had a meeting with John MacDonald from HIE regarding the next round of possible funding sources, including the second round of Scottish Land Fund (SLF). UTS received a grant from SLF for the costs of the Options Appraisal and HR wanted to use some of it to pay for further peat assessments. John also advised holding off the second submission to SLF until the end of April 2017. SLF can fund revenue and a project manager, and costs associated with capital works, like site surveys, planning, building warrant, specialist VAT advice but *not* the actual construction costs.

- Action Point - HR will seek SLF permission for part of grant to be spent on further peat assessments.

Skye Mountain Rescue Team – HR said that the team's Staffin-based member Gregg Walters had informed him that the team do not require a building to look after casualties at the Storr.

The board noted that the site construction costs were still high and HR had received communication that Highland Council will want a percentage of the car parking income to be directed to upkeep costs for the rest of the site SCT does not purchase.

It was recommended by the Storr consultant team in the final report that UTS could become VAT-registered to save on capital costs. However, UTS is then obliged to pay VAT on all its

activities. A discussion took place on the merits of being VAT registered. Alternatively, UTS could have a trading arm for the Storr. VAT costs can be included in funding applications for the Storr.

- 4. Ceumannan II:** Planning permission for the viewing platform and car park was granted last month by Highland Council, HR said. A key planning condition is that traffic management scheme would have to be approved prior to work commencing. Coastal Communities Fund [round 2] – UTS’s funding application - had been lodged on 9.1.17. The board meeting offered its thanks for all his help with the application to GH. The CCF grant would pay for new car park, construction manager, access track, footpath, fencing, road signage, marking, site survey and additional activity plan costs.

HR has lodged all Permission to Start documents with Heritage Lottery Fund. Cashflow situation is a challenge as UTS does not have reserves to fund project without a portion of HLF grant up front. Hugh has gone back and asked for just under 10% of the total grant. All capital works are happening in year 1. GH to assist HR with cash flow forecast to send to HLF. DMcD had seen situations in the past where THC had agreed to bankroll projects that had secured funding and suggested an approach could be made if situation not resolved.

- 5. A’ Chidhe/Slipway and Fish farms:** 72 people had attended the community open day at the Kilmartin and most were supportive. Feedback is currently being assessed by Organic Sea Harvest (OSH).

Ramp – HR had submitted an expression of interest to the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for a ramp or concrete plinth at the slipway to improve access for users to the water. HR had also asked Alex MacInnes of OSH whether the ramp would help its proposed fish landing plans. Alex had sent details of the proposed boat to be used by the company. The EMFF can fund up to 75% of the cost and has asked if UTS can secure match funding. HR also hopes to speak to HIE. Thomas Butler from Kilmuir was in touch with SCT and is to start boat tours at the Slipway in April, and has permission for a container at the Slipway. EFF has indicated that supporting local businesses like this would meet their outcomes.

Action Point -- HR to ask OSH and HIE if match funding could be provided

DMcD said there was new funding coming on-stream for marine tourism

- 6. Taigheadas/Housing:** On 9.2.17 UTS met the Stenscholl township and Ronnie MacRae of the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust and John Lamont from Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association, plus the architect Alan Dickson of Rural Design. AD had provided a presentation. Majority of township were in favour of the development. Township tenant Iain MacLeod, who lives next to the site and would be most affected, preferred to give his view once he sees the plans on paper. There will be a community drop-in day in early March showing the plans.

- 7. AOCB: Snaim sa bhasailt / Crofters’ Memorial**

The call to artists has gone out and the deadline for submissions is 28.2.17