

Mull and Iona Community Trust
Minutes for the 297th Board Meeting
An Roth and via Zoom - Monday 23rd January 2023

Meeting started at 10.30am

Present: Barry Whenman (BW), Steve Blazye (StB), Rob MacManaway (RM), Jane Griffiths (JG), Derek Crook (DCr), John Maughan (JM), John Innes (JI), Dave Currie (DJC), Mark Strevens (MS), and Sandy Brunton (SB), Donella Fernyhough (DF), Heather Waller (HW).

By zoom: Sue Hawkes (SH)

In Attendance: Moray Finch (MF), Mairi Greig (MG), and Phil Rogers (PR), Ian Jones (IJ)

Apologies: Robbie Cameron (RC)

1. Welcome, Apologies and AOB

SB welcomed everyone to first quarterly board meeting.

Introductions around the room.

AOB: MF, approval of RCGF grant.

1.1 Co-opt Ian Jones

Proposed by BW, seconded by JI.

1.2 Board Meeting Format

MF gave an overview re why we have moved to quarterly board meetings. Auditors will flag it if a director misses 50% of the board meetings during the year (raised to ensure continual involvement from directors) reminder that if included in the minutes that they have read the papers and provide comments to show that they are still engaged with the organisation. Attendance at the more regular steering group meetings will also show interaction.

Discussed opportunities to involve young people through Tobermory and Oban High Schools, supported volunteering opportunities through employer, opportunities through steering group involvement, if not full director.

It's likely that there will be interim shorter board meetings to discuss specific matters, which will count towards attendance.

Short term working group to be formed re wider engagement of young people – MF, MG, DF, MS and HW to form the group.

Approve Minutes

2.1. Approval of minutes from board meeting – Monday 12 December 2022

One typo noticed and corrected.

JI proposed; JM seconded.

2.2. Review actions and matters arising from previous minutes

Item 1; Gantry site and polytunnel discussion - Ongoing, camera to be placed.

Item 2; Updated code of conduct to be issued to new director - Completed.

Item 3; MESS Volunteers Code of Practise - CF; ongoing, MG to check with MESS Manager.

Item 4; MESS Bunesan Volunteers Code of Practise - CF; ongoing.

Item 5; Board to show appreciation to MESS for record sales, SB to email – ongoing

Item 6; Key tasks for January board meeting – completed.

3. Declarations of Interest and Register of Related Parties

SB reminded everyone that declarations of interest are attached to the agenda and if anyone has any change in circumstance to please let MF know to log possible cases of conflict of interest.

BW requested change (no longer holiday let owner).

4. Finance

4.1 Standing Committee Report (SB, RM, JI, MF, PR, MG)

PR gave an overview from FSC meeting, held 13th January. Explained updated management accounts and why we needed it. New report no longer takes into account 'correction' transaction figures which were inflating income and expenditure, although balance was correct.

HW requested a training session on viewing the management accounts – PR/MG to set up.

Additional reporting (balance sheet reporting) is presented each quarter (Jun, Sept, Dec and Mar), but the current proposed frequency of board meetings would not allow time to have these reports prepared and provide timely and current finance reporting.

Proposal to move quarterly board meetings to a different cycle (Feb, May, Aug, Nov) by JI, seconded by MS. Additional short interim meeting likely to be required in October to approve annual accounts.

4.2 Finance Reporting & Designated Funds

Actions from Board Meeting

1. (CF) MESS Steering Group to discuss polytunnel at Gantry site and drainage improvements – needs to be widened to discuss whole Gantry site
2. MG to confirm that all directors' code of conduct papers have been received
3. (CF) MG will follow up with MESS Manager to ensure that all MESS volunteers receive an induction
4. (CF) DCr will work with MESS Manager to ensure all Bunesan MESS volunteers sign the Code of Practice
5. Board to show appreciation to MESS for record sales and an email from SB to Hazel to distribute to the volunteers – SB to email
6. MF/MG to form short term working group re engagement of young people
7. PR/MG to set up training session on viewing management accounts for board
8. PR to add charts for management accounts and designated funds, with highlighted areas
9. MG to forward notes to all board relating to meetings held with NWMCWC for info
10. SS/MG to send out doodle poll to re-arrange director training
11. MF to circulate details of meeting with Tob Distillery PR company
12. Steering groups to be populated by Directors at February Board Meeting

MG explained that designated funds are unrestricted funds that the organisation can allocate against specific projects/activities within the charitable objectives. We are tracking the income and expenditure during the year to help understand the current balance of designated funds.

Designated funds can be moved between projects/activities provided it is noted in board meetings and has the approval of the board. Could these be presented differently? PR will be looking at including charts for designated funds and the management accounts spreadsheet, and highlighting any particular items of note.

