

Sunart Community Company - Board Meeting 17th June 2024 - Village Hall, Strontian

Attending: P Sharples (Chair), J Jones (Secretary), J Hilder Treasurer, L Macgregor, S Traynor, H Taylor: Others: B Drinkwater, K Simpkinson, Christine Nater

1. **Welcome:** Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting and James introduced Hollie. Apologies: N Brookes, R Henderson, B Drinkwater, K Simpkinson
2. **Acceptance** of Minutes of last meeting 13th May 2024: Proposed J Hilder; Seconded L MacGregor. There were no amendments
3. **Community Company Planning:** To update Hollie, James will send copy of the information from our planning event. Also see income generation item below.
4. **Update:**
 - **Longrigg Woodland** – Andy Hughes unable to attend. James gave a brief update to appraise Hollie. James suggested that as we had not heard anything, our solicitors, McPhee and Partners, will be awaiting response from FLS legal department with regards the licence for the lorries turning and Camuschoirk
 - **Oakwood** – Update from Karyn: Gross sales remain up on last year; currently on **£18,766.97** compared to £13,505.86 for the same period in 2023. An increase of **38.95%** There are three new Producers up and running, all making sales in their first month of joining Oakwood.
UV window film on 4 of 6 Velux windows; while too early to tell if it prevents fading of products, it noticeably reduces the heat build-up on (rare) sunny days...which is good news as the extractor fan / cooling system has stopped working!
Karyn will arrange for Wendy to provide the Board with 1st quarter Profit & Loss statement in early July.
James explained that at the meeting with Oakwood producers he had agreed to publish Oakwood figures but these were not ready at the time. He proposes to circulate this information to them. He also suggested that a piece be placed in the Dtd? to explain and promote what Oakwood and how it operates. Hopefully, more people may offer to volunteer in Oakwood.
A confidential discussion took place concerning the behaviour of one of the community members volunteering in the shop.

There should be a meeting with all the producers to explain the introduction of the code of conduct. It is proposed to hold two meetings annually with the producers and volunteers each year to say thank you and consider any options for improvement or development.

- **Men's Shed;** James asked for this to be renamed as "Craft Hub". The vacancy for Craft Hub Co-ordinator has been advertised and there have been a number of enquiries. Interviews are set for 5th July and Paul, James and Rowena will do the interviews.
- **Loch/ Moorings** – it was commented on that there were two resident boats and also visitors recently. James has sold the three moorings owned by the Company to A & H Edwards, T. Coope and A Harpur The mooring fees are in the process of being collected. James will reschedule the Jetty/ Moorings meeting. Thomas has moved the pontoon and done some work, though there is work still to be completed and the pontoon returned to the water.
- **Paths** – There was a working group on 9th June and Eilidh-Ann organised clearing overgrowth on the path to the community woodland, the greenhouse and Men's Shed area, and the dismantling of the old rotten picnic tables. The next Volunteer session will be Sunday 7th July, 2pm – 4pm. Meeting at the High School car park, to work on the 'Back Road' between the Fire Station and the Church Bridge. There has been a request for some stone to fill in the hollows on the Back Road; James spoke with Shaun Corrigan of Corigan Contractors Ltd, who has offered to donate a trailer load. The Board thanks Shaun for this generous donation.
- **Website/ Communications/ Newsletter:** Nick has been working on this in recent weeks and intends to have a fully working version for the Board to review and approve by the time of the next meeting in July. Becky has been busy writing draft content for our current website, for everyone's approval, so that our current site is up to date until we transfer over to the new

website. She will have draft copy ready this week to circulate. If there are any updates that we wish to include then please let Becky know.

Social Media: Do any of the directors have photos of Sunart, or any SCC projects or activities? Can you send these to Becky please? We are a little short on content, and she would love to share more about our projects, but cannot post to Instagram without photos, and Facebook posts that are text only, are not as engaging. Any help with this appreciated!

