

# Assynt Development Trust

## Note of meeting – Assynt Leisure Centre

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025 – 4.45-6.45 pm

**Present:-** Elaine Mackaskill (EMacA), Marianne Hutchison (MH), Lana Bracewell (LB), Amy Mitchell (AM), Kari Knight (KK).

**Attending:-** Adam Pellant (AP)

**Apologies:-** Nigel Goldie (NG), Ewen McLachlan (EMcL), Catriona Maclean (CM), Dougie Cunningham (DC).

### 1. Minutes and Actions of the last meeting

The minutes were approved. Matters arising as follows:

30 <sup>th</sup> July 25  Action No.	Action	Update	Closed / Open
1	LB to start looking at SCVO website and developing a Director starter pack and to look at Governance Checklist to see what area we need to gather information on and develop policies if necessary	LB spoke with AP and Third Sector Interface Scotland Network to make a start in getting a suitable package together. It was agreed that their extent of experience will bring a really positive aspect to the table. They will work with ADT to assist in moving things forward. LB to liaise with HTSI.	Open
2	EMacA to ask NG to add MH, DG and EMacA as directors to AC(T) trading company	Not added yet – still high priority.	Open
3	KK to start looking at ideas for newsletter (quarterly) and get quotes for updating and moving website from Wix	<p>A local person with web tech skills was contacted and it was discussed about transferring from the Wix platform. WordPress.com is considered as a potentially suitable alternative. It would probably be better to self-host so that migration from one platform to another can be implemented fairly easily. There was further discussion about enabling a re-design including a new logo.</p> <p>The local person's price to manage a self-host web-site was agreed to be very good value, however AP suggested that it may be better to have staff and possibly directors able to edit and add content on websites not just a paid third party administrator. It was agreed that a decision on how to progress can be finalised at a later date.</p> <p>ie. Decision still pending.</p>	Open
4	EMacA awaiting response from Culag Park users for a meeting to discuss Field use guidance	No response has been received, to follow up	Open

5	<b>EMacA</b> to ask NG for an update on fire risk assessment  Who? To progress contacting Village Hall and maybe others to see if we can share location costs of possible future assessments by a contractor.	The current fire risk assessment file is on the google drive. Scheduling alarm tests/drills is one key thing to discuss among building users.	Open
6	<b>AP and EMcL</b> to look at info on website about Glebe Land planning and update  <b>AP</b> to set up next Glebe Steering Group Meeting.	Part done – more could be done to ensure all Board members have access to all files. AP gave an update on the Glebe land project and he indicated that after requesting confirmation of suitable dates he will be able to confirm when the next steering group meeting will be soon. It is looking likely it will be Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> September, 6-8.00pm (this is also noted below)	Closed  Closed
7.	<b>Action on LPP</b>	Romany Garnett has provided a first report, which has now been put in a folder on the google drive (within LPP folder within 'other projects' folder).	Open
8.	<b>DG</b> to be sent info by EMcL/AP to bring her up to speed towards possibly being future ADT representative on the board of the seaweed CIC being established.		Open

## 2. Seaweed

There was some discussion about whether the Board is willing to sign up to the Memorandum of Understanding between Scourie, KLB and ADT, regarding setting up a CIC to progress seaweed farming development. The draft document was circulated prior to the meeting, and it was agreed that the document can be signed.

## 3. Glebe Land

AP gave an update on the Glebe land project and he indicated that after requesting confirmation of suitable dates he will be able to confirm when the next steering group meeting will be soon. It is looking likely it will be Wed 6<sup>th</sup> September, 6-8.00pm.

He is getting to grips with the funding situation.

## 4. E-bikes

It was confirmed that one E-bike has been agreed to be sold. There is a list of all who have enquired but it was agreed that it is best that this isn't circulated on FB, until we have gone back to those who have already made an offer and expressed an interest. There was some discussion about prices for the remaining E-bikes, and as they have had variable use and are in different conditions, it was agreed that a set price is fixed at £500 and then open to negotiation depending on each separate bike. Also that the remaining bikes require to be removed from the Leisure Centre as soon as possible.

