LISMORE COMMUNITY TRUST

Purpose: to maximise the potential social, economic and environmental well-being of the whole community of the Isle of Lismore

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LISMORE COMMUNITY TRUST HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3rd JULY 2024 IN THE HALL AT 7PM

1. **Present:** Peter MacDougall (PM), Laura Savill (LS), Anita Bachuil (AB), Archie MacGillivrary (AM), Anna Stewart (AS) Kate McLuskie (KM) via technology.

2. **Apologies:** Brona MacDougall, Andrew Livingstone and Seona MacDonald.

3. **Minutes of the last Meeting (9th May) and matters arising.** Proposed by AS, seconded by LS, passed.

4. **Correspondence**. Correspondence from Sebastian Tombs had been attached to the agenda. It was about the limited people resources the island had and whether it was worth contacting the SIF to see how other islands coped in these circumstances. We thought that this was in particular reference to the Hall. As they had an EGM coming up on Friday we thought we would leave it till after that. Also ask Sebastian to outline how he might see it working. **Action: AB**

There was also copy of an email from Shona Wright asking if she could stock baking goods in the telephone kiosk at Achnacroish and eventually in the one at Point. This was agreed. **ACTION: AB**

5. **Financial Report.** From LS.

RBS – Account verifications seems to have been approved but LS has not received confirmation.

RBS Account – we have a total of £2491.42 in this account, a credit from HMRC Charities for £2491.35 was received. LS will write a cheque to pay this into the Co op account as the funds are for the Lismore Stores. LS will contact BM to let her know it was received.

The Main Trust funds are just over £7k, currently restricted in the Co op Account. LS is working on getting the new (additional) account set up so that the Trust can have a Co-op Bank Account separate from the Shop's day to day business.

Clarification of Accounts

RBS – original account that I and previous Treasurers have tried to access Online Banking for. It was eventually recognised that the account was 'too old' to have Online Banking, a new account would have to be set up. RBS was making the process very difficult so the Board agreed to change banks and LS set up a new account with Co-op

Banking, which took several months to get in place. During the setting up of the account, the Community decided to purchase the shop.

The Co-op Account came online just before we launched the shares, so it made sense to use this account for the Shop. The Trust (main) still need a new account as we still have to phone in to get any information or balances. The Co-op think it should be simple to set up an additional account alongside the 'Shop' one, with it's own Account number, to run separately from the Shop

6. **Shop**. A report from Roxanne MacColl (Manager).

First, thank you to the members of the Management Board who continue to work hard to make the running of the shop as a community venture a success.

Environmental Health inspection

The shop had an unexpected visit from Environmental Health on Thursday, 6 June – and passed the inspection with flying colours. The inspector was complimentary about the state of the shop in general, of our management of pests, and of our handling of other issues, including working on finding solutions for transporting frozen and chilled food from Oban safely.

Customers and the survey

Customers were happy to participate in the survey, and both locals and visitors continue to be very positive about the buying and running of the shop. I get the impression from those I speak to that people feel that they can voice their opinions (positive and negative) and preferences to myself and Bob, and this suggests that they feel a sense of ownership and pride.

Training and Development

I attended an online workshop with The Plunkett Foundation – Maximising the Potential of your Community Shop - along with managers and staff from 6 other rural, community owned shops, in June. This gave a good introduction to the Plunkett Foundation itself and the resources they have available. The workshop looked at encouraging and supporting volunteers; suppliers; succession planning, and products and pricing strategies.
It was hugely informative and interesting, and I would suggest making the most of our membership with them.
Paddy MacNichol from Appin Stores came over for an afternoon in May, and we spent a productive few hours comparing notes, and Bob recently went there to see how things were done. We've established a strong connection and have already picked up a new supplier based on Paddy's suggestions.
It will take a while to unpick everything we've learnt so far and to put some plans in place to move forward with suggestions and ideas.
However, three important issues were highlighted:

1. Our need to have clearer idea of our incomings and outgoings, and to develop a pricing strategy that supports continued growth.
2. Our need for some goal setting and a plan for moving the shop forward.

3. Our need to develop a succession plan, with policies in place to cover emergency or unexpected events.

Staff and volunteers
Unfortunately, we still have not been able to start training supply staff. Ideally the Post Office security checks will be completed this month and then we can begin. With both Bob and I taking annual leave through August and into October, there will be need for competent cover staff so this is something to keep in mind.

LS asked the board to consider buying a 'gun' that would help with the stock takes. It costs £90 to hire one for a week and to buy costs £500. She was going to a little more research into this. There was the possibility we could share it with Appin Shop. **Action: LS.**

7. **Island Tourism Strategy**. It was felt that this was something the Community Council were doing so it was perhaps not necessary for us to pursue. **Action: AB to write to Seona MacDonald.**

8. **Housing update**. A report was sent in from Andrew Livingstone as follows.

I have been unsuccessful in getting a second quotation from solicitors for representing the Trust with 2 failing to respond and two saying they are just too busy to take on the work. Only Twin Deer Law in Fort William have quoted.

John Forbes for the Communities Housing Trust is also to provide a proposal for management services and again I have chased him for this although I believe he has been on holiday.

In the meantime, Julia has been tasked with progressing Stage 2 funding with SLF and stage 1 funding with RHIF. I have started to look at potential mortgage providers who will likely be needed to fill a funding gap in the project.

On 12th Feb I joined a call with the Community Housing Network Group, this is a quarterly meeting that brings together the local community trusts, council and other representatives or interested parties where experiences/issues etc are shared. I found it very interesting and it maybe we get a visitation from members of a trust(s) on Lismore where we can discuss our specific project and benefit from help and advice of others directly.

Finally, I have a couple of asks of the board for approval tonight.

a. Authorisation to engage Twin Deer Law in Fort William as per quote for legal services associated with the housing project. They are knowledgeable in this area having carried out similar work for MICT and other community Trusts and it is anticipated that costs for legal services will be covered under the funding to be applied for as noted above.

b. I have had discussions with several individuals regarding the services of Modular

Connect/The Wee House Co and their reputation for their homes and also of services associated (I.e. planning, design, professional services and infrastructure for providing a full turnkey project) has resulted in nothing but praise. As such I would like approval to visit them in Cumnock in the next couple of weeks as they have a project being built on site which is of interest but the main purpose would be to discuss their full delivery service and what is involved as they did for Roger and Gilly Dixon Spain. I was hoping to take Julia along but it may be Julia will visit at another point due to current commitments. The cost of my expenses shouldn't exceed £60 and should Julia visit at a later point I would anticipate her expenses to be less than £100.

a) and b) above were proposed by LS, seconded by KM – agreed unanimously.

9. **E-bikes.** Julie Livingstone and Frances Willis have volunteered to run the apps needed for the e-bikes. Julie is holding a tombola to raise money for the bikes.

10. **Kiosk.** AM told the meeting that the insurers had everything in hand. Harper Engineering in Oban were tasked with the job of restoring the Kiosk. **Action: AB to pass to Harper Engineering our bank account details and confirm VAT registration.**

11. AOB. There was no other business and AB thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.20pm.