



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST HELD
AT WILDSIDE, WHITEBRIDGE AND VIA MS TEAMS
AT 7.00 pm ON WEDNESDAY 14 August 2024**

Present	Catriona Fraser (CF), Malcolm Stewart (MMS); Chris Gehrke (CG); Ken Sinclair (KS); Mark Sutherland (MS); Maureen McGuire (MM); Craig Lightbody (CL).
Apologies	Gareth Jones (GJ)
Non-attendance	Maire Brown (MB); Susan Greer (SG)
Chair	Catriona Fraser (CF)
In Attendance	Tony Foster (TF); Kirsteen Campbell (KC).
Minutes	Kirsteen Campbell (KC)

Declarations of interest: None

A. INTRODUCTION

CF welcomed the Board and staff members to the meeting at 19:29

B. MINUTES

KS **PROPOSED** and CF **SECONDED** the Minutes from the Board Meeting held on 5 June 2024 and these were **AGREED** as a correct record and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

C. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Purchase of Forest School:

CF **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** that the Trust progress with purchasing the forest school, and this was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

Legacy Fund meeting:

CF **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** that the Trust continue with the same level of funding to the legacy fund and that payments remain monthly. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

Action: CF to discuss the frequency of the legacy fund payments further with Fiona Mustarde (Finance Officer).

D. TRUST MANAGERS REPORT

The Board noted the circulated report. The following items were discussed by the group:

Post Office and shop

TF: SFCT have offered to help Boleskine Community Care (BCC) review their feasibility study. However, to date this has not been received.

The Board recognises that Foyers shop is a key objective to the Community Action Plan and that BCC are the key community group relating to the project as they announced at their AGM their intention to purchase the shop. However, BCC have had difficulties in getting this off the ground. The Trust is keen to retain the shop in the community.

The board discussed the formation of a community group that would be supported by SFCT staff. Stratherrick and Foyer Community Trust are seeking approval from BCC for Trust staff to assess what resources/capacity exist to commission a feasibility study application to the Scottish Land Fund.

Action: Members of the Board to meet with BCC to discuss their ideas regarding the purchase of the shop.

Riverside Field

TF met with Sarah Robertson of Sports Scotland and Darren Reid of Highlife Highland and discussed the possibility of the field being converted to a regular shinty pitch, rather than a MUGA, which would reduce the maintenance costs significantly. The development would be allowed to grow organically in relation to the needs and wishes of the local community.

MM highlighted the issues raised at the Riverside Residents meeting with SFCT Directors in July and the need to restore their confidence in the Trust to ensure their voices are listened to.

The Board recognise the the need to revisit the Community Action Plan and to develop communications with the community to reaffirm priorities.

Action: TF to produce a paper outlining discussions with Sports Scotland and Highlife Highland (to be shared with the Riverside Liaison Group at the next meeting).

Action: Members of the Board to review the Community Action Plan and to develop a communication plan with the community to reaffirm priorities.

Teams

The group all agreed that communication needs to improve, and work needs to be done with the implementation of MS Teams.

Action: KC to provide MS Teams training for board members.

SSE Fund Management

TF met with Carol Masheter (SSE) to discuss the best way to improve fund management:

- Any commitment that is approaching the £25,000 threshold, or over £25,000, must be pre-approved by SSE in writing or via email.
- These must be minuted by the Board prior to seeking SSE approval.
- The scoring matrix to be used for larger projects.

- Advanced drawdown requests to be evidenced by community support via the CAP, Business Plan, evidence of match funding, and written support from the Community Council.

Staff Support & Development

- Clear annual targets to be set for senior staff.
- CPD budget increase from £1000 to £5000.
- Grant training to be expanded to include Directors.
- SSE to provide a question and answer session with the board.
- Policies to be reviewed every 12 – 24 months.
- Informal meetings notes to be filed.

SSE Agreements, Aberarder Wind Farm

CF met with Carol Masheter (SSE) and Mark Hindley (SFCC) regarding SSERs new strategy for community funding of which there are two types of funding:

1. Lifetime Fund – For those who are visually affected.
2. Time Limited Fund – For those who are affected by construction only.

In terms of community funding from the Aberarder Wind Farm, the Time Limited Fund is applicable which amounts to £21,000 for years one and two.

SSE undertake negotiations which go to the SFCC, removing the requirement for a community benefit negotiator.

Action: CF to seek a decision from SSE regarding investment in wind turbines.

Action: CL to check with SFCC if this is the equivalent to £5000 per megawatt in terms of the community benefit that's being given.

Homes

TF: 40 people expressed interest in the Inverfarigaig homes.

Action: TF to report on local housing needs.

