

**213th MINUTES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
of SLEAT COMMUNITY TRUST (SCT)
Monday, 27th February 2023
6:00pm, Boardroom and Zoom**

Present: Mike Shucksmith (MS), Chris Pendlebury (CP), Roddy Murray (RM), Eilidh Grant (EG), J.D. MacInnes (JDM), Garry Noakes (GN), Polly MacInnes (PM), Ruud van Ruitenbeek (RR), Martin MacGillivray (MM), Andrea Nollent (AN), Sarah Hess (Co. Sec.), Flora MacLean (FM)

Apologies: Dòmhnall Angaidh MacLennan (DAM), Ruairidh Morrison (RMN), Gordon Matheson (GM), Ade Stokes (AS)

1. Apologies - Due to Zoom problems at the Board end DAM was unable to join.
2. Declarations of interest - RM and MM for Hydro Scheme.

Previous minutes were proposed by JD and seconded by RM.

3. Update on Website – Paddy McKay

The website is being overhauled by Paddy McKay, Paddy's background is as a software developer. He will be working with Vanessa Lopez from Lumberjack Digital, based in Breakish. Vanessa has done a variety of websites including Visit Sleat and Broadford and Strath. The cost will be around £1600.00, with the proposed live date being Monday 3 April 2023. The new site will be mobile friendly as it is on Word Press which makes it a lot faster. It will also tie up with social media feeds.

There will be training given for editing and keeping the site up to date.

Paddy will start migrating from the old site. A holding page will be on the old site saying site is being upgraded.

The logo is being updated, proposed designs will be forward to the board shortly.

Each area of the trust will be promoted along with the facilities we offer.

4. Matters arising – Worldpay & Dojo

The direct debit and contract with World Pay was cancelled in January 2023. The last payment to Worldpay was £128.00. They gave us £100.00 compensation for the inconvenience incurred. Dojo, the new card machine terminals are working well and the transfer of funds into the bank account is quicker. Their monthly costs are half of Worldpay, but some of this could be people still paying by cash and their initial terminal rates are lower for the first couple of months.

FYI - Worldpay statement Feb 2022 £599.00 – Dojo statement Feb 2023 £382.79

5. Cashflow

SCT has a VAT refund of £3,907.74.

The lunch club has a fund of £122.70 which is recorded on the SCT Restricted Accounts worksheet, a further donation in February of £1,401.82 was received.

SRL has no income in January from split logs and only £150 for log lengths.

SRL has received £5,000 from SCTCL as loan repayment.

SRL has £6,622 income from the International Tree Foundation.

SCTCL income is higher in January due to the Worldpay income being withheld in December. The averaged income for December and January for SCTCL is £50,689 as a comparable value indicating lower levels for the period. £5k down on Nov and more for previous months.

Water costs are being picked up 100% by SCT.

SRL has settled the Peatland Restoration account £9,512

SRL has paid the electricity liability at £17,854. In the future a repayment plan is to be established.

SCTCL staffing costs have risen by £300 in January.

SCTCL supplier costs have increased in January by £4,000.

SCTCL costs have increased in January by £12k. £2,700 being accountancy (50% of the total bill), £5,000 loan being returned to SRL

SCTCL retains the £10,000 loan from Skynet.

The net flow of cash across the 3 companies is negative this year, some is offset due to grant receipt and payment within SRL being in different financial years (2021-22 grant received but 2022-23 payments early in that FY).

6. Electricity Bill Payments

The backdated liability to SSE has been paid in full.

We've now got a supply contract with British Gas Lite (from 27/1/23)

Because of the complication with our meter, BGL have not yet sent over a confirmation of meter readings at handover to SSE. This is now in hand, and a final bill from SSE will come soon.

The final bill from SSE will be in the region of £3,915.51. An 80%/20% split between SCTL/SCT works out as: £3,132.41 from the shop; £783.10 from the Trust. (That is for a period of 46 days.)

BGL need to be given meter readings each month – around about the 26th (the billing point is 27th each month). This limits the opportunity for inflated estimate bills.

BGL were given a reading on 23/2 – and it is expected this will generate a bill in the region of £615.45 (for a period 26 days.) The same 80/20 split works out to shop: £492.36 / Trust £123.09.

The government subsidy will not last – on April 1st it drops from 21. 1p / unit to 1.9p/unit – so April electricity bills will rise.

