

**204<sup>th</sup>**  
**MINUTES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**of SLEAT COMMUNITY TRUST (SCT)**  
**Tuesday, 31st of May 2022**  
**7.30pm, Boardroom and Zoom**

**ATTENDANCE:** Martin MacGillivray (MM) (Chair), Roddy Murray (RM) (Trustee), Eilidh Grant (EG) (Trustee), Polly MacInnes (PM) (Vice Chair), Mike Shucksmith (MS) (Business Development Officer), Flora MacLean (FM) (Trustee), Garry Noakes (GN) (SRL Chair), Ruaraidh Morrison (RMN), John Duncan MacInnes (JDM) (Trustee), Ade Stokes (AS) (EAG advisor), Sarah Hess (SH) Administrator.

**1. Apologies:** Andrea Nollent (AN) (Trustee), Dòmhnall Angaidh MacLennan (DAM) (Trustee)

**Absent:** Ruud van Ruitenbeek (RR) (SCTCL Chair),

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** MM & RM, declared an ongoing interest in the Hydro scheme.

**3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:**

The 203rd meeting minutes were proposed by FM seconded by GN, approved by the board.

**4. MATTERS ARISING:**

GN is coming in on Thursday 2 June to help with SRL business. It has come to light that not all orders have been charged for and neither has the delivery charge been passed on to the client.

Corry and Neille are coming back with a confirmed delivery charge, so the client knows in advance the total cost and therefore invoicing can be immediate. Some invoices haven't been going out for up to 2 months after the delivery, which effects the cash flow.

Wood chip and long length invoices are now under control. SH is reconciling them, so we are in a much better position than we were.

Date for village hall general meeting will be the evening of Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June. We need to book from 18.00 to allow for set up. Hall to be booked by EG. **Action EG.**

The newsletter: MS has put together the latest version and Duncan has offered to put the newsletter together in the future. Duncan is happy to collate the material and produce something that can be sent by email. For translating into Gaelic, Roddy will assist and will start the latest newsletter this week. **Action RM & DM.**

The service improvement plans still need updating and then maintaining, each board to go through their own and update the document. This needs to be completed by Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022. **Action All Boards.**

First Aid course – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June 09.00 – 17.00 at SMO. 7 people attending. Noticed that the shop side is low in numbers. It is a concern as sometimes there is no first aid coverage for the shop, and we are meant to operate the shop with a minimum of 1 person with a first aid ticket. The offer of a manual handling course has no takers to date. MS has offered both manual handling and the food hygiene courses to help the shop team, and this may be easier to undertake than online courses. Each course is one day in duration, assuming the shop need the “Award” in the subject and not simply the “Principles” of.

FM offered to help in the shop, to help cover for the H & S courses. MM to discuss with RMN

REPOSS system – there are concerns at the moment with the trading cash flow. The trading finances are dropping and some of the DD's are high. We need REPOSS to be correct so a pricing check can be done as supply costs rise. This would help with looking at the profit margins of items. Also, for assisting in the ordering so we can see the fast and slow movement of items. Some days the income is matching the expenditure.

SRL is supporting SCTCL cashflow with a £10k loan. A revised look at our profitability margins needs to be undertaken, and an assessment of what can be increased accordingly. REPOSS should be able to report on this quickly if it is up to date. **MM** to arrange a meeting with Ruud and Tricia to discuss the lack of clarity re the REPOSS system and to advise how the admin office can assist.

MS reported that the front of house of the shop is impeccable and the team run it very well, it is the back office that needs some assistance.

Noted that Alison has cut her hours.

MS asked if the last stock take coincided with year end. **Action FM** to check and follow up.

Audit by Scottish woodlands. Action plan ongoing for H & S – GN having a meeting with MS on Thursday 2 June to go through some outstanding details and cash flow. **Action GN**.

SH has been added to SCT's records with Companies House as Secretary, that was approved between meetings by email.

All MOU's are now by SO's and are up to date

The visit from the Lord Lieutenant for Ross, Skye & Cromarty went very well with some very positive feedback on what the trust has done and proposing.

Signage – is ongoing with Tricia who is looking at feather flags

Chris Smith re-joining the board is ongoing

## **FINANCE**

Cashflow: MS presented the latest actual cash flow/forecast to the end of May.

The forecast for trading has been given to MS by Tricia and the SCT financial record and SCTCL's now match.

The cash flow is looking healthy from an SCT point of view. That includes the £15,000 grant payment from Foundation Scotland as contribution for the part time position of ADBO and for the feasibility study from Rural designs for the CSP at the entrance to Tormore CF.

GN meeting on Thursday with MS to also include timber and stocks to revise the policies and procedures.

Peatland restoration work is coming to an end and grant account will soon be fully paid up. MS is monitoring Norbord's self-billing invoices and payments along with making the final claim to NatureScot. The first Norbord payment was made today (31/05). There is only one invoiced left to pay to D Wemyss for £36,000. Work today included finalising values.

### **Communication**

The information evening at the Village Hall is to take place on the 30/06/2022. Some catering to be organised as well as the layout i.e., tables at the front with rows of chairs at the back. Presentations to be around 5 mins each, therefore allowing for Q & A. **Action MM.**

Flora has kindly offered to assist with the catering, tea & coffee and cakes. Using the kitchen there. **Action FM.**

### **MS Update**

Plot Sales – the Housing Trust advised that applications are still in progress. 2 parties still interested.

### **Health and Safety and Policies**

H & S policies all in place – AN checked them. SCT has the Trust Service Improvement Plan and the Strategic Business Plan needing maintenance.

The shop still has a few items to finish off on their training along with the new starters needing the training. A fire drill is planned. Date TBC. **Action RR / Shop Managers.**

### **SMO Facilities Update**

Sports facilities - no update as the finances of the college have been redirected, we have asked HIE for assistance with the site surveys.