MM proposed that the Trust put a note interest to the relevant estate agents for two properties currently on the market in Foyers. The Board **AGREED** in principal and further investigations to be undertaken by MM.

Action: MM to contact DTAS for further information on the purchase of property, and to review options as to how the Trust will finance purchasing the properties, i.e., mortgage or buy outright.

Winter Wonderland

TF has held discussions with staff members regarding Winter Wonderland. Caroline Tucker (Project Co-ordinator) to produce a paper outlining proposals for the future running of the event.

E. COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICERS REPORT

CL emailed the Minutes from the previous Community Council Board meeting which were circulated prior to the Board Meeting.

F. FINANCE UPDATE

The board noted the finance report circulated by Finance Officer Fiona Mustarde (FM) which included the projected cashflow for 2024/25; cashflow to 30 June 2024; and management accounts to 31 March 2024.

FM is currently reviewing and revising the finance policy which will be ready by the October Board Meeting. FM is also working on the year end accounts with A9 Accountancy.

Action: TF to transfer contact details held by Santander to be CF prior to leaving the Trust.
Action: TF to write a Statement of Delegation stating the Finance Officer as the authorised user for the SSC Community Investment portal.

CF **PROPOSED** and MM **SECONDED** the approval of the 2024/25 cashflow projection. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

G. GRANT APPLICATIONS

Student Grants applications and grants awarded:

Holly Emmott - £500 for course costs.
Roxana Beatrice Elgar - £500 for course costs.
Charlotte Page - £500 for course costs.
Jersey Page - £500 for course costs.
Alexander Brown - £500 for course costs.
Chantelle Lewis - £500 for course costs.
Annalise Beith - £500 for course costs.

CF **PROPOSED** and CG **SECONDED** the approval of all seven student grants. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

Action: KC to send grant letters to all recipients.

H. AOCB

KC/SF - Updates to the current grant guidance and application forms was circulated prior to the board meeting:

CF **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** that the medium group grant award is increased from £20,000 to £25,000. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

CF **PROPOSED** and CG **SECONDED** to update the wording in the guidance regarding applications for three-year grants. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

CF **PROPOSED** and MM **SECONDED** that up to maximum of 10 driving lessons can be applied for as a separate grant application per person (to be paid directly to the diving instructor). This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

CF **PROPOSED** and MM **SECONDED** that Sporting Grants are renamed to Sporting/Excellence Grants with the same criteria. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

Action: KC/SF to investigate vocational/life skills grants.

Action: KC/SF to request information regarding additional funds from SSE to cover the expansion of grants.

Project Management review:

MM: TF is due to leave the Trust at the end of August 2024 with no replacement CEO appointed. MM identified the need for interim measures to be put in place in the absence of a CEO. MM also suggested that in light of staff roles and responsibilities changing and the pressure staff are under, a bonus be given at the end of the financial year. The Board **DID NOT AGREE** and remuneration would be considered to reflect additional hours and responsibilities during the transitional phase. MM also suggested the Trust upgrade their current CRM to improve communication with the community and will investigate this further.

MM **PROPOSED** an CF **SECONDED** that an interim management plan be implemented until a new CEO is appointed. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

MM **PROPOSED** an CF **SECONDED** that support in the form of additional hours for staff be implemented. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

CF **PROPOSED** an CL **SECONDED** that an Executive Chair is appointed in the interim period with remuneration and structure to be confirmed. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

CF **PROPOSED** an KS **SECONDED** that additional staffing support in the interim period comes from current staff rather than an external contractor. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

MM **PROPOSED** an CG **SECONDED** that the Finance Officer has implicit approval of 'Business as Usual' expenditure within the agreed budget parameters of up to £3000. This was **AGREED** unanimously by the Board and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

Action: MM to investigate upgrading the current CRM.

Action: Board Members to look into the structure of staff roles and responsibilities during the transitional phase.

Community Liaison Director role

CL requested clarity on the role and responsibilities of the CLD. CF advised CL to go back to the SFCC to request a proposal outlining the role and associated expectations. She also suggested that the SFCC approach SSE for clarity on the current role and any changes since it was established. The board discussed removing the legal aspect of the role.

Action: CL to consult with the SFCC and SSE to provide clarity on the role of CLD.

Information requests

SFCT Board direct any requests of information to the website where all relevant Trust business is publicly available. The Articles of Association define how Board Members are elected to represent community members by an open and transparent election and how they, as a Board, can devolve decision making to other community members or bodies.

Members

No new members were noted since the previous board meeting.

I. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 2 October 2024, Wildside Centre/MS Teams

Meeting closed at 22:40

Signed by Chair (CF): _____

Date: _____