



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 5 March 2025

Present Maureen McGuire (MM); Maire Brown (MB); Ken Sinclair (KS); Maire Brown (MB); Craig Lightbody (CL); Peter Faye (PF); Michael White (MW); Stewart MacPherson (SM).

Apologies Chris Gehrke (CG); Mark Sutherland (MS); Susan Greer (SG); Malcolm Stewart (MMS)

Non-attendance

Chair Maureen McGuire (MM)

In Attendance Jewels Lang (JL) - SFCT CEO; Fiona Mustarde (FM) - SCFT Finance Officer.

Minutes Kirsteen Campbell (KC) - SFCT Administrator.

Declarations of interest:

INTRODUCTION

MM welcomed the Board and staff members to the meeting. Meeting started at 19:03.

FINANCE REPORT

FM circulated the following finance papers prior to the board meeting and noted she had received no feedback from the Board:

- Finance Report 5 March 2025
- Current Finance Policy
- Proposed new Finance Policy
- Proposed Delegated Levels of Authority
- January 2025 cashflow

MM **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** the new finance policy prepared by FM. This will include amended wording and will be reviewed every three years unless there is an operational change. The board **AGREED**.

FM advised the Board that Rob Butcher from Clarendon Investments will be attending the April meeting. She also notified the Board that an issue with the investments, on Clarendon's part, had now been corrected and dealt with internally. She informed the Board that no investments had been lost from a SFCT perspective.

Action: FM to prepare Treasury management policy.

Action: FM to investigate corporate liability insurance.

GRANTS

The Board **APPROVED** the following grants which were accepted out of rotation:

Constituted Group Grant:

Aldourie Parent Council: £338.20 to support a pupil resident in the Foyers area to attend a school trip.

Student Grants:

Gill Grey - £250.00 for course costs.

Alannah Graydon - £100.00 for course costs.

Meg Somerville - £225.00 for course costs.

Action: KC to send grant letters to all recipients.

The Board discussed the allocation of student grants. MW notified the Board he has undertaken some analysis of grant allocations which he will share with JL.

Action: JL to provide analyse of student grant allocation over the previous five years to the Board.

MINUTES

Uploading and circulating the Minutes from the January and February Board meetings has been delayed due to the absence of KC (Administrator) for an extended period. These will be sent to Members and publicised on the website by the end of March 2025.

Action: JL/KC to prepare the Minutes from the January and February Board Meetings.

Action: JL/KC to work with Calum Martin (Marketing Officer) to update the community via email and social media re the delayed Minutes from January and February 2025.

ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

MM/JL went through the list of actions from the February 2025 Minutes using the RAIDD spreadsheet as follows:

- Ensure proper project plans are in place for all initiatives – Ongoing.
- Provide a breakdown of the budget and expenses for the Errogie Church project – Ongoing.
- Discuss a strategy for engagement with the Community Council regarding apprenticeships and employment opportunities – Closed.
- Prepare a paper outlining options for the relationship with the Knockie Trust, including the possibility of a formal Memorandum of Understanding – Ongoing.
- Schedule a meeting between the Trust and the Community Council chairs to discuss the BCC project to purchase the shop. Shop Action Group, at Feasibility Study Stage. Funders need cross community participation including 2 Trust Directors – Ongoing.
- Compile a summary of the "lessons learned" from the Errogie Church project – Ongoing.
- Review the director's code of conduct and address any potential violations – Ongoing.

Action: KC to locate and circulate the Lead Directors roles for 2025.

TRUST MANAGER REPORT & PROJECT UPDATE

PROJECTS

Errogie Church (The Gathering Place):

MW went through his report circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The group discussed building regulations, the possibility of a 'Change of Use' to a community centre, and the phases that were initially outlined by Mike Lawson (ML), Architect. Completion of Phase 1B is in progress and architect drawings have been submitted by ML for a fire exit; disabled ramp; and disabled toilets.

Action: Clarification on what is included within each of the building phases to be circulated to the Board.

Action: Investigation into the current heating system.

Action: JL to seek written recommendations from ML.

Wildside Centre

The Board discussed the toilet refurbishment which is progressing well. The issue with the current outdoor lighting was also discussed and it was noted that staff are working towards a solution, and an electrician has been approached to provide a quotation for works required. The playpark surface is being looked into by Caroline Tucker (CT), Project Co-Ordinator, and quotations are coming in for fire escape doors.

