Assynt Development Trust

Note of meeting – 5 October 2026, 4.30 – 6.30pm, online

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

Apologies: Ewen McLachlan (**EMcL**)

Action Point	Action (arising in 30/9 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
1	**AP** to post 'manifesto' document on the ADT website & Facebook, to include an appeal for people with interest / experience in renewable energy, woodland / croft creation, or enterprise unit projects.		Open
2	**LB** to edit the NW2045 Anchor Organsation Terms of Reference to reflect what the Board is willing to agree to.		Open
3	**AB** to review and update policy documents for Board review and approval.		Open
4	NG to look for old Chair gmail account password.		Open
5	If **NG** continues to experience difficulties accessing OSCR, **EMacA** will see if DTAS can help.		Open
6	**EMacA** to check whether Inverness Impact Hub can provide assistance/advice with GDPR.		Open
7	**AB** to contact Daisy to try to fix the non-functioning landline.		Open
8	**AP** to cancel the Surveymonkey contract for next year		Open
9	**AP** to contact Community Energy Scotland to investigate grant funding and whether they can visit to assess renewable energy project options.		Open

Action Point	Action (arising in 30/9 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
1	**EMacA** to email the 'ADT' flyer to a list of possible directorial candidates to ascertain their interest.		Open
2	ACT to approach local contractor for a quote to repair the Mission building car park.		Open
3	ACT to prepare a summary of its accounts & projected cashflow for the next meeting.		Open
4	**AB** to work with **NG** to take over annual reporting to OSCR.		Open

Action Point	Action (arising in 28/8 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
2	All directors to work to identify and approach potential candidates for directorship.	Ongoing.	Open

Action Point	Action (arising in 29/4/26 meeting)	Update	Open / closed
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.	An EoI was submitted circa 2018. Any further action is still to be determined. **EMcL** will follow up with Helen Cameron as to whether HC intends to purchase Culag Cottage.	Open

1 Minutes and Actions of the last meeting

This meeting was held less than a week following the previous one, to address items not considered in the earlier meeting. Minutes of the two meetings will be reviewed at the next meeting.

2 Director recruitment

AP agreed to post the 'manifesto' document on the ADT website, as well as a link to it via a Facebook post.

MH has contacted two possible candidates; one is thinking about it, and the other is yet to respond.

3 ADT as anchor organisation (AO) for NW2045

NW2045's proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Anchor Organisation (AO) were discussed. There was agreement that some amendments to the ToR are required to properly reflect ADT's AO role. ADT is willing to assume legal and financial responsibility only, for projects for which it has given formal approval in advance. The day-to-day management and 'technical' management of the projects will be the responsibility of NW2045.

LB agreed to edit the ToR to reflect what the Board is willing to agree to. Once reviewed by the rest of the Board, the edited document will be provided to NW2045. **AB** agreed to notify NW2045 that they should expect the edited document shortly.

Last week, NW2045 submitted ADT's Fair Work First policy statement to Highland Council as part of a grant application. However, there was some confusion over whether the submitted document has been properly approved by ADT. **AB** undertook to review this and other required policy documents and to present them for Board review and approval. It was noted that policy templates are available on the DTAS website, and we may be eligible for free legal support from them if necessary.

In response to a concern raised during the NW2045 Operating review, NW2045 contract staff have undertaken a review of their working conditions against HMRC criteria for "employed" versus "self-employed" status. The outcome is that all contracted staff are believed to be "self-employed". A copy of the analysis was emailed to all Directors with a request that they review and provide any comments.

4 Invoice approval and payment procedure

AB stated that procedures are in place, but yet to be documented (Paula Watson has agreed to work on this). **AB** will only pay out from the company account upon formal instruction from either Paula Watson (Financial Consultant) or Tim Wright (Accountant):

- Tim Wright provides payroll and PAYE instruction based on approvals from **LB**.
- Paula Watson provides invoice and employee expenses payment instructions based on approvals received from **EMacA**, **LB**, **AP**, **EMcL** or Lizzie Williams (NW2045).

Given that Paula mostly dedicates Wednesdays for her ADT work, it was agreed that we should make people aware that payments will generally be made on Wednesdays. Paula's role in the process is crucial, as she will be able to ascertain whether there are sufficient funds in the bank account to pay a particular invoice. The need to be able to anticipate and balance grant income and invoice payments and to generate cashflow projections should be emphasised for all projects.

5 Technology

It was acknowledged that invoices and other correspondence may still be going to the old Chair gmail address. **NG** will look for the account password so someone can try to log into the account and find out which companies / suppliers we need to provide with our new contact details. We may ask Martin Davies to set up a 'bounce back' on the old account, or just close it.

NG is still having difficulty with accessing our OSCR account to inform them that our accounts reporting deadline has been extended. If **NG** continues to experience these difficulties **EMacA** agreed to see if DTAS can help.

Martin Davies has indicated a willingness to continue to provide ad-hoc support on tech issues. He has recommended that someone other than himself be appointed as account administrator for the Microsoft sharepoint/email set-up. He also recommends that we assess the need for formal data backup, and determine whether we are compliant with GDPR legislation. **EMacA** will check whether Inverness Impact Hub can provide assistance with GDPR.

The question of whether to maintain our own landline & internet service at the Mission building was discussed. It was agreed to continue for the time being, until someone has time to properly consider the options. **AB** will contact Daisy to try to fix the non-functioning landline.

AP will cancel the Surveymonkey contract for next year.

6 Income-generating ideas

The spreadsheet of ideas generated by **AP**, **EMcL** and **LB** was discussed. It was acknowledged that many of the options are likely to be long-term initiatives. The ones agreed to be potentially most of interest, and which will be looked into further, are:

- Renewable energy: potentially including solar PV panels on the Mission building, and a hydroelectric scheme (though not on ADT-owned land). **AP** will contact Community Energy Scotland and see what kind of grant funding may be available, and whether they would be willing to come and assess options for renewable energy projects in our area.
- Woodland planting or croft development on the Glebe land. Past research has suggested there is a market for rented croft land.
- Creation of enterprise units on Glebe land, and/or development of existing buildings in the area for same.

AP will add to the 'manifesto' posted on Facebook / the ADT website to particularly seek people who might have interest / experience in the above type of projects.

It was also suggested that we could think about finding new tenant(s) for the Mission building office space, and/or developing the storage space at the east end of the building.

Minutes by AB