

251st Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Sleat Community Trust

On: Monday 30th of March 2026

In: Board Room & via [Teams](#)

MINUTES

1. Attendance:

- a. In Person: Duncan MacInnes (DMI), Donaidh MacDonald (DMD, SCT Chair), John MacDonald (JMD), Paddy McKay (PM), Tricia Petri-Clark (TP, SCTCL Director), Ruud van Ruitenbeek (RvR, SCTCL Chair), Garry Noakes (GN, SRL Director), Norma MacPherson (NM, Shop Manager)
- b. Via Teams: Eilidh Grant (EG), Gillian Munro (GM, SMO), MML (Office Admin), Andy Williamson (AW)
- c. Apologies: Sophia Lockley (SL)
- d. The board is quorate.

2. Items for AOB:

3. Declarations of interest:

- a. DMI Sleat Community Council
- b. MML for Shop, Balmacara Community Trust
- c. PM for Hydro

4. Minutes of the last meeting, matters arising:

- a. Proposed: PM, Seconded: JMD
- b. See action items below

Generator: RvR updated the board that there will be an online fundraiser coming up to raise money for a generator however this cannot be set up until there have been quotes given for installation as a target is required to set up the Fundraiser. The Application for the fundraiser also needs to be made through the Trust rather than the Trading Board. The Shop Managers were asking about getting a subgroup set up that will deal with the Generator Fundraiser and all managers want to be involved with this.

AW informed the board that there will be a SEN Resilience fund that should open up again in the future which could help with the costs but there is currently no funding open. SEN's regional fund is supposed to be reopening so this is one for the board to keep an eye on. RvR will organise a meeting for the Generator Fund which will include the Shop Managers and Martin MacGillivray and JD MacInnes as they were interested in helping with this. DMD will speak to An Crubh about their experience in getting a generator as they recently had Norman Gillies up with them.

5. Finance:

AS circulated the latest Cashflow Report ahead of the meeting but is now no longer Finance Director for SCT.

AS was asking if a treasurer for the board has been found yet who could take over and do what Ade was doing as this is a Board Level responsibility. AS wanted to finish being responsible the financial spreadsheet so it is important to replace him. The Treasurer does not need to be a Board member so that may make it easier. It was suggested to advertise the position on social media and by spreading the word locally. Tracey Broadley has recently been approached but is currently unable to help. In the meantime, the Finance Subgroup will look at the Finances.

6. Finance Subgroup Report (AW):

a.) Report back from Meeting

AW reported back from the Finance Subgroup meetings which were held in person and online.

The Finance subgroup looked at the finances and the Trust is in a difficult situation with the expenses being higher than the income which results in SCT now hitting the reserve line of £20,000. It is not possible to reduce costs for SCT so the Trust needs to look at increasing the income. However, John Cayley from SCTCL has renegotiated a new electricity contract for SCT and SCTCL which has reduced the bill which is extremely important in the current climate.

TP made a proposal to SCTCL for getting £6,000 out of their Savings account to help SCT. This brings the finances for the Trust back over the reserve line which is important for the End of the financial year, so the accountants do not flag this up. The last Accounts flagged up a historical debt from Trading to the Trust so this money transfer can be counted as a repayment of this debt and get adjusted in the accounts. MML to inform the accountants about this.

One short term option to raising money is selling the last Capisdale Plot (Plot C). The group looked at increasing the rent for the garage but that is not a good idea especially with the social value the garage is providing for the area. The Focus is therefore on creating revenue producing projects and these need to be started now and the Trust should not be waiting until a CDO is in place.

Hiring out the Marquee which was donated by DMD to the Trust is one option for generating revenue. This can be hired but the people hiring it will have to put it up themselves. Anybody interested can contact the office about using the marquee and this will be advertised in the next Newsletter. No set price was agreed on however all proceeds of the rental go towards the community. DMD to look into finding a price.

AW circulated the last Finance Subgroup meeting minutes which include a list of potential projects. AW asked the board to review these for the next meeting.

b.) Funds transfer from SCTCL

£6,000 from the SCTCL Savings Account have been transferred to the SCT account.

7. Recruitment – Community Development Officer (AW):

AW is in the process of writing a job description for the position and the draft for this will be circulated amongst all three boards before being advertised.

MML informed the board about the difficulties Balmacara Community Trust is having just now for hiring a suitable CDO. AW acknowledged that recruitment may be difficult as the board needs the right person as the role is vital for the Trust.

