

**214th MINUTES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
of SLEAT COMMUNITY TRUST (SCT)
Monday, 27th March 2023
6:00pm, Boardroom and Zoom**

Present: Mike Shucksmith (MS), Roddy Murray (RM), Eilidh Grant (EG), Polly MacInnes (PM), Ruud van Ruitenbeek (RvR), Martin MacGillivray (MM), Sarah Hess (Co. Sec.), Ruairidh Morrison (RMN), Ade Stokes (AS)

Zoom; Andrea Nollent (AN), Dòmhnall Angaidh MacLennan (DAM),

1. Apologies: Gordon Matheson (GM), Flora MacLean (FM), Chris Pendlebury (CP), J.D. MacInnes (JDM), Garry Noakes (GN),
2. Declarations of interest - RM and MM for Hydro Scheme.

Previous minutes were proposed by RvR and seconded by PM.

1. Cashflow

Cash flow observations for February 2023.

SCT

The community café account is being run within the SCT account and a line has been added for income and expenditure for clarity. Summary is provided on the SCT Restricted account worksheet.

Running restricted accounts within the SCT Bank Account does somewhat make the picture inflated (those account monies being within the account balance)

There was £45 made from the books in the lobby, this will sit within the Community Fund restricted account.

The final ICF grant payment has been received.

Staff costs are up due to P32 payments.

Office costs are increased due to the annual CHUBB payment for Fire Extinguishers

We have paid the Pre-Planning application fee for the TF CSP, this was funded by Foundation Scotland, and we have £3600 still left in our account for that project (for Topo survey, engineering and trial pits for the next stage of work – developed design).

SCT paid out £1000 to SRL for the Bothy development, £500 to SRL for tree protectors and £500 to Sleat PS PC for football kit from restricted funds.

The account is slightly elevated due to the funds being in the account for the salaries of the BDO, ABDO and Caretaker for March

SCT will donate £200 to the Healthy Homes Project (March payment).

The Robert Campbell funds have all been spent.

SRL

No split log sales for the second month this year

Log length sales were up, but not on par with Dec.

SRL has received a donation of £1,500 (£1000 for bothy development and £500 for tree protectors) from restricted accounts.

The first installment for the new shed doors was paid £6,180 and the CHUBB FE rental costs were £266.40.

SRL sees a net inflow of -£3,241.

SRL is to pay a £54,000 VAT liability. This balances the VAT on the peatland restoration invoices. We are checking that we received the VAT refund to the same value... this should mean SRL bank account reverts to where it would have been.

SCTCL

Avg sales in Dec and Jan were £50,689 (using avg due to WorldPay settlement), sales are down £7,000

Staff costs are stable across Dec, Jan and Feb, but on par with August.

Supplier costs are down considerably (£8,000)

Accountancy costs (the second of 2 payments) were £2,700.

SCTCL sees a net inflow of -£2,698.

On a quarterly basis the P&L from SAGE/XERO to be distributed to the board – Action SH

2. Post ICF Fund Planning

SRL – will help support the posts of Gordon/Mick and Mike for 1 year, but they will be reviewed 30/09/23, as it is not a sustainable model. But it helps to give the trust some breathing space to look for more funding.

SCT Board agrees to SRL supporting these new roles, with a review after 6 months.

Grants are now more for development/projects not for supporting the core staffing.

Mick Robertson's job description sees his role being split over four areas from 03/04/23.

Gordon Matheson's job description is a continuation of what he was previously doing with extra emphasis on forest wood sales.

Mike Shucksmith's job description will now Trust Manager

The SCT board approves the above changes and job descriptions from 03/04/23.

3. Electricity Bill Payments

Moving forward 80% of the electric bill will be covered by SCTCL. For Feb & March the bill will be £563.00 per month, but after 1 April this will double, if not more, due to the government subsidy for businesses being limited/stopped.

Calculations show that the monthly bill could increase to £1,625.

See attached report from Gordon.

4. Plot

It is still unsold price £25k. At the moment it's not appealing as to put in the initial services, these are expensive, due to the terrain not being ideal. Ongoing thoughts welcome.

5. Update SMO partnership

DAM gave an update – JMcQueens are heavily behind schedule due to various other projects they have on. They have lost a few key staff i.e. digger drivers which has compounded the problem.

The projects for Kilbeg will not be done all in one go, so there will be down time.

