Assynt Development Trust

Note of meeting (online via TEAMS) – 3 June 2026, 5pm – 7.15pm

Present: Elaine MacAskill (**EMacA**), Nigel Goldie (**NG**), Marianne Hutchison (**MH**), Kari Knight (**KK**), Lana Bracewell (**LB**), Alan Blakemore (**AB**), Adam Pellant (**AP**)

Apologies: Ewen McLachlan (**EMcL**)

Action Point	Action (arising in this meeting)	Update	Open / closed
1	**NG** to contact the accountant and ask him to liaise with Paula Watson. **NG** to provide bank statements for the CT account to Paula.		Open
2	**EMacA** to confirm with **EMcL** arrangements for managing the new NW2045 coordinator position – will ADT be the employer, does **EMcL** have enough time for this, etc.		Open
3	**MH** to contact Games Committee		Open

Action Point	Action (arising in 29/4/26 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
1	Finalise minutes from 18/3/26 meeting – **AP** has provided comments and clarifications; **AB** to action.	Minutes finalised.	Closed
2	Consider a drive to get more local donors to the food larder (e.g. social media appeal).	**KK** to develop a social media post in conjunction with **AP**.	Open
3	**EMcL** to investigate whether HC might be willing to take on the redevelopment of the Culag Square sheds (since they already own them) as part of their proposed Culag Cottage development. Otherwise, ADT might consider submitting an EOI (expression of interest, in community asset transfer).	An EoI was submitted circa 2018. Any further action is still to be determined.	Open
4	**EMacA** requested **EMcL** to forward paperwork relating to DOSS application, Adam Smith Consultation Experience candidate's scope of work, and anchor fee for Summit 2 Sea project.	DOSS paperwork received; others pending.	Open
5	Need to set meeting date to discuss comms. Next AGM required by mid-June.	10/06/26 meeting to progress funding application. 17/06/26 for AGM.	Closed

Action Point	Action (arising in 18/3/26 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
1	NG to begin process of transferring Treasurer responsibilities to AB by signing him up as an administrator of the RBS bank account.	Application made. **NG** to follow up with RBS.	Open
2	All directors to complete the identity verification process on the Companies	Completed.	Closed

	House Website by June. Note Amy Mitchell is listed as an active director who needs to complete the verification process – **NG** to investigate.		

Action Point	Action (arising in 25/2/26 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
2	A regional web company have sent a cost estimate for website design, infographics, etc. The Board needs to decide whether to have an ADT-focussed or broader (Discover Assynt, Historic Assynt) website. **KK** has arranged a meeting with Historic Assynt to discuss. It is noted that the Discover Assynt website has a lot of content (much is out of date) and will need regular maintenance if we are to take it on.	First step is to apply for funding – 10/06/26 meeting scheduled to begin DTAS funding application.	Closed
3	Approach Ullapool High School – Art Dept? to see if they could run a competition for designing a new logo? **KK** said that the regional web company have someone who has worked with schools and could manage this. **EMacA** said it may be better to wait until after the exam season is over.	As above.	Closed
4	Book stall for Assynt Games - **MH** will contact Games Committee. Gather and work up info for stall – membership forms revision etc – who to do?	**MH** has received verbal agreement; just need to get it in writing.	Closed

Action Point	Action (arising in 30/7/25 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
4	Engage with Culag Park users to discuss Field use guidance. **MH** sent draft guidance to all users. ADT to look into potential cost recovery from users, e.g. for grass cutting, improving drainage, fixing damage. For example, users could be encouraged to make grant applications, or donate their time. **EMcL** agreed to look into potential for applying for Highland Council Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) funding for equipment and maintenance costs, since Park is used by e.g. school, leisure centre.	Two users have responded; two have not. **MH** will continue to follow up. Potential 'hook' could be to consult with users as to what improvements they might like to see, and then seek funding. CRF funding is a possibility, but user support would be useful for applications. Wish list – new mower, roller, storage shed. **NG** will come up with figures on regular spends for maintenance, so users can be made aware of ongoing costs.	Open
5	Mission building fire risk assessment: need to establish responsibilities of	Not discussed.	Open

	both ADT as landlord, and building users. The current fire risk assessment file is on the cloud-based drive. Scheduling alarm tests/drills is one key thing to discuss among building users. Investigate possibility of reducing annual fire alarm service costs by scheduling them at same time as, e.g. village hall. Review of the Fire Risk Assessments should remain high priority, including review of records kept including regular monitoring, and any associated agreements which may be in place. In line with this, review of the contracts held with commercial tenants.		
6	**AP** to contact Scott at MAKAR to see if they are still able to tender if not design and build.	**EMacA** and **AP** to action later. Phase 1 is the current priority.	Open

1 Minutes and Actions of the last meeting
Minutes of 29/04/26 meeting approved.
Actions as above.

2 Papers for board review (attached)
a. Request for transferring £392 from unrestricted reserves to food larder funds, to correct historic recording errors – this was approved by the Board.
b. Continuing use of Freeagent rather than xero, for ACT (trading company) management accounts – this was approved by the Board.

