

Minutes of ADT Board Meeting, 6pm Tuesday 14th February 2024

Present: Nigel Goldie (Chair) Bob Bazley, Marianne Hutchison (from item 12), Matthew Woodrow, Catriona Maclean.

In attendance: Ewen McLachlan, Adam Pellant, Dougie Cunningham (present as director from item 1)

Apologies: none, except for late arrival.

DC in attendance having expressed interest in joining the board. Following introductions, it was agreed for the board to appoint him, noting that he could be re-appointed by the board following the AGM later this evening, given that it was too late to formally stand for election by the members at that AGM. DC was welcomed to the board.

1. Minutes of previous meeting – approved.

2. Matters arising: None not covered elsewhere on agenda.

3. Governance & AGM:

a) Agreed to aim for annual accounts to be completed early in the year.

b) Development Officer Job Description updating: agreed a subgroup meet to go over this with staff, including BB. Noted the process will aim to work around the presence of an admin post, although temporary, and the need to reduce voluntary workload of NG. This subgroup activity will also address other related matters raised by NG such as procedures for event attendance and expenses. Action: EM/AP to send BB the current job description.

4. Financial Issues for 2024 (attachment): Noted need for board visibility of budgets and management accounts. NG has checked future availability of previous bookkeeper – she will not be available for the near future.

5. Highland Council Budget reduction: Noted the recent consultation, now ended, on where HC should make savings. Will return to later if MH is able to catch end of the meeting.

6. Financial procedures for approval (attachment): postponed to another meeting.

7. Recent Funding Applications

CRF applications were successful for:

Admin post - 9.6k grant towards 13.6k cost, 4k ADT funds required as match funding.

Development Officer post – 21.6k grant towards 36k cost for 1 year of DO post and related costs, with 14.4k match funding yet to be confirmed from HIE after current DO grant expires at end of March 24.

NW2045 – 50k grant, as 100% funding, for various elements of NW2045 work for 1 year, including providing a secretariat function for the group, and data gathering and research to build evidence and ensure NW2045 work addresses community priorities. 4k of ADT project management fee has been accepted as part of the grant.

Glebe stage 4a/b (building warrant and construction tendering for phase 1 of 10 units) - 74k grant towards 164k cost, 90k match funding required, for which SSE sustainable Development Fund application has been made since last meeting.

Lochinver main street playpark play equipment – CRF application was not approved but has been invited to reapply for a May committee meeting decision. MW updated that a national lottery application for this project was also unsuccessful due to lack of confidence in obtaining match funding, but welcomes a reapplication in future. MW hopes for a preferred contractor/supplier to be selected by March/April. The plan is that ADT / Assynt Community Council purchase equipment and donate it to HC who then would maintain. HC are however interested in ADT leasing the playpark site to manage it.

Primary School update: CM gave update on the fully-funded outdoor play equipment project which has been stalled due to inter-departmental issues within HC. The Primary School have now signed an agreement to maintain the play equipment. Noted how difficult this project has been dealing with multiple HC departments. Proposed that Phil Tomalin, HC ward manager, be invited to attend an ADT board meeting to hear about the issues and hopefully help out. Action: CM to contact him.

CM also flagged up the *Save Our Rural Schools* campaign involving 4 high schools in the NW region.

8. Glebe Housing project update: Further update – Issues around flooding and active travel route raised by statutory consultees as part of HC planning process. Site visit by planners is scheduled, to be attended by HC planner, Communities Housing Trust (as ADT agent) and design team representatives. Second CRF grant is significantly underspent, as the main elements have not gone ahead as planned, including the outline planning application work for later housing phases, which has been delayed while addressing issues with phase 1 full planning application. We may be able to use some of the underspent grant towards some other costs.

9. NW2045/FIRNS project: (see 7 above.)

As other business taken here, BB updated that subsidiary trading company AC(T) Ltd have now agreed and signed a 10 year lease of the café and bunkhouse sections of the Mission with the operators of An Cala.

10. Food larder update: NG has spoken with Iain Macleod, volunteer food larder co-ordinator. Church of Scotland may be willing to take on formal management of larder. Agreed that ADT could still help by putting their name as applicant/recipient to grant applications if and when required.

11. ADT support for CIC to promote music events (attachment):

DC expressed his interest, as this is a project he is personally involved in, although noting neither he nor his partner intend to gain financially, either by profit or by payment for work, through this venture. DC and his partner are considering setting up a Community Interest Company to promote local music events. Discussion of this, including that a subscription model is felt unlikely to work in Assynt as events tend to be often attended without prior bookings. The board expressed general support. EM suggested Creative Scotland be approached for funding. Agreed that AP/EM could provide help with CIC set-up.

12. AOB:

a) **Broadband** issue raised, suggested put on agenda for next meeting.

b) MH arrived. Further discussion of **HC budget cuts**. MH suggested we could still write to HC, and could highlight how so many key rural jobs, including in education, are on much too short fixed term contracts, which hinders work and recruitment.

c) **ALC kids' work space:** CM raised a proposal she has been discussing with Paul, the new Assynt Leisure Centre manager, Ullapool High School head teacher Caroline Boyd, and others, for a space in ALC for use for high school kids to work, both for home work, and for remote work on the many school days when unable to attend school due to winter weather school transport issues. Proposed to be with adult supervision, and possibly with hot food provision. Agreed for AD to support this. MH raised the recent call for additional CRF projects, which need to be supported by a HC councillor, and funding being available from HC resilience fund, using the HC ward discretionary grant form. Agreed for ADT to help with application/s for this project. Action: CM/AP.

d) Also agreed AP apply to the HC resilience fund for ~2k of food larder supplies.

Date of next meeting: Maybe week commencing 8th April. TBC.