

237th Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Sleat Community Trust

On: Monday 27th of January 2025

In: Board Room

At: 18.00pm

MINUTES

1. Attendance, Apologies, and absences:

Ade Stokes AS, Ruud van Ruitenbeek (SCTCL Chair) RvR, Paddy McKay PM, Eilidh Grant EG, Myrielle Macleod MML (Admin), Garry Noakes GN, Duncan MacInnes DM, Ciorstan Howarth CH, John MacDonald JM, Andy Williamson AW (meeting chair)

Apologies : Donald MacDonald DMD

The board is quorate.

2. Welcome to Board Members and Introductions

The meeting started with an introduction of all the old and new board members to one another. Then the question was posed if all present agree to approve the 3 new members of the Trust. All present agreed.

3. Co-option of Young Person Representative

Ciorstan Howarth was proposed to be the co-opted young person representative. AS proposed and PM seconded the co-option.

4. Items for AOB

- a.) Approval of being able to send out shop business plan
- b.) Approval of Mann Judd Invoices
- c.) Parent Council School Pitch
- d.) Domain Renewal
- e.) Blue Plaque
- f.) Newsletter

5. Declarations of Interest

PM for Sleat Hydro

DM for Community Council and as Shop Supplier

AW for Community Council

MML as Shop Supplier

CH as Shop Worker

6. Minutes of the last Meeting, matters arising

The Minutes were proposed by AS and seconded by GN.

The money SCTCL needed to pay to SCT to avoid tax on Profit was done. All the Action Points regarding the AGM were dealt with. MML was put on Companies House as Company Secretary.

Shop plans to show where the Awning will go were found and circulated to the SCTCL board. The building work can be started when the weather gets better.

RvR send a link with Director information to the Shop staff so they could get to know the Board members.

MML checked and there are no keys for the cupboard locks in the office. It was suggested to purchase a Yale lock and put this on the Archive Store where everything important will be kept. Elliott will be allowed to use the office while MML is on holiday but a sign on the door will display that the office is closed.

Action Point: move all important documents to store archive before holiday MML

Action Point: purchase and install Yale lock at Archive store DM

Action Point: put up a sign indicating that the office is closed during holiday MML

AS pointed out that the board needs to make sure they are quorate before every meeting. That means that we need 50% of Directors (elected or not) to be present and of those there must be a majority of Elected Directors. So currently it would be a minimum of 5 Directors attending, of which 3 would need to be Elected

The board still has space for 2 co-opted directors and 1 treasurer who doesn't have to be a director.

Action Point: update Companies House with new directors and take retired ones off MML

Action Point: update the SCT website accordingly with the director's PM

7. Finance AS

a.) Quarterly Report from the Finance Director: AS

AS apologized for sending out the report late as the numbers in the Cashflow tracker had to be reconciled first. AS has now designed a new cashflow projection which goes up until March 2026. This redesigned tracker has a separate restricted and unrestricted funds tracker. This will be started with January 2025 and should help to circulate the quarterly report quicker for the next time.

Action Point: re-send new tracker to MML AS

Action Point: transfer January Data from old Cashflow Tracker to the new one MML

For the benefit of the new directors, AS explained that he gives a Cashflow Report every quarter to show the financial position of the Trust using the cash flow as well as the bank statements.

Showing the quarterly report to the board, AS explained how it works to the new members. There are the in and outflows and the Balance carried forward. The actual figures are used as well as comparison figures. There is then the variance between figures that is being shown including a variance percentage.

There is a hybrid between the forecast and actual to date on the report. Q4 shows the actual numbers and Q1 shows the forecast. There is also a commentary box and statuses in Red, Amber and Green.

Showing the consolidated figures first, AS also handed out copies of the December 2024 bank statement. The report shows the unrestricted fund balance and not the bank account balance. Using this information, it shows that there are nearly £10,000 in the bank which are restricted funds. All figures have been reconciled against the bank statements, however there is a difference (underreporting) of £34 which has not been found yet.

The overall SCT balance keeps going down as the outgoings outweigh the income, but the income is higher as forecasted due to the lump sum paid by SCTCL. The reason for this transfer was that SCTCL was able to make a top-up MoU contribution to SCT from profits.

At the end of December, £10,000 was loaned to SRL and since then, another £5,000 was loaned to them.

The commentary mentions a higher Q4 inflow and also a higher outflow. This is due to the play park grant that was received and then went back out for payment.