Foyers Bay

CL gave an update on the current works, noting that the landscaping is now complete. It is anticipated it will be open for community use in the Spring. CL also mentioned that staff are currently working on a new booking system.

Forest School

JL: The Forest School survey provided at the community engagement session held on 22 February is currently available at various community hubs. JL will update the Board in April of the survey results. The session report has been circulated online.

Homes

PF notified the Board that good progress is being made and the two SFCT managed properties have gone on the market. A recent issue with the boundaries was brought to the attention of the Board and is currently being looked into.

Action: JL to contact both the former CEO and Chair of SFCT regarding the Dodds Park Quantity Surveyor.

Transport

JL: The new vehicle has not yet arrived and there is an ongoing investigation into this. The Board discussed how the vehicle will be used and who will organise and manage it. The Board also discussed the use of the current leased van and will look into alternative options, including hiring a vehicle for events.

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICERS REPORT

CL gave the following report to the Board:

The Minutes from the previous SFCC meeting are currently in draft and will be circulated once finalised.

A proposal from the Farigaig-Boleskine Residents group to potentially bring the woodlands next to the B852 near the Foyers Substation into community ownership. SFCC Chair Mark Hindley (MH) is contacting Forest and Land Scotland to note this interest. It was noted that SFCT is not expected to fund the purchase should it go ahead.

SFCC are awaiting a response from Strathdearn Community Council regarding the proposed Community Benefit funding from the Aberarder Wind Farm. CL will update the Board of the outcome in due course.

To date there has been no response from the Highland Council regarding training on negotiating community benefits.

CL met with JL and MH regarding the role of Community Liaison Director. JL has re-written the criteria which has now been submitted to CL and MH for consideration. CL will report back to the Board in due course.

A Memorandum of Understanding in relation to payments for the Community Council micro grant scheme has been agreed and adopted by SFCC and SFCT. Previously, payments for this scheme went directly to SFCC from SSE via the Stronelaig panel fund. However, this has now come to an end. The remainder of that fund (£19,311.42) was paid to SFCT in November 2023, and this will be used to continue to fund the SFCC micro grant scheme until the funds run out, then it will have to be re-looked at.

Riverside Field is to be taken off the SFCC Agenda until further notice.

Olivia Grant, as representative of SFCC, and JL, to meet with UHI regarding possible apprenticeship opportunities with Statkraft (developers of the Loch Na Cathrach pump storage hydro).

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

MM presented her SFCT Focus and Projects Proposal with the Board which highlights 4 broad principles:

- Operation & Governance
- Management of Estate
- Focusing on Projects that affect the whole community
- Community Groups

The Board identified the need to agree on key priorities moving forward and to outline where the focus should lie short-term. The Board agreed an additional Director's meeting should be scheduled for this purpose following the DTAS training on 13 March 2025.

The Board discussed employing a Project Manager to assist with operational support on a temporary basis. The role would include the management of facilities; organisation of the current SharePoint project sites; evaluation of projects and report writing. Concerns were raised about bringing a new person into the team as it may bring added pressure to the current staff. The Board will discuss this further at the additional Director's meeting.

Actions: JL to arrange an additional Director's meeting with an external facilitator. This will focus on project planning, including staffing, budgets and funding needs.

AOCB

SOSA

The group discussed the remaining funds held by SOSA, who were disbanded in 2024, including SFCT grants and unrestricted funds.

Action: MB to contact the former SOSA Treasurer to determine what funds remain.

Foyers Primary School

A meeting between the Highland Council, the community Council, and parents within the Foyers Primary catchment area is to take place on 25 March 2025 to review the current mothballed status of the school. This meeting is informal and does not form any part of a formal consultation. Depending on the outcome of this meeting, the Board discussed the opportunity of leasing the building from the Highland Council on a month-to-month basis. The building would be used as a centre for the Heritage Group.

The Board **AGREED** to support THS in their search for suitable premises.

The Board **AGREED** that Foyers Primary School would be appropriate should it become available after the consultations with parents/stakeholders on 25 March 2025.

The Board **AGREED** that the basic terms as outlined, once confirmed in writing, under which occupation may occur are acceptable.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Board discussed the need to elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the current year. MM and PF both expressed an interest in holding the position of Chair and a decision is to be taken at the Board meeting on 2 April.

Action: Chair and Vice Chair positions to be ratified at April Board meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

DTAS Training, 13 March 2025, Wildside Centre

SFCT Board Meeting, April 2025, Wildside Centre/MS Teams

Meeting closed at 22:20

Signed by Chair (MM): _____

Date: _____