## 5. E-car

The Sutherland Resilience Initiative (SRI) have an eCar that they wish to allocate, and subsequent to proposing its passing to ADT for the use by the community, they are keen for an answer either way. The eCar would come with insurance and road tax.

EMacA asked whether there would be a range of other costs associated with the vehicle and it was confirmed that all costs would be the responsibility of the ADT except the actual cost of the vehicle itself. She also queried whether the demand for such a facility has been tested in any way. The current availability of the 'Dial-

a-Bus' facility currently operating out of Lochinver was highlighted and the extent of lack of awareness of the facility open to all.

There was some discussion on the complexities of the logistics of keeping and maintaining an eCar, including how booking would be managed and implemented, and by whom. MH gave an update on her recent communication with EMcL on the matter and she would possibly prefer some form of car pool initiative, rather than the use of one eCar.

LB suggested that she had some positive experience of using a transport app when visiting cities, which we could look into further.

It was concluded that even although it was a great idea, it was, at the present time, too soon to make a decision without carrying out further research on the fundamentals of ownership and operating in a rural area. Other options on the matter of local transport availability require to be researched and considered.

Action – EMcL to be asked to frame a short social media post to ascertain whether feedback would be positive and whether there was sufficient demand for a possible eCar to be based at the Leisure Centre, if they agreed to it.

## **6. RLUP/NW2045**

The ADT Board require to decide on whether to accept EMcL's suggestion to invite RLUP / NW2045 staff to attend a pre-board meeting to inform about the various projects and their progress; and if so, when this should take place. Both EMacA and MH indicated that they would prefer to have more information prior to making any firm commitment to meet with RLUP.

All present agreed that the forward development of positive associations could be extremely high, with considerable potential developing, and as such momentum in this regard should be maintained a priority. It was also noted that EMcL is very much up to speed on the overall situation therefore it would be useful for him to present a summary to the Board. Action: EMcL to be asked to summarise RLUP during next board meeting, with possible other RLUP staff to attend prior to a later board meeting

## **7. HC former drop-in building**

The former Highland Council drop-in building is for sale on the open market and AP gave some further detail on the current situation and explained his initial thoughts on how the Trust may manage the building, including a possible purchase using the Scottish Land Fund, although this would involve a lot of work. Some discussion regarding the situation ensued and it was agreed that a social media post was not appropriate at this point. Agreed action: AP to draft a letter to HC expressing ADT's interest in the building, but noting in it that we would not want to hinder a potential purchase of the building for local business/enterprise use.

## **8. Drumbeg Hotel**

AP was recently approached by a Drumbeg resident regarding the possible community purchase of the Drumbeg Hotel – it was noted that the Hotel may be proactively used in future anyway. Board can discuss / decide if willing / appropriate to progress further in future. [AP then left the meeting.]

## **9. Luis Gouveia**

Further to four Assynt secondary school pupils recently completing and passing their DofE gold expedition and one completing their China trip, reports have been received from them relating to both, which have been circulated to the Board. The Board would like to take this opportunity to convey their thanks and wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

## **10. General administration**

### **a. Governance –**

There was discussion regarding the increasingly apparent requirement for financial / operational support, particularly in consideration of the Glebe project. The Board agreed that a paid part-time post may be the best

solution. Action: AP to be asked to approach Communities Housing Trust for advice on getting paid PT support for glebe project admin/management, alongside their level of work as our agent.

b. Members/Directors

Discussion around arranging a suitable day within the next 6 weeks to facilitate a meeting, either half or full day, where the ADT Board members can meet and gain more insight into the responsibilities and requirements of being a director.

**DONM – 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2025 – 4:45-6:45 – Assynt Leisure**

Meeting ended.