Another difference in the income was higher than anticipated rental income, Christmas dinner money coming in and a PAYE refund.

Outflow differences were due to the Christmas Dinner money going out, higher energy costs and the accountancy fees.

AS then went on to the SCTCL report. The Trading position has been strong all year and the balance carried forward is different to the forecast due to the nearly £20,000 contribution to SCT. The actual numbers also exclude the savings account. The report for SCTCL used the in and out bank balances only making it a transactional report.

The savings account has been put up as a reserve account for unexpected things. At the end of the year, the money will not be able to be carried over but needs to be transferred to the SCT account again.

There is a difference in the forecast for the outgoings which is due to the VAT bill being higher than anticipated and that the income in Q4 was higher than anticipated due to better sales. This also has had an impact on the cost too. Fuel supplies have been bought at £47,000 instead of £32,000 sold so there is an excess of stock not sold yet.

Due to the recent power outage, there was a loss of chilled/frozen stock which needed replacement. There is a claim with the insurance company in for this.

For the SRL report, commentary was supplied by Chris Pendlebury. Overall, the woodchip business is not viable anymore. Therefore, the truck and blower are redundant and should be sold asap. However, there is also a possibility that a firm called Puffin will take these over, an answer is expected soon.

Overall, SCT cannot rely on SRL income until the felling has been done which is being held back due to the Long Term Forest Plan awaiting acceptance first. It was also flagged that there is still a VAT liability which will mean that further money will go out.

AS made an ongoing concern statement for the accountants with 2 statements. One shows what happens with influx of SRL MOU money and one shows what happens without SRL MOU money. All these assumptions though assume that SRL has paid of their loan and outstanding MOU money by December 2025.

One way of still getting money in for the Trust is the selling of Plot C without the Rural Housing Burden. MML spoke to Community Housing Trust about getting rid of Rural Housing Burden, but the email was not very clear. This point is being carried forward as Agenda Item for the next meeting.

Action Point: speak to Community Housing Trust and get clarification on email

MML

Action Point: check Planning Permission conditions

MML

b.) Risk Register: AW

AW shared his screen with the board. During the recent audits, it was flagged that SCT does not have a risk register. The risk register designed by AW lets you put in probability and impact, and this results in a matrix calculation. This will then decide what action needs to be taken which is either Monitor, Manage, Migrate or Mitigate. This risk register will need to be filled in and be finished by the end of this financial year. The sub Finance group will be required to fill this in.

Action Point: fill in risk register as soon as possible

Finance Group

This register should warn the Trust of things happening before they happen, and it is good governance. It also will need regular updates and should be reviewed every quarter at least. All the boards are included in the risk register but a sub set can be given to each board to be completed. Before having a meeting on this, brainstorming via email will be required.

Action Point: get brainstorm on Risk Register via email before Finance Meeting **All board members**

8. SCTCL (TRADING): General update: RvR

The month has been quieter just now, but this was expected. The turnover however is higher than anticipated. The recent power cut caused a lot of stock to be disposed of responsible as this was over the advised temperature for some hours. Donations from the public have been received for this. There is a claim in with the insurance and a discussion is ongoing with the loss adjuster at the moment for which a servicing report for the chillers as well as a SSE outage power report is necessary. Trading is also insured against loss of profit as well as stock. Staff costs can however not be reclaimed. There was no information given on the excess that SCTCL needs to be paying.

Action Point: check AS insurance template on excess information **MML**

For Skyenet, everything is ticking over well. Calum is providing back up batteries which cost money but provide a better service.

A future plan for the shop is to get a quote for putting in a socket that can be used for a small generator (to be purchased) to keep fridges and freezer going if there was another power cut. The Tormore generator would be to difficult to move and takes too long to move as well.

9. SRL (RENEWABLES): General Update: GN

SRL had their board meeting on Friday. The Long Term Forest Plan is still dragging on as there has been no response to it. Once it has been approved, the felling can begin. The Deer Management Plan needs to be submitted and approved, and Alan Drever is working on it.

There is a discussion with Puffin wood fuel, who are bidding for a contract for woodchip supply with UHI, and a Rep is coming up to see the wood chip, truck and blower this week as they have shown an interest in them.

The ongoing VAT issue needs someone to pick this up as the interest calculated keeps shifting. A payment plan was thought to be in place including the fixed interest, but this keeps changing. It was suggested to take this to MSP and MP.

