

Sunart Community Company - Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 20th November 2019

Venue: Dail Mhor, Strontian

1) **Welcome and Apologies:**

Attending: D Barker (DB), J Jones (JJ), J Madden (JM), A Carmichael (AC), J Hilder (JH), J Tyldesley (JT), D Calver (DC) and H Ricketts (HK)

Apologies: A Carmichael (AC), I Baker (IB) a written update is provided

JJ explained that JH would be joining a late as he was waiting for the Corran ferry. JH joined the meeting at 7:30pm. J Madden welcomed everyone including the two new directors, Debbie Calver and Helen Ricketts to the meeting. As this was the first meeting after the AGM, JJ explained that the agenda would be 3 items: Christmas Auction, meeting dates and item 9b) Board Development – Director appointment and Co-option, and any other items directors wished to raise or have an update. It was agreed to proceed with agenda item 9b) first and is recorded here.

9b) **Board Development:** David Barker stood down having completed his 6-year term. Directors elected at AGM: Debbie Calver and Helen Ricketts and J Hilder. Co-option of directors: J Tyldesley proposed D Barker, Seconded by J Jones. Appointment of office bearers: D Barker proposed J Jones for secretary, seconded by J Tyldesley; J Tyldesley proposed D Barker as Chair, seconded by J Madden; J Jones proposed J Hilder as Treasurer, seconded by H Ricketts. There is no Vice Chair appointed at this time.

2) **Review of LDO Performance:** - none

3) **Minutes of the last meeting** 18th September 2019: Proposed: JT Seconded: JM.

4) **Matters Arising not covered by the Agenda:**

a) **Christmas Auction:** JM asked if this had been publicised. It appears that it has not.

- Notices will be place in the Shop, Oakwood, Library, Post Office and Bothy bar. A notice to be put on Facebook, and JM pointed out that not everyone uses that. There was a discussion about whether or not there was a flier put through people's door last year and it was agreed to sort one for this year. JH was going to look out last year's poster and flier and email it out. IB to post on Facebook page, and we will ask John Muir if he can assist with the fliers.
- JH pointed out that the Auction was included in the SCC Update in the De tha Dol? [On checking after the meeting this was for both October and November].
- Donations: JH will contact local businesses and hotels, HR will speak with the Kilcamb; JJ will approach Murdo Campbell. Directors can approach people and collect donated items and bring them along on the night. JT has spoken with John McDonald about venison and JH will speak with Laudale; HK will check with Marine Harvest re donating a salmon; we could also approach the crafters in Oakwood and ask if any would donate items – AC/IB could ask.
- Bar Licence: JH has organised and the licence passed to DC. J MacKinnon and K Proctor have offered to cover the bar and DC will assist, too.
- The auction will be run by JT assisted by Robert Dunn. JT asked if anyone else would take over the auctioneer role, and it was agreed to ask Duncan Cameron as he used to do the auction before JT; HK said she might also do a stint, having seen what is involved and would consider doing the auctioneering in the future.
- There will be a children's auction 6:30-7:15 approx
- The Village Hall has been booked by JM. JM and Mary McIntyre will record auction cash
- The suggestion is that Community Benefit Fund (CBF) replacement panel members will drawn during the auction- IB and Eilidh- Ann Phillips will organise this

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- We will contact Chris Millar-Craig to see if there are any young musicians who might be willing to play a couple of tunes at the auction.
- We will list donations, so people can be thanked and JJ will prepare sheets for Laudale auction items
- Timings: 6pm Set up; 6:30pm- 7:15 Children's Auction; 7:20-30pm Auction

b) Board Meeting dates:

15th January 2020

26th February 2020

25th March 2020

29th April 2020

Meetings will start at 7pm and venues to be arranged. When the Men's Shed is up and running meetings can be held there JJ will draw up a further list of dates for May 2020 – April 2021 with a meeting about every 6 weeks, this will be circulated and discussed at the next meeting.

5. Finance Report:

The bank balance and report will be circulated [NB – Treasurer reported after the meeting Main Account Balance £35,062.91, Oakwoods Account £4,705.24].