MF gave overview of FSC.

4.3 Membership numbers and donations

There were three new members since the last meeting.

4.4 Budget Preparation

MG explained that the budget template is almost complete and ready to circulate to staff, for helping to compile the budget from Apr 2023 – Oct 2024 (following requests from the accountant to have a budget available for 12 months from the date of signing the accounts). The budget should be available for approval at the February board meeting.

5.0 HR and Policies

5.1 Policy Reviews for approval

No policies for approval at this time.

6.0 Strategy Standing Committee

Strategy standing committee met earlier in January to carry out an annual review of the 5-year strategy. Review required to ensure that the document still accurately reflects the our indicative future activity, as thing can change in 12 months. Document is currently with Dawn Reade, who carried out the graphics work for the first one, to be updated. It is hoped to have this available for the February board meeting for approval.

7.0 Special Items

7.1 General and Deputy Managers' Reports (for information/discussion)

Item 21 – clarification re winter cabinets and cost of batteries.

Item 9 – MF gave an update on the fuel pump at UF.

Item 10 – UFSF – preferred contractor selected based on quality and price scoring. Seeking uplift, means that we are requesting more funds.

Item 11 – NP, could we include more plants, landscaping on site?

Item 14 – UF water, re school supply. This will actually contribute to running of the supply.

Item 15 – An Roth, render, not a warranty issue.

Item 16 – Calgary toilets, we are helping to ensure that the toilets remain open on behalf of the community. The toilets are still owned by the Council, but at some point we may wish to revisit that.

Deputy Manager's Report

No questions raised.

7.3 MICT/NWMCWC meeting, facilitated by Inspiralba

MF gave an overview and the history of why these meetings came about and their purpose. MG to forward notes of previous meetings relating to this for information.

7.4 AOB – Approve award of RCGF funding

Proposed by JI and seconded by JG. Gratitude and thanks passed onto the staff involved.

Congratulations to Tobermory Harbour Association on their successful award.

Break for lunch, at 12.35pm, SH left the meeting.

Staff joined for the remainder of the meeting – Cally Fleming (CF), Ewan Baxter (EB), Hazel Cowe (HC), Jan Dunlop (JD), Helen MacDonald (HMD), Sian Scott (SS)

7.2 Fundraising Officer's Report

SS gave an overview of why the dedicated post of Fundraising Manager came about.

SS talked through applications just submitted that require approval -

Approve submission of Steel Charitable Trust application for Solar PV/ Heating System for UFSF

Approve Waterfall Fund application, large grant for UFSF

Approve Waterfall Fund application, small grant for Ranger-led Climate workshops

Approve Bank of Scotland – Reach, for UFCT

All applications proposed by StB, seconded by DCr.

SS talked through the applications in progress as detailed on her report.

Board training – date for February, SS/MG to send out option by doodle poll to arrange the date.

Tobermory Distillery/Distell – all agreed that we should meet to discuss how this would work and the benefit to MICT. Meeting 26.1.23 at 10am; MF to circulate details by email.

SS left the meeting.

8.0 Steering Group Reports submitted in advance, discussed as noted below:

8.1 Ardura (MF)

MF discussed through project report which was circulated before the meeting. Composting toilet and forest school shelter moving forward.

DC raised that there is a local maker of bird boxes from old pallets, if more are needed.

Questions about pests and problems for newly planted seedlings. MF clarified that phytophthora affected larch has been harvested. Weevils are there and will know in Spring how much they've affected the seedlings.

Ishriff is no longer being disposed of by FLS, so there may be an option to extend the long distance path.

8.2 Ardura Community Wellbeing Project (RF)

No report submitted this month due to absence.

8.3 Childcare/Out of School Care project (MG)

MG gave an overview of the report which was submitted previously. Opportunity to access funding to explore feasibility of nursery located in Craignure, and needs throughout other areas around the island as well. There is a survey online for members of the public to express their opinions. No further discussions with the Council regarding out of school childcare; it will most likely depend on available Scottish Government funding. MF has asked Community Enterprise to submit findings regarding need out with Craignure separately to highlight the need for childcare particularly on the Ross of Mull and Iona.

8.4 Nonhebel Park, Tobermory (MG)

MF talked through report which was submitted prior to meeting.

Planning application and building warrant submitted, waiting on planning application being validated.

Official opening could now include both phases.

8.5 MESS

EB and HC gave an overview of report which was submitted prior to the meeting. Thanks expressed to the team for their work which has increased the turnover of the shop. Discussion re textiles not suitable for the shop sold as rags. Bunessan shop going to take a stall at the next Bunessan Community café to promote what the shop has.