7. Update on funding of posts

In June 2022 an application was made to the Investment in Communities Fund, this is from the Scottish Government. It has funded MS post for the past 4 years. It has also funded 70% of GM post the other 30% is from Foundation Scotland. It has also funded the caretaker's post. As from 1 April 2023, this funding is no longer available.

Initially looking at possibilities on how the days/ hours can be accounted for.

Mick – 6hrs SRL – 3.5 Hydro - Community Café totalling 11 per week. We need to find another 9 hours, to make up his 20 which he is contracted for at the moment. Revised job descriptions will be changed according.

Gordon – Looking at possibilities within SRL The woodland report he has just completed is an extremely useful paper to work with and go back to. MS looking at funding possibilities for his post. **Action MS**

Mike – Various discussions at the moment with SMO, as there may be a few opportunities there ie Campervan service point, National Gaelic Library, Sports Complex. Maybe a possibility of 2 days a week as project manager.
SRL for 1 day. Ongoing discussions with SCT.

8. SCTCL

One freezer has been turned off as approx costings to run it is £5k per year.

The shop has bought a gadget which the plug goes into that will measure the actual elec usage of the freezer giving a more precise figure. **Action RR for updates**

Once we have the amount of electric usage decisions might have to made on how much frozen goods we keep. A chest freezer is available if we need to transfer to that option, as the cost of operation a chest freezer is a lot lower.

Based on cash flow done by Tricia, there will be a difficult year ahead regarding costs and turnover.

There is saving of £20K showing over the year. This is from a few cost saving measures put in place, ie using volunteers and lower paid staff, keeping up to date with the prices and increase where needed. This keeps the bank balance in the black.

DRS – deposit return scheme due to be implemented August 2023. Implementation not yet confirmed to smaller shops.

There are a few logistics on how it's going to work/storage/space & cost of a machine and whether it is worthwhile. Looking at signing up for a trial and to see whether we can opt out.

Action RR

The freezers and chillers are being serviced this Wednesday, so the shop will be closed due to H&S re the gas that is used in the servicing. This time will be used for staff meetings and training.

9. SRL

The splitting of logs has currently been suspended due to an accident involving the splitting machine. Once the Forestry Bolt on First Aid course has been held, production can resume. First Aid course planned for Wednesday 8th March 2023 09.00 – 17.00. Anyone wishing to attend please contact MS.

Funding- £6,622.02 was received on 27 Jan 2023, from the International Tree Foundation. SRL hope to employ Ruairidh MacPherson to plant the 2,500 sycamore and for the native woodland species to be planted by community volunteers.

The long-term forestry plan needs to be reviewed and updated. Gordon has been in contact with Adele Beck who works for Great Glen Ecology, who did it previously. A grant might be available for this, she is not available until Sept 2023. Initial scoping needs to be done, then a plan preparation which should be grant funded. **Action GM**

A review of the forest evacuation plan needs to completed– **Action CP.**

10. **EAG Review**

Our last meeting focused on the challenges faced by the Group, namely the diminishing number of meeting attendees and the need to improve involvement with the local community.

Covid restrictions and the subsequent lifting of them have been significant factors in creating these challenges.

The Group is unanimous in its resolve to continue and as a bare minimum fulfil its advisory role to the Trust. It was agreed that work needs to be done to promote the Group and attract people to become regular meeting participants. The Group also needs to organise more 'real' events and activities to balance the virtual meetings and talks that have become the norm over the last 2 – 3 years.

Our next meeting in March will build on this discussion, hopefully leading to ideas that can be implemented in the coming months.

New e-mail address

In response to our Calico e-mail address being spoofed, we have now created a new gmail account:

sleatenvironmentgroup@gmail.com

Please ignore any e-mails from our previous e-mail account as these could be malicious.

Peat Restoration

Nature Scot is proposing that interpretive display boards are erected in Tormore. Alan Drever is the contact point for this initiative.

AOB

Matt Harrison has asked for assistance with devising T & C's for a small business grant to help local business after SCT helped him, previous to get established. **Action MM**

The Community Café is starting on a positive note, first week approx. 50pax – 2nd week 40 pax.

There is a break in April, then will recommence in May and June. Will have a break in July & August and resume Sept – Dec 2023.

Dorothy Jackson is organising a bid for a survey for healthy homes. If successful she has asked if SCT can help promote the survey, act as banker, and to assist with match funding approx. £200.

MM to email the SCT for their thoughts and feedback **Action MM**

Next meeting Monday 27th March @ 18.00 in the boardroom