

**Foyers Bay Steering Group Meeting – Notes**

**Date: 15th February 2024**

**Meeting time: 7pm**

**Meeting location: The Hub, Lower Foyers**



**Present:** Malcolm Stewart (MS) – Chair,Caroline Tucker (CT)

Alfie Taylor (AT), Bob Main (BM), Craig Lightbody (CL), Neil Farnham (NF), Russell Bain (RB), Vaughn Devlin (VD)

**Apologies:** Robbie Burn, Ken Sinclair

1. **Welcome**

* MS updated RB on change of direction in project due to concerns over buried waste material.
* CT updated the group on conversations with Fairhurst Engineering and Highland Council:
  + CT contacted Fairhurst to ask about digging test holes to identify level of contamination and type of waste material. Quote came back c. £25k to carry out full contamination testing, sampling and disposal.
  + MS alerted CT to a Highland Council (HC) survey done in 2007, CT contacted HC to ask for a copy of the report. They have agreed to send this, plus other related survey details. CT to circulate to group once received.
* CL suggested that we pass this back to SSE as they own the land.
* BM added that previous testing had also been done around the shinty pitch.

1. **Actions arising from previous steering group meeting:**
2. **Clarify terms of use of land as outlined in SSE lease**

* CT read out paragraph on lease stating that ‘*The tenant may use the subjects of let for the operation of a community facility to store, moor and launch boats belonging to members of the local community and other members of the public. The tenant may also use the subjects of let for a range of community based activities and events associated with fishing and pleasure use of Loch Ness*’.

1. **Clarify terms and conditions of funding from Highland Council and Scottish Canals**

* CT read out the paragraph on the agreement between SFCT and Scottish Canals stating that *‘Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust acknowledges that these funds are to be used exclusively for the development of a slipway and ancillary facilities upon land leased to them at Foyers Bay, Loch Ness, Inverness-shire'*.

1. **Meet with Quantity Surveyor to discuss tender applications and proposed next steps**

* MS summarised that he and CT met with the Quantity Surveyor to outline concerns about waste material and possible shift in direction. QS to notify the two businesses that have tendered for slipway.
* BM added that he had carried some informal survey work, which he shared with the group. Suggestion is to lower the gradient to 8% and make access wider, whilst keeping an eye on surrounding landscaping.
* MS asked if the group felt we could do this ourselves by formalising BM’s plans and bringing in our own contractor – this work could be done with a 14 or 20t excavator. Question remains, what would happen to the waste material?
* RB suggested that we agree with the contractor that it is their responsibility to dispose of the waste material.
* BM suggested that the rocks and concrete rubble could be used to raise the picnic area by 1m.
* RB pointed out that Fairhurst’s original drawing is very similar to what BM has produced, but that they have added concrete to the sides. All that we need to do is inform the contractor that that bit is not required, and then work of those plans instead of asking for new formalised drawings.
* BM suggested agreeing an hourly rate with the chosen contractor.
* BM also mentioned that it might be possible to clear an area just above the shoreline for vehicles to turn.
* MS raised concerns about this – the ground is soft here, and would we want vehicles on the shoreline. SEPA may have concerns about this.
* AT pointed out that in order to get a boat in the water you would still need to reverse the boat in so is there a need for a turning zone?
* **Action:** *Wait for further info from HC before finalising decision. CT to circulate this around the group once it arrives.*

*Put landscaping contract out to tender, focussing on local contractors (Ali McQueen and George Campbell suggested). Make them aware of waste disposal requirements.*

1. **Engage with specialist to carry out ground survey**

* As noted in point 1.

1. **Gather quotes for purchase and installation of floating moorings and markers. Agree usage management plan and rental fee for floating moorings.**

* MS shared the quote from Gaelforce for floating moorings and summarised the idea proposed at the last meeting with regards to their installation – this would provide a temporary solution to allow the bay to be used this season. It would be something tangible for the community to see. Cost of each mooring is c. £850, and Gaelforce have indicated that there may be a possibility of a discount for ordering more than one. Do we want to go ahead with this?
* AT agreed that this would be a good idea. There are no other mooring options at the moment.
* CL also agreed that if we have the opportunity to do it, we should.
* RB suggested that they were sign-written before installation.
* MS asked how many – consensus was 5.
* MS and CT stated that we would need to determine terms of use:
  + Suggested a nominal daily rate (value to be confirmed) with a max stay of 7 days. Beyond this, there would an additional fee, to be agreed.
  + Concern raised about liability. CL suggested that anyone using them would need to sign a waiver and MS added that we would need to see boat owner’s insurance before use.
* BM asked what size of boat a 1t mooring would hold. MS responded 4t. Nothing bigger than this would get close enough to shore to use them anyway.
* **Action:** *CT to sort out paperwork – registration forms and Terms of use.*

*MS to order 5 moorings and speak to workboat.*

1. **Update on Community wood.**

* CT updated that this was due to be processed in the next couple of weeks and distributed over the next month.
* Discussion had about funding stopping. CL asked if SSE would pay for just processing? MS added that there may be scope for setting up a designated community group, however it was agreed that this would be separate to current discussions!