8. Improving internal communication (boards, staff, volunteers) (AW):

During the last SCTCL meeting which AW joined, the Shop Managers pointed out that they are not being kept in the loop about what is going on with the Trust. Historically there seems to have been a “them” and “us” mentality which has left the shop staff feeling as if they are not part of the team. This is not an intentional situation and seems to have been an inherited situation instead. For the CDO, internal communication will be in the job description. The Trust was happy for NM to join the Trust Board meeting as the shop thought they were not allowed to join these meetings.

Overall, there needs to be better communication between the boards, with staff and volunteers as well as communication and relationships with the crofters, FEI, CDI etc. Trust Directors were also encouraged to join the Shop and Trading meetings, and everyone needs to find a way to keep information flowing both ways.

The Shop is the face of the Trust and can therefore support the Trust through conversations that are being held in the Shop so sharing of information is important. It was also suggested that Shop Staff can become Directors of the Trust. AW checked the legality for this via the Articles of Association, and they state that no employee of the company may be a Trustee but as staff are employed by Trading and not the Trust, they would be eligible to become Trustees.

9. SRL (Renewables): General update

GN gave quick update. The last Board Meeting was held on Friday. The Long-Term Forest Plan is now with Scottish Forestry. The colour coding of maps was incorrect in the Plan so Chris Pendlebury is correcting this and will then resend the maps.

The UK Forest Certification which was difficult to obtain is not needed. Alan Drever has done research on this and the Forest Standard (which SRL already has) is sufficient for the LTFP. The only downside is that there will be less money for felling without the Forest Certification Scheme.

The Heads of Term Lease Agreement that has been signed between SRL and Matt Adam's is in the process of being turned into a contract. GN has been looking at this

and it will be discussed again at the next SRL meeting. The Stock Take of the forest is due on Wednesday and Chris Pendlebury and Ade Stokes will be doing this.

Otherwise, SRL is working towards the Tormore Forest Open Day.

GN confirmed to the board that SRL currently gets a modest income from Matt Adam's via the Trailer lease, Woodshed rental, and some wood sale.

10. SCTCL (Trading): General update

TP reported on the latest in Trading as RvR had been on holiday.

The annual Stock Take is happening just now, and the accountant is due on Wednesday morning.

The shops communications on Fuel and the pricing on Facebook were very well done especially as it is hard to keep up with the pricing as the Shop doesn't get the fuel price until the day of delivery. The shop has been approached by Scottish Fuels (Certas Energy) if they are interested in letting Certas run the petrol station. This could mean that new pumps would be installed and the maintenance would fall to them however this would also mean that the prices for fuel would be set by Certas and if it is an unmanned petrol station it could reduce the footfall in the shop. Some more information on this proposal is required.

The Shop Bank Balance is just under £50,000. From the Savings account, £6,000 were moved to the Shop Account and £6,000 to the Trust account. The accountants had previously advised that it would be unwise to have too much savings at the end of the financial year for tax reasons.

Financially, having around £50,000 in the Shop current account is good for this time of year and the shop managers have done a winter analysis of sales recently and noticed that from October to February the income has been higher than in previous years. The shop is now only shy of £5,000 to hit the 1-million-pound turnover for this financial year.

The margins in the shop are slim and there is not a lot of money but the winter months have been steady and consistently better than previous years.

Staffing wise, the shop now employs 12 part time staff which has a full time equivalent of 4.5 employees. The wages for all of these will go up in April with the Real Living Wage going up to £13.45 per hour. There is also some young staff that will be turning 16 so their wages will also be going up.

Some issues with parking outside of the shop were mentioned and this needs to be discussed at the next SCTCL meeting.

11. Strategy, governance and management (AW):

Currently, the finances and getting a CDO have taken over but once the CDO role is sorted, this will be picked up again.

12. IT Matters (PM):

Transition from Dropbox to Share Point is ongoing. PM looked into sourcing a new PC and was suggesting to also look at getting a new desktop for the Shop managers as well as a laptop for the new CDO. MML mentioned ongoing issues with the Office Desktop. PM will pull a proposal together.

13. Risk Register Review every quarter

a.) Access to Bank Accounts in Myrielle's absence

The Risk Register should have been reviewed at this meeting however there is too much on the agenda to do this. Risk Register will therefore be reviewed at the next meeting.