Newsletter: as discussed at the last meeting, the goal is to get the first one distributed by early September, followed by a second version early in December; thereafter. Nick thinks we can aim for a Spring and an Autumn edition 2025. There is a drafted copy ready for the first edition and he will get in touch with Becky to discuss the design, artwork, printing and distribution. Becky has been sending out regular email communication to members about upcoming events and path group updates. She would like to send a summer newsletter – at the last meeting she attended, we were waiting for some more news re Longrigg and Dualchas, so that there could be a big update in the newsletter – are we at a place where a mid-July update would fit with SCC plans? She would love to hear all your thoughts on this. Her plan is to get content together by the start of July

- **Heritage** – Sunart Church acquisition: The Dualchas ‘AGM’ was held 3rd June where five new members were enlisted, officer bearers were changed and there was a pledge to be involved more when the church was acquired. The question of who owns the graveyard i.e. Church of Scotland or Highland Council is still legally unclear and James thinks this will only be finally resolved when the purchase progresses and solicitors are more involved but seems to reside with Highland Council.
 - **Social/ Activities** There was a bingo night in the village hall and this was conducted in both English and Gaelic. It was a very successful event and there were requests for more and perhaps a quiz next time. The night raised £121 and £50 was donated to Dulchas.
5. **Assets & Risk Register** (standing item) – Nothing at this time. John mentioned that there should be a serious scrutiny at least once a year and when the Longrigg Woodland and the Strontian Church Building acquisition come on line, each project will require a comprehensive risk assessment to be conducted, and regularly reviewed, and incorporated into the Company risk assessment produced by Tony Burke last year.
 6. **Income generation** (standing item) - This is a standing item as the Company needs to raise over £5,000 each year to cover basic running costs e.g. utilities and insurance, etc. Our main income generators are the Burger stall, Christmas market and auction, so any other activity and event or raise money is vital. Oakwood was set up as a venue for local producers to sell their products to local people and visitors and to provide information to visitors. It was agreed at the outset that the income generated after paying commission to the producers and the running costs of Oakwood, is used to support our community projects and activities and the Company in general. The Company also has requested grants and funds from the SCBF and Sunart Community Council.
 7. **Finance, including Common Benefit Fund (CBF) & Oakwood**
Oakwood: £7,553 and expecting transfers in of £1,700. Main account: £57,684.
SCBF: The next meeting is October 2024. The spring grant round was very successful, with funding allocated to: the Craft Hub role; Strontian Play Group; Strontian Primary School Parent Association, and Carna Conservation Initiative.
 8. **Staff matters** (standing item): There have been 4 requests for application packs so far for the Craft Hub Coordinator role. We have more social media posts planned this week and next. Two of our enquiries heard about the role via Facebook.
A confidential discussion took place about a possible change in the terms and conditions of the shop manager.
It was agreed that the practice of a producer weekend cover rota be reconsidered but this to be discussed and implemented by Karyn.
 9. **AOB**
 - Craft Hub Officer – see Men’s Shed
 - Insurance – We have renewed our policy with Zurich and the premium is £1068, an increase of £72 for the £10,000,000 public liability cover. James suggested that as Zurich are consistently the cheapest and there is substantial additional work obtaining quotes, we continue with Zurich and review every three or four years

- Faeries Road Bridge – Update. John contacted Johnny Grey with regard the application to FLS for a contractor with £10,000,000 public liability cover and that meet FLS's work licence requirements. James had also approached Shaun. However, it is likely that most contractors will not be available until after October as this is their busiest time of year.
- Burger stall advance preparation – was discussed and Laura will start preparing the “volunteers” rota. John to double check on the requirement for a GasSafe certificate for the BBQ, as legislation cover indoor and commercial requirements.
- Bingo machine - it appears this was Denise's machine that has been donated to the Sunart Centre, which can be booked through Jacob Green.
- Change of water supplier – Tony Burke, a previous director, who kindly acts as an associate overseeing our utilities requirements. Tony submitted a proposal to combine the water accounts for the Craft Hub and Oakwood to one provider and recommended Everflow; James circulated Tony's information by email and John seconded the proposal. The Board ratified this decision and a copy of Tony's information is attached to these minutes.
- Play Park and tubs on the green: members of the community have asked the Community Council if equipment in the play park can be repainted and a bench be installed, as in the past. The community purchased the equipment many years ago, therefore ownership sits with the Company, because the Community Council is not permitted to own assets. A suggestion is that the bench donated by Lorna Tonge's daughter might be suitable. The bench is currently stored by Jamie McIntyre, so James will check. There was a suggestion that Lorna's bench be sited opposite Eric McVicar's, however, John explained that the Paths group have been invited to apply to the Highland Council for a few benches and one could be a picnic bench for the location opposite Eric's property.
- Co-option of Hollie Taylor: proposed by L Macgregor, seconded by J Hilder. S Traynor absented herself from the decision.
- Member Drive: Becky informs us that there have been 6 new members join in the past month. Becky is planning some social media posts to encourage new SCC members – which will be shared to local community groups also.

Date of next meeting: 22nd July 2024 Venue Village Hall