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STAFFIN COMMUNITY TRUST
Minutes of Board meeting
SCT office
Tuesday, January 29 2019
7.30pm

1. **Present:** SCT chairman Sandy Ogilvie, directors Angus Ross, Ian MacDonald, Roddy Gilles, Calum MacDonald, Dugald Ross, Donald MacDonald; staff Hugh Ross and Angus Murray; John MacKenzie, Staffin Community Council chairman (item 6)
Apologies: Sine Gillespie.
2. **Minutes:** DR proposed that the minutes of the last board meeting on 27.11.18 were accurate, which was seconded by DMcD.
3. **Matters Arising:** RG asked about the Lealt platform car park access road and the recent sub-zero temperatures, HR said the board could discuss it at item 7.
4. **School playing field:** SO said he was pleased to welcome John MacKenzie, who is the chairman of the recently re-formed Staffin Community Council. JMck said the community council had discussed with HR and AM at its recent meeting its hopes of trying to deliver improvements to the current school playing field and general leisure facilities. JMck said he recognised that SCT had a lot on its plate with various projects but was keen to update the board about the community council's objectives. He said improvements to the playing field, a soft play area, play park etc had all been discussed.
DMcD said that SCT's project work was funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and generating an income stream was vital. He said it could be difficult to achieve income generation through taking on the playing field.
AR said that SCT had been involved in the community's efforts to have the pitch improved more than a decade ago and Highland Council subsequently spent a sum of money on top soil. However, he said the material was of poor quality so the surface was not adequately improved. JMck said having a good pitch would encourage local people to start up sporting activities again. GH said there was a range of funders and it would depend on the status of the community council what it could apply for.
SO said his own personal view was that the SCT board had to be mindful of the size of any project because at present it had a full workload. IMcD said possible improvements had been mentioned when the Columba 1400 pitch was opened some time ago.
JMck said he was hopeful a combined effort from the various organisations in the Staffin community could get results. He said other areas like Edinbane had managed to secure

facilities like a top-quality playpark and was keen that Staffin could emulate that success. GH asked how much work had been done in shaping the proposed project, JMCK said the community council was not that far advanced yet.

SO said the SCT board was very supportive of the community council efforts and asked to be kept updated. DMCD said he was very pleased to see the community council reformed. He told JMCK that one unrelated issue it might wish to consider was the removal of the barrier at the Culnacnoc War Memorial so that elderly members of the community can more easily lay wreaths at Remembrance time.

JMCK left the meeting at 8pm.

5. **Housing, Health & Business Development:** HR provided an update on the site purchase and Resumption application, which was submitted to the Scottish Land Court by the Kilmuir Estate solicitor in December. He had previously been told by SCT's solicitor Johnny Bell that the Resumption and land purchase would be completed in January. However, he had contacted the estate factor, Ewen MacPherson, and its solicitor said it could be between four to six months. That could mean it would be March, by the earliest, that the land would be owned by SCT.

HR shared a hardcopy of the funding situation. There was a significant shortfall at present but it did not include SCT's partners' contributions, income from potential sale of Staffin Surgery as an affordable home, the sale of the plots to HSCHT and LSHA and the potential contribution from NHS Highland, via the surgery sale.

HR said that SCT's status, as a company limited by guarantee with charitable objectives as outlined in its Articles of Association, prohibited it from applying to possible grant sources like the Quaker Housing Trust, Prince's Countryside Fund, Trusthouse Charitable Fund, etc. SCT met all the other criteria apart from that and he wanted to start lodging applications now. The board had deferred a decision on becoming a charity until its March meeting so it could find out whether the threshold for audits was to be raised. HR asked whether the board would consider moving that decision forward to its next meeting.

GH said it would be helpful if HR spoke to the charity regulator OSCR and got a steer if this change was indeed coming. He said that it was unlikely the application to OSCR could be processed that quickly.

HR said he was investigating the merits of crowdfunding and community shares and noted that Columba 1400 had impressively raised more than £13,000 for building maintenance works via a crowdfunding campaign and intended to soon seek advice from the chief executive Marie Clare Tully.

HR said he was meeting NHS Highland officials in Inverness on February 6th regarding the purchase of the Staffin Surgery. The NHS Highland Asset Management Group (AMG) met last week and agreed – in principle – to sell the surgery to SCT and retain the capital receipt (subject to Scottish Government approval). The sale proceeds would hopefully then be diverted to the new surgery's construction and NHS's internal 'fitting out' costs. NHS's area official Kate Earnshaw is now working on a full Options Appraisal, and a Business Case to justify this financially to the AMG which meets again at the end of February. A request would then be submitted to the government, if it passes through the AMG.

6. **Staffin Slipway Development:** HR said that he hoped to hear soon whether SCT had been successful in its application to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund for the Slip redevelopment.
7. **Skye Ecomuseum - Interpretation:** AM said February 11th was the deadline for the Interpretation Plan so it could be finally agreed and signed off. He said he would share the plan with the board for comments. Maoilios Campbell, Flodigarry, had been helping AM with the Gaelic interpretation. IMcD asked if the board could also see the Gaelic text for the interpretation. AM had a sub-group meeting last Friday with DR and SG and made good progress. AM and the consultants, Lateral North had been told by Highland Council's area planning manager Mark Harvey that consent would be required for all the physical interpretation, including at the sites of the current panels. This was unexpected and could delay the installation works in April, as a full planning application takes about two months to process. AM had asked Staffin Community Council if it would be willing to be the named planning applicant so SCT could save 50% on the fees and had received a positive response. IMcD said it could come under pre-planning notification and advised AM to check that.

AM said path repairs to the Slipway route would be carried out by Rabbie's staff next month over two days, supervised by Donald Kennedy, of Highland Council.

HR said he wanted the board's input on a potential safety issue at Lealt. During the recent freezing temperatures, the council's gritter driver Angus MacDonald had told DR that he had observed two cars sliding back down the access road to the new platform car park. The driver thought that there was a possibility of a vehicle going through the fence. HR said it was a concern previously highlighted by Eric Faulds, the car park engineer, and DMcD. DR and IMcD suggested that a gate with a steel-fixed strainer and/or a cross beam below the current height barrier could restrict access during icy conditions, with a sign notifying the public it would be shut.

DR suggested buying second hand crash barriers could be a way forward. IMcD said often the second-hand structures were just as expensive. HR said EF had thought having barriers installed was essential as there could be a collision between cars going in opposite direction on the track during the summer. HR said there was still some of the funding grant but some of that was restricted. He had been in discussions with EF about parking signage and the car park.

HR also intended to speak to a local contractor re several tidy up tasks at the site including muddy patches at the car park and path, the installation of picnic benches and the lack of tension on the platform fence.

The board agreed that a crash barrier would be required.

8. **Crofters' Memorial:** Atlas Arts had intimated to SCT that it wished it well for this project and would now focus on its other work having been involved in the research and development for several years. AM discussed submitting an application to a Bord na Gaidhlig funding stream which opens in September. He said there was a budget in the Ecomuseum for a good oral history project on the Staffin crofters' uprising, which he wanted to develop.

AOCB

The meeting concluded at 9.30pm.