

## Sunart Community Company – Minutes of Meeting

**Board Meeting** 7:30pm Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June (Zoom)

**Attending:** P Sharples, J Hilder J Jones D Barker J Tyldesley J Mellis; B Drinkwater

**Apologies:** D Calver, J Madden

### Items

1. Welcome: the Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. Acceptance of Minutes of last meeting (7<sup>th</sup> April 2021): Proposed J Hilder, Seconded J Tyldesley. No amendments
3. Community Company planning: This item was proposed at the meeting in April 2021 and carried forward as the meeting in May was deferred. The Business Plan 2016- 201, is now clearly out of date; and comments/ observations made were that some of the items listed have been actioned some are still in progress others and yet others may no longer be relevant. Also that given the Covid pandemic and the restrictions over the last 15 months or so, people's views and priorities may have changed or now may have a different focus. A question asked was about what is the Community Company's focus for the next few years? What is about improving "industry" - locally e.g. tourism is of major importance. PS mentioned that there had been an article about the community in Innerleithen where they had developed cycle and mountain bike tracks which had lifted and improved the local economy and opportunities. It was mentioned that the plan had been developed on information collected by consultants as part of a community consultation and report which was funded by HIE. The point was made that the Business Plan was drawn from the consultant's report, which has been referred to locally as the CADISPA report. There were 50 items mentioned which the Board prioritised to 25 items and then the top ten were the focus for action. The question of how should the plan be updated was discussed. For example, is it for the Board to draw up a list and then conduct a consultation; should a consultation be conducted first or should there be some review of what has been achieved over the intervening period and maybe list the original items and as if there as still relevant and what there might be in addition. The observation was made that there might be a multitude of views and different aspirations; however, consulting with our community is essential. There are funds available and JH suggested there might some additional funding we might access to conduct a consultation. It was agreed that there should be a meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July at 7:30pm to progress this further.
4. Update (brief) on:
  - Longrigg Woodland – There is a project meeting being scheduled for the first week in July to progressing the next stage
  - Oakwood – Jane Mellis gave a brief update. Oakwood has been open since the 26<sup>th</sup> April and the turnover so far is approximately £9,000. It is open 11am – 3pm every day. Oakwood is staffed by volunteers, however more volunteers are always welcome. The question whether or not of extending would benefit was discussed but the opening hours seem about right at the moment. There has been some online sales but the is a bit of a glitch with Google which Tony Gowland is seeking to rectify
  - Men's Shed – The comment was made that the new cabin is still not open. JJ apologised and acknowledged this although there had been some issues obtaining a contractor, which has proved unsuccessful. However, he will seek some assistance to try to get the work started.
  - Loch/ Moorings – Jetty and Green Shed - ongoing
  - Paths – PS asked which paths is the responsibility of the Company. It was explained that the Back Road path behind the Fire Station and High School and the path by the Strontian Hotel. However the Ardnastang beach path and the and the Longrigg Burn

are on private land owner's property but a permission had had been obtained and funding from Paths for All obtained to develop those paths. Other paths were primarily on Forestry and Land Scotland or Common Grazings or Highland Council land. The bridges in the Ariundle and Faeries Road path are maintained by FLS. However, there is some ambiguity about the Faeries Road bridges as these were put in with grant funding with the agreement of maintenance. However, the bridges need to be replaced and FLS does not have the funding for this. The Community Council is currently in discussion with FLS as how this can be progressed.

- Website/ Communications – Becky explained there is now a Fund raising button on the website and she asks for any photographs of projects, local pictures which can be put on the website. There is now an Oakwood Instagram page.
5. Assets (standing item) The reason for having standing item was explained i.e. to keep things in view, to identify and schedule when review or surveys are needed e.g. tree inspection on the Back Road, and to ensure the Company meets its duty of care for insurance, etc. Action JJ to update the assets register list and circulate – DB will assist.
  6. Income generation (standing item): This is a standing item as the Company income is mainly derived from: the Annual Show and the Christmas Auction although in recent years the was a Water Festival which was to be run last year in conjunction with the Three Lochs Book Festival, both of which had to be cancelled. We held a Christmas Fair and auction outside Oakwood and the Village Store and year and this proved a great success and was much commented upon. There is a suggestion that a scaled down Water Festival event be held last this year, at the same weekend as the rearranged Three Lochs event. The idea is that this would be at the jetty and would inevitably be primarily for local people, but it would be an event and might raise some additional income. There is also the suggestion that we organise another Christmas Fair event on the last Friday in November. Both these suggestions were approved and JH will progress the Water Festival and Jane will progress the Christmas Fair. JJ also mentioned that Jamie Tait, who roganises the Cub Scouts, had asked to stack wood at he Men's Shed site, as there is already a pile waiting to be burnt, and he had raised the idea of a November Bonfire Fireworks event. The Scouts may not want to take the lead, Jamie will check, however it might be something that local people might want and enjoy. JJ will speak to Jamie Tait and we will need to check if the Primary School (they did the fireworks before handing it to the Scouts) or some other charity might want to host this event. If not it might be something to consider.
  7. Finance, including Common Benefit Fund (CBF) & Oakwood: Company account: £30,172.91: Oakwood account £8,638. The Company account includes some CBF money and some for Urram.
  8. Staff matters (standing item): Lara Van de Peer was re employed briefly i.e. placed back on our books for administrative reasons, but has now finish and gone to her new job. We wish to express out thanks and wish her well in her new employment. The CBF has supported our request for funds towards conducting a community consultation and JH is looking to obtain additional external funding for this work. Becky has been liaising with Rory Green from the UHI with regard approaching businesses and employers. The UHI have provided a full list of courses that are available to employers, businesses and individuals and will approach the list of employers/ businesses that we have compiled. Becky has also prepared a database of members, this an online database and will be checked against the Electoral Office database which we have obtained. The final information will be circulated to directors, on hardcopy so that we don't infringe GDPR rules and directors are asked to check the list and flag up any inaccuracies or updates, using their local knowledge. The database can then be used for updating members, sending out periodic newsletter, etc.
  9. AOB

- Companies House – JH explained that the Company Annual accounts had been submitted late and as a result the Company has incurred a fine of £375. He had been tied up over the period obtaining, issuing and recording the finance and administration of the COVID related grants which the Company had to apply for on behalf the Community Council/s for emergency provisions and relief e.g. for PPE, the Helpline, prescription and Sunday meals for people shielding, etc. James said this was his fault, and he'd missed the deadline and he offered to pay the fine. The secretary had received the letter of notification from Companies House and he suggested that as a Company there is a collective responsibility and proposed that it is not for James to pay the burden of the fine. All directors agreed.
  - Picnic bench - A request from Jody at the Bothy Bar to buy the bench currently at the Men's Shed location as these benches are in such short supply they cannot be obtained at the moment. After discussion it was agreed that Jody can borrow the table for as long as required. There was also the idea that the Men's Shed might make some picnic benches, which led to the observation that there are 4 benches stored at DB's which need to be located in the village. JJ acknowledged this and will progress.
  - JJ will purchase a donations box for the Hatchery parking area.
10. Date of planning meeting: Wednesday 7:30pm 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 (Zoom)
11. Date of next meeting Company Board: 7:30pm 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021 (Zoom)