6. Capacity Building/ Projects:

- a) **Loch Development:** The Loch Group hosted a public meeting on the 4th Nov in the Village Hall attended by 15 people with lots of good discussion and feedback on what do with the green shed and car park. There is not a great appetite for major structural works/pontoons at this stage. Action: JH to type up notes.
- b) **Paths, Trails and Maps:** On going. JM asked for a collection book for car parking donations to be mounted on the hatchery shed. JH suggested the most secure option would be to mount the collecting box inside the shed, with a hole cut for donations. JM to ask Pete Madden is this was acceptable / practicable. To be actioned at next meeting. Update from the Paths Group re School House Plot: JJ explained that the members of the group feel that they are now unable to maintain this plot. Also the proposed path along the Strontian River, on the Anaheilt side, is too much for them, too. They had originally viewed this proposal made by R Dunn, to connect this riverside path, and through the school House plot and a short stretch of Forestry land to Phemies path with enthusiasm. However, they now feel this is as beyond their capabilities. Options for clearing and use of the Old School House were briefly discussed: getting a contractor to clear the scrub, replanting native wildflowers, a community orchard. At one time it was only an idea, but the School House plot, the Community Woodland, the greenhouse and the composting area might be something a community group might want to take on e.g. gardening, etc but members of the group think this is too much for them. One director said that currently there does seem to be some interest within the community. **Action:** This can be discussed further at the next meeting. The siting of the benches and signposts was raised and a small advert will be placed in the De tha Dol? asking for local contractors to tender. DB suggested the School House plot need to be properly mapped and JJ mentioned using the Company GPS handset and the potential of having access to LIDDOR equipment might be a possibility. Also we can ask Kate Proctor to take a look to see if there are any important plants needing protection
- c) Community Building - Hub, Heritage, etc. – No action, Carried forward
- d) Lifelong Learning - No action

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- e) Transport Links – AGM suggestion of a community transport scheme and an option to do a feasibility study to buy a car is something we might want to discuss further. Also at the AGM, mention of a charging point was raised – JH will speak with Alistair McLean
- f) Housing - No action, Carried forward
- g) **Community Benefit Fund (CBF)**: Options for an endowment fund, as the contribution from Foundation Scotland is still available. Carried forward. New CBF panel members will be drawn at the Christmas Auction. **Action** IB/ Eilidh-Ann Phillips

7. Assets

- a) **Old Schoolhouse Plot**: mapping the area?.
- b) **Back Road** Leaf clearing will take place on Saturday 23rd November 10:30- 12:30; secretary has emailed Paths group and Director
- c) **Composting site**: The portable cabin has been located there pending a planning application to the Highland Council for this to be used for the Men's Shed - Carried forward
- d) **Community Woodland Plot**: Nothing to report. Carried forward
- e) **Oakwood Centre**: There is still work to finish: painting, notice boards and groundwork ie clearing weeds, laying the gravel, which can be done through the winter. DB, JJ and HR said they could do this work: DB to organise. JH will prepare a "Staffing and Budget" paper for the Board. JJ will circulate Update paper

8. Potential/ Future Community Facilities/ Projects:

- a) **Men's Shed**: Planning permission has been granted. JH has prepared an outline budget for £13,000, which is for connection to utilities and work to get it ready for occupation. The Sunart Community Council and the CBF have provided some money so some of the cost of the building can be settled by the end of the year. JH is pursuing funding applications. Applications for connection of electricity, water and sewerage are being made. JH has spoken with Shaun Corrigan who has a 10 ton jack we can borrow to raise the building. Shaun also mentions we can get used (pre-owned???) door kits specifically for these buildings
- b) **Longrigg Woodland**: The Longrigg Working Group having met with the Highland Council Roads Engineer are exploring options and requirements for extraction using the bottom portion of Longrigg Road, just below The Old Manse. There is the need to get a roads consultant to provide an assessment of what is required. JM mentioned that there were rumours of access via Ranachan being explored without the Board's knowledge, and a local resident was angry because he felt ambushed at a social event; upsetting local residents is something the group should not be doing. Also, there seemed to be little information coming from this group. JH pointed out that in the original consultations on this project with community, in the Village Hall, there were three options for extraction routes: the common grazing, Longrigg Road and via Ranachan. The grazing's route is now not an option and the others are just being explored. No decisions have been made as report in the De tha Dol?.

9. Developing the Community Company:

a. Fundraising

- i. Fund Raising & Income Generation: Note: Christmas Auction on 30th November is an important fundraiser Directors are asked to assist.
- ii. Gift Aid: None

- b. **Board Development**: Details of the appointment and co-option of directors and election of office bearers are recorded in item 2 above.

- c. **Strategy Review and Business Planning**: None at present and JH proposed that this be the main item for the February 2020 meeting.

- d. **Staffing:** None
- e. **Office:** None.
- f. **Website:** None

10. **Other Matters:**

- a. **Fisheries:** None
- b. **Drimnatorran Farm:** Noted
- c. **Village Hall And Old Primary School Building:** On going
- d. **Community Building – Hub, Heritage, Pool:** None
- e. **Lifelong Learning:** None
- f. **Transport Links:** See 6e
- g. **Housing:** None

11. **Correspondence:** -

- a. None

12. **Any Other Business:**

- a. Items from the Community Council: None
- b.