Action Point: discuss VAT issue and put out letter to MSP/MP **GN and SRL board**

10. Strategy, governance and management

a.) DTAS Review: AW

An initial session was held with Audrey from DTAS. The next step after this is to hold a strategy review meeting after having the completed assessment ready. The follow up session is a half day session and will be held by Audrey. This will help the board to decide how to approach strategy. This review will involve all boards.

For the DTAS review, the spreadsheet will be re-circulated to all the boards, and everyone should look at these and add their contribution. PM will be at the next SCTCL and SRL meeting to facilitate going through the template.

Action Point: facilitate DTAS review with SCTCL and SRL board **PM**

b.) Board Skills and Experience Analysis: AW

AW had forwarded a spreadsheet to analyse Trustee skills and look at strengths and where there are gaps which indicate training needs for the board. The overall spider diagram will help get a picture of the skills of the whole board.

Action Point: in next 2 weeks: all complete Audit and return to AW **All board members**

c.) Local Place Plan: AW

The Local Place Plan, which was designed by AW and DM and others, will need reading by all board members as this shows the short, medium and long term proposals for the community. SCT should look at these ideas for strategic reviews.

Action Point: print copies of Local Place Plan and provide to community and An Crubh **DM**

11. Resilience Planning

A document on Tormore futures was distributed to all prior to the meeting. The suggestion in this paper to split up operations and develop new projects at Tormore. This will have to be taken to strategy review and be reviewed using the place plan as well. There may be tax implications if it goes forward with a smaller renewables operation and when things will be transferred to the Trust. More governance will also be needed for the Tormore Management Group than what is currently being advised. An extended discussion broke out about this.

Action Point: re-send Tormore Document in Word **PM**

Action Point: have everyone make comments on Tormore Document **all Board members**

Action Point: review the document at next board meeting **all Board members**

Action Point: carry forward this item **next board meeting**

12. Local Place Plan: AW

This was discussed above.

13. CRF2165: Playpark Report: AW

Money for the playpark has been received and has gone back to the Highland Council. Hopefully work can start by Easter, but this depends on the weather.

14. AOB – from items given in 2 above

a.) Shop Business Plan: MML

A question was asked if the Shop Business plan can be circulated to the communities in Glenelg/Arnisdale and Edinbane. All are happy to have this circulated once names have been redacted.

Action Point: redact information in the PDF Business Plan **PM**

Action Point: mention idea to contact Invermoriston Shop to Glenelg and Edinbane **MML**

b.) Mann Judd Invoices: MML

MML asked for approval for payment of the Mann Judd Invoices from SRL, SCT and SCTCL for the accountancy fees. All invoices can be paid for in 3 installments with the last instalment being due before the end of the financial year. As the invoices are in line with the predictions given to the board previously, the board approved the payment.

C.) Parent Council School Pitch: AW

The Parent Council was asking if the Trust would like to take over the school pitch as the council has not kept it well. There is no drainage and maintenance of the pitch would be very expensive. Overall, it was agreed that it would not be feasible for the Trust to take this over. However, the board could support the school, but more work would be needed on the proposal by the school.

Action Point: reply to Parent Council **AW**

D.) Domain renewal: PM

The Domain renewal for sleat.org.uk is due and would cost £30 per year. PM could transfer this to his existing plan which would reduce the price down to £12 per year. All present people agreed that this is a good idea.

Action Point: move domain over and cancel Host World

PM

E.) Blue Plaque: DM

DM asked if a plaque could be designed and put on the Shop building to indicate the first major achievement of SCT which was the purchase of the petrol station, garage and house from Donnie Mackinnon. With Donnie and Colleen going to great lengths to enable the community to do this and supporting all the way it would be a good recognition and also part of Sleat's History.

Action Point: suggestion of wording for plaque and present at next meeting

DM

F.) Newsletter: DM

DM has been doing the Newsletter for a while now. DM would like to include CDI and Community Council in the newsletters going forward so there is more coordination. Other members should also be involved in the development of the newsletters. The deadline for the next Newsletter is 15/2/25.

EG asked if the new updated SCT members list can be circulated so everyone can check if they know of anyone that doesn't need to be on it.

Action Point: circulate updated SCT Members List

MML

Action Point: update Mail Chimp with new Members List

DM

The meeting ended at 20:35 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 24th of February at 18:00 pm in the Boardroom.