The Trust and SRL Bank Accounts are currently only accessible by MML. The Shop Account can be accessed by Debbie (Shop Manager). RvR volunteered to get access on behalf of the Trust. MML will look online on how to give RvR access to the banking app.

14. Land Purchase Rawlinson (MML):

MML had an update from the Trust's solicitor TC Young. They have received the Rawlinson's request to purchase some extra land adjacent to their property for £2,000 plus they will pay the legal fees.

15. EV Minibus Charger Update (MML):

After speaking with Voltshare and then CPS again, CPS can make the chargers into Plug and Play chargers. That would mean anyone can use the chargers and we are unable to access the data for this, nor will there be any technical support available for this. Technical support is only possible through an external company therefore MML will need to connect with Voltshare again.

16. Newsletter Update (DMI):

DMI circulated a draft newsletter. The photography exhibition is still to be added to this. EG also raised some comments on the Food Shed part of the Newsletter. Names will be removed from this bit, and it will be added to the newsletter that people interested in volunteering for the food shed can contact the Facebook group.

EG was also uneasy about the editorial comment which can come across as slightly offensive. DMI to take those sentences out.

DMI also announced there will be a set date for the next Newsletter and it will have more Gaelic in it.

17. Tormore Woodland Open Day (DMI):

The Tormore Woodland Open Day is happening on the 12th of April in line with the next volunteer day. A meeting for this has been held and there is a plan in place for

what needs to be done. All the different users of Tormore will be invited, photos will be shown, guided walks will be held, and Matt is opening up his shed.

18. Tormore Management Group purchases and Shed (DMI):

DMI thinks the name Tormore Management Group is a misleading name that is frightening volunteers already and a more appropriate name would be Tormore Community Group. DMI will email the Group and suggest changing the name. The money that has been allocated for Tormore purchases is still sitting in the fund and will be used for purchases such as a battery driven wheelbarrow. There is also an old shed in Tormore that Matt will not be needing so if it can be moved to the Polytunnel it can be used.

19. Holiday Update (MML):

MML will be away on Annual leave from the 7th of April until the 27th of April. During this time, Anne Zajac will be dealing with any minibus enquiries and PM agreed to monitor the emails. There should be no invoices coming in that require immediate payment and there may be statements coming in that look overdue but just hold on to them as they sometimes do not reflect the most recent payments. Debbiee will send the Payroll Information to MML while on holiday and the time for processing this will be claimed back.

20. Ferry Group Update (PM):

PM updated the board on the ferry service. Unfortunately, there is still no ferry service over the Easter period.

The issue has been raised with MSP's and MPs. There may be a charter service available however there has been no update on this yet, so PM is awaiting information on passenger charter or any charter for the next 2 weeks. More delays are possible.

21. Networking Event Armadale Castle (PM):

PM met with the new owners Hutchison and their manager Chris on behalf of Visit Sleat. They will try to host and fund a business network event on 22nd of April at the Stables to talk about VS and generate ideas on how to get involved. This will be an evening event with all VS businesses invited to it. PM will send some words about this to DMI for the Newsletter.

22. Pay Increase April 2026

Pay Increase happening for all staff in shop. MML asked about if the Admin Pay will also be adjusted. If so, a confirmation via email is needed so it can be forwarded to Payroll.

The meeting concluded at 19:31 pm and the next meeting is on Monday, 27th of April 2026 in the Boardroom.

ACTION ITEMS

	ACTION POINT	RESPONSIBLE	OUTCOME
1	Go ahead with amending or getting new Shop sign and show to Trust, get SCT Offices Sign	RvR, PM	In process
2	Set up Generator Meeting	RvR	
3	Speak to An Crubh about Generator	DMD	
4	Tell Accountants about Money Transfer to adjust historical debt	MML	
5	Look at pricing for marquee hire	DMD	
6	Review List of potential projects	All Board Members	
7	Discuss Parking Issues at next SCTCL Meeting	RvR	
8	Pull together proposal for new PCs, laptop	PM	
9	Quarterly Risk Register Review due	All Board Members	
10	Find out how to give RvR access to Bank Accounts	MML	
11	Get back in touch with Voltshare about Minibus Chargers	MML	
12	Email Tormore Group about changing name	DMI	
13	Send words to DMI for Newsletter about Networking Event	PM	