3 Financial Update - Paula Watson
Paula provided two documents - summary Profit and Loss for the year 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2025, and budget vs actual spreadsheet – for review / information.
Paula reports that her progress has been slower than ideal, partly because she has been unable to contact the accountant. **NG** will try to contact him and ask him to liaise with Paula. **NG** also to provide bank statements for the ACT account.

4 AGM date
Set for Wednesday 17th June at 7pm.
AP to book venue, draw together necessary documents and publish formal notice.
EMacA will ask Paula Watson for an easily understandable accounts summary.
EMacA to provide Chair's report.
Note: above actions NOT added to list at head of this document because the AGM will have taken place by the time of the next Board meeting.

5 DO's update
AP provided a written report in advance.

There was a meeting yesterday with ADT's new contact at the Community Housing Trust (CHT), Emma Garry. She is concerned about the financial viability of the Glebe housing project in its current form, and thinks we will need investment from Highland Council (HC) – in which case, the fact that the design is not compliant with Firm Foundations criteria may be a problem. She is also concerned that the necessary upgrades to Canisp Road may not be feasible without involving unacceptable road closures.
The question was raised as to why these potentially significant issues are only being raised now. **AP** pointed out that it wasn't originally envisaged that significant direct investment would be sought from HC, hence Firm Foundations wasn't deemed necessary (the architect advised it would be costly and impractical). As for the road issue, Fairhurst (civil engineers) are assessing and due to comment within the month. **AP** has been in discussion with the Assynt Foundation chair regarding planned works at Glencanisp Lodge which could be affected by the road work. In addition, there is a sense that Emma has a generally more cautious viewpoint than her predecessors, and the financial conclusions are based on cost estimates that have not yet been accurately assessed.
MH noted that HC have a significant commitment to affordable housing provision; it may be worth talking to them about ways around the apparently excessive bureaucracy that is impacting the project.

There is a meeting next week on HIE funding for stage 4. **EMacA** noted that ADT will need to budget for loan repayment (if utilising a second HC interest-free loan facility towards design costs repayable from future Rural & Islands Housing Fund).

The Local Place Plan (LPP) hasn't yet been shared with Assynt Community Council. Through input from key stakeholders in both areas, additions have been drafted for the Culkein Drumbeg and Achnacarnin plans. **MH** asked if upgrade of the bridge at Inveruplan is included, and **AP** confirmed it is mentioned in connection with the proposed path from Little Assynt to Lochinver.

AP is working on linking the process for ordering from the Williamson Group to the new ADT email addresses.

AP needs ADT bank card use for making a payment to 1Password, which will hopefully get him access to Microsoft 365 without needing to have a mobile phone. The card is in **NG**'s name.

There was a brief discussion on candidate projects for HC Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) – Culag Park maintenance and signs, communications, the Lochinver former drop-in centre.

AP is continuing to work on the Net Zero Action Plan.

EMacA noted that DOSS funding for NW2045 has been approved. The job advert is about to be issued. **EMcL** is to line-manage the new position. There are questions about whether he has the capacity to do this, whether his time will come out of ADT hours, and whether ADT as AO will be the employer. All TBC with **EMcL** when he returns from leave.

EMacA said that the question over whether the employment status of NW2045 consultants complies with HMRC regulations was brought up at the last RLUP meeting, and it is believed that all is compliant. However, this will be formally addressed as part of the operational model review.

6 Technology

Noted that **EMacA** and **EMcL** are already using the new (assyntdevtrust.scot) email addresses. **AP** will start using his as soon as he gets ability to log into the new Microsoft 365 sharepoint resources (see under item 5 above).

Martin Davies will be back from holiday soon; **EMacA** is keen to get everyone using the new set-up, particularly features like a shared calendar; this will hopefully cut down on email traffic.

Funding is available to replace DO's laptop computers if desired. **EMacA** to discuss with **AP** and **EMcL** and present a proposal to the Board.

7 Role of ADT as anchor org for NW2045

There are various concerns amongst Board members: that the NW2045 is a drain on ADT's limited resources; that too much of EMcL's time is taken up with NW2045 and the direct benefits to ADT/Assynt are not clear; that we as directors don't have much visibility on what is going on within NW2045, despite our legal responsibilities as directors, and others.

It was acknowledged that the operational review is still in progress and that we should allow the process to be completed before making any decision. Also, **EMcL** has the most knowledge and experience of NW2045 and he needs to be involved in the discussion.

8 DTAS recovery and resilience funding

It was decided to hold a separate meeting to go through the self-assessment process: Wednesday 10th June, 4-6pm online.

Board members should review the self-assessment requirements beforehand.

9 ACT issues

AB asked whether we should be trying to encourage the users of Culag Park to support local business/es, especially when compared to non-local potentially competing businesses being brought in for some events.

There is broad agreement amongst the Board that ADT cannot and does not want to try to tell event organisers what they can or cannot do. Instead, a courteous, co-operative relationship between event organisers and local businesses would be preferred.

It was agreed that **MH** would contact the Games Committee and **AB** would talk with relevant local business operators, initially with a view to finding out what degree of liaison, if any, goes on between them during event planning.

10 AOCB

None

11 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 24th June, 2026 – Assynt Leisure in person

Minutes by AB