



**DRAFT - Minutes of Sunart Community Company Board meeting 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

Attending: J. Jones (Chair), L. Cameron MacGregor (Vice Chair), P. Sharples, J. Hilder, S. Traynor, N. Mellis.

Apologies: A. Gainsford, N. Brooks and H. Taylor

1. The minutes from the previous meeting (18<sup>th</sup> August) were accepted: proposed by L. Cameron MacGregor, seconded by S. Traynor

**2. Matters Arising**

**Faeries Road bridge awaiting quotes** – one local contractor has visited the site and has said a quote will be provided. We still have the original quote from ACT. It is likely that we won't secure 3 quotes and instead will inform funders we tried and failed. **Action: J. Jones** to progress.

**Pontoon on Loch Shiel** - J Hilder had spoken to the Angling Club and Polloch Community Shed reps and there was no appetite to acquire the pontoon as its upkeep was likely to be financially unsustainable – therefore not required. **Action: JH** to place notice on Facebook

**Director Recruitment** – A Hughes and J Hilder will retire at the AGM. This is James's last Board meeting after 14 years. **Action: All** to continue to seek nominations ahead of the AGM

**Crown Estates Fund** – Environmental Projects (Small Grant) It was agreed to submit an application for the remaining revenue funding to set up Tree Nursery for the village either on the old schoolhouse plot – or preferably behind the Men's Shed. **Action: Euan Plamer and James Hilder** to source costs and submit. It was agreed that ideally we build a "Polycrub" rather than a polytunnel.

**Crown Estates Fund** – Community Capacity Building **Action: James** to prepare a budget and submit an expression of interest to this fund for a Development Manager.

The **Sunart Footpath Group** received a nomination for 'High Performing Team of the Year' for High Life Highland's 2025 i-care. Board noted to thanks to Eilidh Ann and all the volunteers for putting so much into the group.

3. **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceilidh** – Laura gave an update. Sunart Café to do catering for 70. James has applied for the Bar licence.
  - a. There was a discussion on where to source sale or return alcohol for the Bar. **Action: James and Neil** to make enquiries and revert to Laura.
  - b. Becky has prepared an invitation to go out to all former Directors and their partners, and also to various businesses who have supported SCC over the years and other stakeholders. **Action: James & Becky**
  - c. We will have the AGM, followed by the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary review – Eilidh Ann & Ronnie will open the session, followed by presentation from James and closed by John. Then the Ceilidh will start with food approx. 45 mins into the Ceilidh. **Action ALL DIRECTORS** will need to be on hand to assist with various tasks – t.b.c.
4. Church Development/Heritage Hub:
  - a. BBC Alba interview: to be timed to coincide with launch of fundraising – **Action Nick and Sarah** finalising details



- b. Key codes/Door locks: **Action: J. Jones** to source new Yale Barrel for front door and adjust the door catch so it locks in properly
- c. Agreement for use: **Action: J. Jones/N. Brooks** to draft a suitable document – carried forward - now urgent.
- d. Roof and ceiling repairs: It is hoped that the local Presbytery will still contribute to roof repairs – negotiations to be restarted once we have quotes. JH has sought quotes from a number of local contractors but so far only one has responded. James to chase and set a deadline of the end of this week. An additional joiner/builder is to be contacted. **Action James**
- e. **Dualchas** – have applied to the Community Council for costs to print a booklet on the Church and calendars. It will be 200 years next year since the church was built hence the publication. Comm Council have offered up to £1,000 which has been gratefully accepted.
- f. It was agreed that a **Church Refurbishment Sub-Committee** would be formed to advance professional quotes and fund raising – S. Traynor will lead on this project. **Action: Sarah** to carry forward.
- g. A **Church Building ‘Spruce Up’ group** of volunteers – (Joan and Mary mainly) have been cleaning and painting various parts of the church to give it a refresh. Work continues but some of the wall surfaces are too crumbly for paint – **Action J Jones** will review wall surfaces
- h. Lockable cupboard – SCC has various supplies used for functions that it needs to house. It was agreed to either adapt the lockable cupboard in the Church Meeting Room, or purchase a metal lockable cabinet. **Action J Jones and P Sharples** to sort out.
- i. Noticeboard for the Men’s Shed and the Church are to be built by the Men’s Shed. **Action A Harpur**
- j. We will need to remove the Episcopalian Church sign at the Church Gate as its no longer required.