RTIF (Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund) have agreed to fund the CSP Project Management costs through SMO for 12 months. The first £3k has come from Motorhome Visitor Management Budget. Which covers MS to work there one day a week. This helps with funding his position. £7,600.

6. SCTCL

More volunteers are needed for the shop to help reduce staffing costs.

A suggestion to increase the trading hours in the summer as well as Sunday opening was suggested. RvR to look into staggered hours as a trial.

At different times promotion of items will be done. The first is a special discount we will receive from the supplier of our fruit and vegetables. Suggested recipes using these items will be posted on the shop's Facebook page, which will be linked to the new website.

Caramarie: +£0.40. Which brings her up to £8.90 which is not what she could earn elsewhere, but at least a little bit closer and it shows we appreciate her. The cost would be less than £150 for the year.

Erin: Currently on £6.50. She joined us last year and to show our appreciation of her performance and because she is one year older, there will be an increase of £0.75 per hour to £7.25. This would cost less than £250 for a year.

7. SRL

The Feasibility study for the CSP has been completed.

The portable generator which will be funded by HIE, will be here in the next few weeks. The wiring needs to be done first before the new doors arrive. With the new doors the moisture content of the woodchip will improve and be more consistent.

A repayment plan for the £17,854 that SRL lent to SCTCL/SCT for the electric bill needs to be established – low monthly payments – **Action MS, SCTCL.**

A chainsaw course is now urgent – SH to follow up with GN to see where we are and what dates have been proposed. We have no in-date certification among regular volunteers or staff. **Action SH & GN.**

Next first aid is on Thursday 18th April 2023 with forestry bolt on. Contact MS if you wish to attend. **Action ALL.**

The long-term forestry plan is under review, a planning grant for £3,600 might be available. Most will go on the ecologist. We need the forest plan to be completed so we are able to fell again **Action GM.**

Woodchip – At present we are charging £28.75 per m³. With the cost of diesel and delivery our prices need to be reviewed. Which will mean a 13% increase. This can be factored in over the next 2 years. Proposed woodchip costs 2023/2024 £32.50 per m³. 2024/2025 £36.50 per m³. This needs to be discussed with all relevant parties. **Action GM.**

Delivery of logs and split – this is an ongoing problem. GM looking at alternative solution, a smaller light commercial flat bedded van has been suggested, with a blower. **Action GM.**

A review of the forest evacuation plan needs to be completed, this is likely to be a simple read through and updating of the date on the document– **Action CP & MS.**

SRL needs to establish the plan for split log production with GM. Action **GM & CP.**

8. EAG Review

The Group held its most recent meeting on Monday 20th March. The next meeting is not yet scheduled but will most likely be before the end of April.

Our main focus continues to be refreshing the Group and encouraging greater local participation in its activities.

Ideas that will be taken forwards:

- Re-branding the Group to make it more inviting and to reflect the breadth of things it does. The lead contender is 'Sleat Nature Group'. The advisory role to the Trust will still be retained despite the name change.
- A poster will be created to promote the Group and invite people to get in touch if they are interested in getting involved. **Action AS.**
- We will create updated content for the new SCT website once a new name and the poster are finalised. **Action AS.**
- We are planning to re-introduce outdoor guided walks and talks as part of our programme for the first time since the Covid outbreak. A guided walk on ferns is proposed for mid-Spring.
- We are keen to attract young people to our events and with that in mind the Spring walk is likely to be scheduled on a Friday afternoon after school. A light-hearted junior photography competition is proposed with the winning photo to be adopted as the Group's Facebook cover photo for the Spring / Summer season.

Skye Beach Cleans

Skye Beach Cleans have organised a skip for 22nd April to remove any beach waste collected in advance. Any communities wishing to take advantage of this can contact me in the first instance. **Action AS.**

The beach waste currently at Aird Road end will be taken away as part of this exercise. There will also be a beach clean at Knock Bay, which is to be led by the distillery.

Peat Restoration

Nature Scot is erecting 2 interpretative display boards in Tormore to raise awareness of peatlands restoration. Alan Drever has been liaising over this initiative. Panels are being sited road-side well up into the Forest - where there are areas of the peatlands which are already re-wetting. **Action AD.**

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 getting established. **Action MM & MS** (carry forward).

Next meeting Monday 24th April @ 18.00 in the boardroom