Deposit Return Scheme – update on the potential opportunities for us to be part of the scheme. Not currently accepting furniture as it goes mouldy in the Polytunnel over winter. Exploring new options for furniture sales. Discussion to find new homes for two Hanna composters purchased through Climate Challenge Fund, as the costs to operate them here are too high.

The current MESS van makes it harder to collect donated furniture as it's smaller and capacity is lower.

There has been 500kg of food distributed through the Community Fridge since reopening in April 2022. The Community Fridge is now located in Tobermory as Co Op is main contributor to the Community Fridge.

8.6 Housing (HMCD)

HMD gave an overview of the report which was submitted in advance.

ScotGov has just announced that private rent increase will be capped at 3%, but some social landlords are looking to make increases of 6.1%.

Economic Impact Assessment (funded by HIE) of providing Key Worker Accommodation currently being carried out, due to be complete by end of February.

Request to employ consultant to look into a shared equity scheme for Mull and Iona, proposed by JM and seconded by MS.

8.7 Ulva Ferry pontoon and shore facilities (CF)

CF summarised the report which was submitted in advance.

Two tenders were submitted out of 25 invitations.

In the process of securing increased funding from HIE, hoped to be secured in the next few weeks. Shortfall of £86,000 to close by the end of February; in discussion with main funders. Other applications are also being submitted to secure funding. MF also indicated that cost-saving measures are being explored, so shortfall should be reduced by various means.

8.8 Ulva Ferry Community Transport (MF/JM)

No report, so MF summarised state of UFCT.

Service is operating with a good team of five drivers. Ticket machine now working as of last weekend.

New vehicle is still not here, but progress is being made. Hoping for it to be here soon.

8.9 Ranger Service including Eagle Partnership & Friends of Calgary Bay (JD & EW)

Funding from MESS for otter signs to be put at entrances at all sea lochs and in passing places to dissuade otter watchers from causing problems. Landowner permission has been received to put up large signs.

Mull Eagle Watch looking at having a Roving Ranger to travel the island, which will help to manage poor behaviour by speaking to and educating people.

Community Riverfly with Bug Life Scotland, a new project to survey the river at Ardura starting in April. More funding possible from Forestry Scotland to help manage this project.

More funding being sought for Mull Eagle Watch post.

Question about the Wardens and whether they will be funded again by the Council; discussion of how they were largely unsuccessful last year.

Question about putting donation boxes at sites of interest. Main concern would be security of these boxes, but Roving Ranger may be able to collect funding as they travel around the island. Further discussion of Rangers' funding and how difficult it can be to find funding to cover the Rangers. Suggestion for re-framing the issue of funding for the Rangers, and asking the Board to prioritise finding a way to change the way the Rangers are funded. JD thanked BW and JG for their ongoing support.

8.10 Data Research

No Report.

8.11 AMAZE Project (SB)

Initial report draft has been completed. This study is exploring feasibility and options to link EV charging points to community buildings which are insulated and able to cope with climate issues.

8.12 Helipad (MF)

Steering group has been formed, terms of reference have been agreed. TSL will be the contractor – approached by the funder – not going out to open tender as funder already has relationship with TSL. MICT will receive grant funding for the project, and be the client for the contractor, paying the invoices from the grant funding. Land has been agreed on a 50-year lease, planning application submitted and validated. Helipad to be called the Wilson-Thompson Helipad (for those closely involved in the development of the Progressive Care Centre, John Wilson and Bill Thompson). Build cost was questioned; MF explained the costs involved in building the Helipad.

8.13 Facilities Management (BD)

Facilities Manager is in post and doing a good job.

8.14 Mull & Iona Community Councils (JM & RM)

No questions raised on Mull Community Council report.

Iona Community Council has not met. Small repairs to pier last winter which didn't go to plan, which need to be completed and finished. If all goes to plan, Iona breakwater will be started in March next year, and on the Fionnphort side pier extension should be started in 2025.

9.0 Discussion items

No discussion items.

10. Any other business

Question about how the format worked. Overall positive comments offered, particularly the depth of the project reports. Consensus that project reports were shorted, as there was more to discuss that was cut short due to time constraints. Several options for changing the order, timings, etc. presented and discussed.

Meeting closed at 3.40 pm

The next scheduled board meeting will be via Zoom on Monday, 6 March 2023 at 7:30 pm.

Signed

Name **Sandy Brunton**

Date

Acronym List

FSC – Finance Standing Committee

UFCT – Ulva Ferry Community Transport

UFSF – Ulva Ferry Shore Facilities

NP – Nonhebel Park

DRS- Deposit Return Scheme

RCGF – Regeneration Capital Grant Fund

NWMCWC – North West Mull Community Woodland Company