5. Craft Hub/Men’s Shed:

- a. No update was available.
- b. Hair dressing is going ahead.
- c. JH reported that Annie had secured funding from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for next year (in partnership with Urram) and had been asked to resubmit an earlier application for funds from the Highland Council CLLD programme. **Action A Harpur.**

6. Rainforest project:

- a. The new funding bid was successful but as the new fence was ruled out by the funders the majority of the £260,000 is to be spent on Rhododendron clearance plus £20k of deer management incentive payments and funds for a tree nursery – all of which must be spent by the end of March.
- b. The Chair attended a recent Rainforest Working group meeting and commended the work of Euan Palmer and James Huilder in handling a tricky project with some diverse opinions on the group.
- c. These extra funds will only be released if we can meet the long list of pre-conditions requested by NatureScot.



- d. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, expressed thanks to James and Euan for their hard work and commitment on progressing this project.
7. **Oakwood:** No update available although it was noted the opening hours have reduced to 10-2pm and further reductions are likely as the season ends and we run in to Christmas sales.
  - a. Inspection of Solar Panels – carried forward?
8. Longrigg:
  - a. The group is about to appoint contractors for building the access road and harvesting.
  - b. Road signs have gone up to explain there will be road closures on Longrigg – these have required some clarification to some folk. (The licence has been received from Highland Council)
  - c. A successful Volunteer Work Party has cleared the entrance to the forest of scrub, ready for the contractors to prepare the bell mouth.
9. Administrative Matters
  - a. Companies House Update **ALL DIRECTORS are reminded to register their identity with Companies House.** James sent an email explaining how this is done on July 11<sup>th</sup>. **The deadline for completion is 30<sup>th</sup> September**
  - b. Funding Applications – see above – Crown Estates.
  - c. **Declaration of Interests** and Register of Interests. **Action: N Brooks** to circulate a Register of Interests Form for all Directors to complete – digitally or hard copy. Thereafter each Board Meeting should check for any changes to the register at the start of a meeting and call for any Declaration of Interests in the Agenda.
10. **AOB**
  - a. **Christmas Auction** – date to be confirmed asap. Neil is available on 6<sup>th</sup> December so that is likely date although need to check if there are any other events then and also when the High School is having their Christmas Market / Fundraiser. **Action: Laura** will check with the school, **James** to contact Nic Goddard to check the 'What's On' calendar. Thereafter **James** to apply for Bar Licence.  
  
The meeting noted that Café Sunart are planning a Christmas Market although no date has been set.
  - b. BBQ Equipment - Neil has been looking at prices of a new Hot Water Urn (circa £160) and also folding trestle tables with wipe down surface (approx. £55 each – we need 4). He is still looking for suitable Bain Marie. Action: P Sharples will check Costco. Neil to keep looking and make final proposal to next Board.
11. Other actions:
  - a. The revised insurance policy is now in place.
  - b. SharePoint access needs to be resolved – Directors experiencing problems accessing the platform to contact B. Drinkwater in the first instance.
  - c. Recruitment of New Directors: to be discussed at the next meeting.
  - d. Employment contracts: new contracts have now been issued.
  - e. Finance report: A. Gainsford provided a detailed interim report.



- f. Web site: Donate facility to be changed to Charities and Foundation Bank once a suitable account has been set up. A. Gainsford/N. Brooks to progress.

12. Next meeting:

- **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October** – AGM & Ceilidh
- **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October** - short meeting to Elect Office-bearers and prepare for Christmas Auction.
- **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November** - Full Meeting