1. **Next steps:**
2. **Signage**

* MS summarised the need for signage to deter campervans/ motorhomes and overnight parking in general.
* RB asked if we could move the perimeter fencing to incorporate the existing parking bays into the yard, but the consensus is that these bays are useful for local users.
* CT gave wordage, which was suggested at the last meeting; *‘For community use only. This is private land maintained by Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust for the use of the community. No motorhomes, campervans or overnight parking – you will be moved on. Please respect this community asset.’*
* Those present agreed that the wording was good. Suggestion to add ‘no fires’. Will also need SFCT logo on sign.
* CL added that we would need to ascertain exact land boundary.
* **Actions:** *CT to contact sign-makers for a quote and mock-up. CT to dig out information on land boundary.*

1. **Installation of water supply and power points**

* MS outlined the existence of a power connection onsite. In order to make the site more user-friendly it has been suggested we connect at least one power point to the supply. Do we agree?
* Consensus is yes to one bollard, and to a water connection.
* **Action:** *Approach an electrician to install a bollard. Get cost of water connection from Scottish Water.*

1. **Purchase/ construction of a shed/ changing facility incorporating an environmentally friendly toilet**

* MS suggested that another possible step forward would be the installation of a shed, which would include a changing facility, shower, workshop and meeting area.
* NF asked if there are any plans for a potential layout.
* RB said that there were plans done while he was Lead Director on the project, and work had been done on identifying facilities such as a changing room, meeting hut and admin facility and skiffs. He will dig these out and send to CT for circulation.
* RM suggested that a space for recyclable material that can be used for landscaping should be incorporated.
* **Actions:** *RB to send all associated documentation through. CT to look into quotes for suitable building options.*

1. **Purchase of equipment for community use – paddle boards, kayaks. Funding available for this.**

* MS outlined this as an option to take forward. Also discussed was the suggestion of installing markers to guide users to the most suitable channel for launching boats. These could be made ourselves.
* NF pointed out that we would need to make sure there are no boulders in this channel. RB suggested that whoever does the landscaping works could check this at the same time.
* CT updated the group that Sarah, our fundraiser, has outlined some possible funds we could apply for to help with changing facilities and equipment, but that we needed to be a named group. Are we happy to use Foyers Bay steering group as the vehicle for this? All in agreement.
* **Action:** *CT to speak to Sarah about next steps for a funding application.*

1. **Identify rules and regulations for site use and consolidate list of key-holders, boat owners and site users.**

* MS suggested that we should revisit our rules and regulations and update the users list.
* RB suggested speaking to Fort William boat club as they are a similar size and should be agreeable to letting us see their terms. CT to get in touch with them
* CT will do some work on contacting those registered already to get an updated picture on active users. She also suggested it might be a good opportunity to ask those who have an interest in the project what they would like to see on offer at the site. This could feed in to funding applications.
* Discussion had on updating the boat registration form as there seem to have been some new boats appearing. Details needed – name of boat, name of user and type of boat. Once this is done, padlocks should be changed and new keys issued.
* MS mentioned that there are some older boats too, such as Colin Evans’ boat, which there is a story behind. MS to pass CT Colin’s brother’s email address so that she can ask about it becoming a community boat.
* CL asked if there was a mailing list for the group. CT said there was but due to GDPR she was not allowed to share the email addresses without each member’s consent. All present asked if they were happy to have their email address shared with the rest of the group. All agreed.
* **Action:** *CT to update and formalise all paperwork, update user lists and pull together a survey for circulation.*

1. **AOB**

* NF asked if the project covers the forested area alongside the compound.
* MS said no, and CT added that as part of the planning conditions for the new slipway we had to keep access to the core path open, but it was not our responsibility to maintain the area.
* CL said that this is SSE’s responsibility – he can follow this up.
* MS mentioned that it was important that now the site was in better condition, it needs to be maintained. CT updated that Higher Ground are contracted to maintain it, she will ask Matt Rhodes to check with them that it is part of their remit.
* RB added that when the contract was agreed, the Foyers Bay site was included.

Next meeting 21st March 2024.

Meeting closed 8.30pm