Kilbeg Campervan Service Point - a meeting with the Highland council this Thursday 2 June with MS and DAM on how we pull the money down. We then should know a proposed start date for James MacQueen next week.

We are still waiting for Scottish water to adopt the water services at SMO and thereafter to determine whether we can plumb into it that from the campervan service point with the black wastewater. We may not be able to plug into the current system for black water due to the chemicals involved. We wait on advice.

It would add an expense to have a separate tank emptied of black wastewater as we likely need a company from Inverness. This would create a pressure on the minimal forecasted operating surplus.

## SCTCL (Trading)

A review of the SCTCL Annual Leave policy for the staff handbook was undertaken. Leave can be increased by length of service to a maximum of 29 days. The notion was approved, one person was against. MS to complete the Handbook and signatures are to be obtained. **Action MS / Shop Managers.**

## SRL (Renewables)

GN presented the following report:

- Invoice and finance – meeting with SH & MS on 02/06 to look at streamlining.
- The Asst BDO part time post has been filled by Gordon Matheson and he will start on the 20/06/22. He will work Mon to Friday mornings only. He will look at the feasibility study for a further CSP at the entrance to Tormore, procuring more timber for the wood fuel enterprises and administrating the Woodsure QA system.
- Disappointing that the position for the cycle trail has not been filled, Andy Neilson might be worth mentioning it to. As he was involved in the Kyle/Broadford one. **Action GN.**
- Summer Solstice Bonfire Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2022. **Action GN.**
- Long Term Forest plan regeneration of native trees – Ash trees going well - a special SRL meeting has been planned to look at the long and short plan of the forest as they need formal review. GN will report back to the board. **Action GN.**
- GN trying to do a chainsaw course, but the quoted cost was £700 with WHC. He hopes to secure funding support.
- Bothy works – Rural designs have come up with a few proposals for the CSP. We will consider if we can tie up the grant application for the Bothy works with the campervan service point. It would be good to get some architectural input on the Bothy.
- Woodsure application – the 2<sup>nd</sup> chip sample has passed its test and the subscription invoice was paid 31/05/22. We still need BSL listing and Scottish Woodlands membership.
- The price of the chip needs to be looked at and maybe increased to help recoup some costs. This will be discussed on Thursday so we can set a sustainable price going forward.
- Peatland restoration is complete, with an article within the next few weeks in the WHFP. Alan has put something together.

The approach for timber in Kinloch Forest has received further communication. This has been an ongoing thing. We don't want to take larch, but a response is to be made for other species. **Action PM.**

There is timber in Tormore that is in a degrading state, it might not be good enough for chip. **Action GN.**

We are looking at purchasing a splitter and we may get the funding. With the funder only looking for applications over £50k could we apply for a chipper and a splitter? With a justification with the fuel prices going up, we want to do all we can to support the community with affordable fuel for the winter. We normally use Neilie's tractor to drive the splitter, but it may be worthwhile to get our own tractor? Therefore, we have one to use for the trailer that's there and to drive the splitter. **Action GN.**

Re the loader, we need to get a lean too to project it from the weather. We need to find out who owns the caravan that is there at the moment, so we can move the loader to there. MS to contact Rob Brakes from the Hydro to see if the caravan is his? **Action MS.**

EAG report – Ade

Finished the Rhododendron cutting for this year between the old road from Drumfearn to the cattle grid approaching Skulamus.

The Buddleia in Tormore needs to be cut back. We have received advice from Nature Scot see SCTEAG report for details.

Himalyan balsam has been identified in Tormore and this needs to be investigated. Access is the main issue.

Highland Climate Festival 25/6/22 – 3/07/22, funding is available. Maybe offer a Nature Trail for the Primary School? Short notice might be an issue.

SCT Environmental Policy to be distribute to all boards so they can comment.

Insurance coverage for volunteers – still waiting on a reply from NFU, though the revised policy is now being reviewed by MS, MM, GN and RR for comments. **Action MS, MM, GN, RR.**

## **AOB**

The land market is very buoyant at present so registering an interest in land, as provided for in Part 2 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, would allow greater opportunity for the Trust to acquire more land on behalf of the whole community if offered for sale. Community ownership of more of the local land resource would enable us to further strengthen our community through income generation, job opportunities and access to land for affordable housing, etc. Martin and Polly have spoken with HIE's Community Assets Team who advised that funding is still available through the Scottish Land Fund. **DECISION: MM and PM** should initiate the registration of interest process by engaging with the Community Land Team.

The Investing in Communities Fund reopened 31/05/2022 and this is the fund that supports our BDO post. We have been supported for 3 years so far plus the one-year extension due to COVID. The latest round would secure the post for a further 3 years. MS asked if we should apply for the current FT post and another post. The Trust is generating sufficient work to justify this, and the volume is set to positively increase. MS asked the Board for ideas and considerations for further feasibility studies so we can add them to the application. These are needed quickly as the closing date is the 28/06/2022. **Action ALL, MS.**

The SCT office was contacted last Friday by a potential fraudster wanting rapid payment of an invoice. The email communication used Henrik's name within the email address and initially this was seen as legitimate. Fortunately, RBS and office staff vigilance prevented any loss of funds. MS reported this to the Police, though they have decided not to investigate. Skyeconnect were informed as a courtesy to spread a level of caution to other Trusts. The email address to be aware of was [admin@eipadremote.com](mailto:admin@eipadremote.com). SH requested that all Boards contact her in person if an invoice is needing rapid payment or of large sums. **Action MM, GN, RR, Shop Managers.**

DNM: 28/06/2022 19:30 SCT Offices / Zoom.

Finance.