13. **Date of Next Meeting:**

- a. **Christmas Auction Saturday 6:30pm 30th November 2019 – Village Hall**
- b. Next Board meeting: 15th January 2020, 7pm Venue TBA, probably Dail Mhor

Izzys update to Board for Nov Board Meeting
SCBF

Panel met at the start of November.

Discussed review documents. And initiated the step down of panel members for re-election at Christmas Auction.

Minutes to follow.

The following awards were made.

The panel ask that a Sunart Com Company director steps forwards to be on the Panel, as well as a Community Councillor.

	Application	Request	Awarded	Info
1	Strontian Nursery	£3,818	£0	The panel feel with the current restricted funds, there is not scope for awarding funds to this project to purchase play equipment. The applicant needs to show some fundraising efforts and and match funding. The panel suggest that the applicants choose which of the three elements applied for are most important and that they apply to the Community Council for funding support.
2	SCC - Jetty	£600	£1,000	The panel see developments to the jetty area and gateway to the village as very beneficial and important. The panel also noted that funds have been brought in from outside the community to fund the acquisition.
3	SCC Longrigg Woodland	£1,000	£1,000	The panel see that it is important to find out the full costs of using Longrigg Road and whether the project remains viable. If the project is a success, the panel would like to ask that the £1,000 awarded is repaid. But if the project does not go ahead, the £1,000 stands as awarded funding.
4	SCC - Mens shed	£4,000	£5,000	The panel feel the People's Shed is a great thing for the community. All generations stand to benefit from this project and it is great to have something so socially beneficial that appeals to men as well as women. Strong amount of Match Funding also noted by the Panel.
5	SCC - Admin	£1,000	£1,000	Panel wish to allocate the £1,000 admin payment to the SCC
	SUM =	£10,418	£8,000	
	Avail Fund	£17,076	£17,076	
	Remaining	£6,658	£9,076	

Longrigg Woodland

- Consultants have submitted to us a draft 5 year financial projection. The working group are submitting questions and requests for changes in their plan before the draft, which we expect at the start of December. Group reps believe there are alternative options that are more cost effective, so are asking the consultants for different models and options for the elements in the project
- A survey of Longrigg Road Junction to investigate improvements that would be required for timber extraction this way is being commissioned with specialist.

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- Consultant and group reps met with Highland council road engineer and who gave an indication of a lower cost option of repairing Longrigg Road, if it is used, after harvesting. JJ has written and asked for him to confirm this.
- Still have some way to go in finalising our business plan but the enthusiasm is there. And there is very encouraging work going on along side our own investigations... see Forland Research Project below:

Forland Research Project – Landscape approaches to woodland management

Based on discussion with various government agencies and others about the need to develop a landscape partnership approach in the Sunart area, Forland is seen as a means to bringing folk together; discuss options for the future land use, and opportunities through collaboration.

- Workshop facilitated by Foreland, focused on the North Sunart Woodland Group (NSWG) area (Longrigg Woodland to Resipole) which formed a number of years ago back in Sunart Oakwood Initiative days.
- Very good attendance a couple of weeks ago for the first workshop.
- A lot of enthusiasm for native woodlands
- Lots of things were discussed, including aspirations for what woodlands could be for our community in the future.
- Very positive and encouraging for SCC as we look at a community owned woodland.... Longrigg Woodland is part of the NSWG area.
- IB and Rory Sinclair were nominated to move things forward and see how the NSWG idea can be bought into activity again. We met with Ian Collier this week to talk about funding opportunities from Forest Scotland for Land Owners. A lot of good information for Longrigg Woodland opportunities too.
- Forland wish to support us in getting things started again and we are in discussions as to how this may best be achieved. Site visits to other woodlands may be funded by them. And they may be able to do some desk based / mapping / research for us.

Oakwood

	OCT-19
TOTAL SALES	£2,419.72
SCC OWN STOCK SALES	£1,402.70
SCC INCOME ON COMMISSION	£71,76
INCOME FROM RENT	£165.00
SCC PROFIT THIS MONTH	£872.78 (plus 6pprox.. £2k stock in shop)

Excluding bills as don't yet have figures

November sales are well down and not very predictable. On day we took just 60p and another day £165.

Christmas Market is this Friday. Various people coming to have a stall.

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We are talking about reducing hours further from next week onwards. Mid week is very quiet.

Overall this year so far I estimate The SCC have made approx. £9,000 through Oakwood. We will know more over the winter when we close and take full stock take.

Our producers have sold Over £12,000 so far