



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 Annual General Meeting of the Lismore Community Trust Lismore Community Hall Thursday 26th September 2024 at 7pm

Welcome, Attendance, Apologies and Proxies

Andrew Livingstone (AL) acting as Chairperson for the evening, welcomed those attending the meeting. The other Directors present were Laura Savill (LS), Brona Mac Dougall (BM), Anna Stewart (AS) and Archie Mac Gillivray (AM). Apologies had been received from Peter MacDougall (PM), Anita Bachuil (AB) and Kate McLuskie (KM). There were 14 apologies from members; Frances Willis, Seona MacDonald, Anne Livingstone, Valerie Livingstone, Niall Bachuil; Fiona Lees, Bob Hay, Dot Hay, Rhona Adam, Mike Hyatt, Liz Buckle, Jeremy Gilchrist, Yorick Payne and Tony Curry. Proxies had been received from Anita Bachuil and Peter Mac Dougall. Rosemary Barry (RB) was present as notetaker. There were 16 members in attendance.

Minutes of the AGM held on Friday 23rd June 2023

These had been circulated previously and as there were no comments they were proposed by AS and seconded by BM as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising not already on the agenda.

Annual Report

This was read by Laura Savill.

Governance

There had been a number of changes of Board members over the year. Roxanne McColl resigned as she had become a paid employee, Laura Savill stepped down as treasurer although remaining a Board member, Andy Hough resigned and Brona MacDougall and Andrew Livingstone were appointed as Directors. This brought the Board composition to 8 including one co-opted member – Kate McLuskie – with a capacity for 12 Board members and a minimum requirement of 4 of whom at least half must be Community Members. Anita Bachuil remained as Secretary.

Regular quorate meetings were held with agendas and minutes posted on the Lismore website.

The conversion in September from a Company Limited by Guarantee to a Charitable Community Benefit Society was to enable the Trust to raise funds through Community shares.

Affordable Housing Project

The creation of two three bedroomed affordable homes at the end of Newfield Terrace has been progressing though at a slower rate than had been anticipated largely due to the work needing to be done for the conversion of the Trust and the setting up of the Lismore Community Stores. Since February AL has taken on the responsibility of taking this project forward with Julia Fayngruen continuing in the role of Assistant Project Manager. Ongoing challenges include the water arrangements and funding support.



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Achnacroish Pier

Funding was obtained to undertake a survey which revealed that the amount of work required was considerable and the Board chose not to pursue this project for the time being.

E bikes

The Trust have had these for over a year. The Tracker App had been renewed so individuals could see where the bikes were and book them. Although uptake has been good the wider community is encouraged to make use of them.

Telephone Kiosks

These are the only source of income that the Trust has access to on a day-to-day basis. The unfortunate damage to the one at Point is currently being repaired.

LS replied to the question concerning the funding of the telephone kiosk repair that it was being covered by insurance. Asked for a figure for the repair of the pier the reply was that no cost had been given as it was a non-profitable repair. The reason for the survey was given as to explore potential uses but it was considered too big a project. There was a query as to the safety of its current condition and a comment that it was used for fishing. As it belongs to the Council the point was made that they have some responsibility for it.

Lismore Community Stores and Post Office

The idea for taking over the shop came about in June 2023 when the owner wanted to sell the business, but no purchaser had come forward. At the risk of losing the shop the Trust proposed that the community attempted to buy the business.

A small group of committed individuals came together under the umbrella of the Trust Board to undertake the background work to arrive at a position the takeover could realistically happen. The need to sell Community Shares to help fund this necessitated the move from a Company Limited by Guarantee to a Community Benefit Society. The members agreed by a vote in August to make this transfer and the business was purchased in November 2023. The subsequent publicity led to offers of welcome unsolicited discounts and donations. The good level of funding and help from volunteers has enabled the running of the shop to move forward positively with the inevitable hiccups and teething problems. The purchase of a storage container has meant that non-perishables could be stored to free up space in the shop and volunteers continue to help with the Oban Bookers run, collection of prescriptions, milk and bread runs, and helping to serve in the shop as required. The use of paid and volunteer staffing has enabled the shop to extend its opening hours over the summer.

Conclusion

Heading into the second year of trading we are planning for the shop to become profitable. We are forging on with the house building project and the Trust welcomes all those in the community who have time or skills or support in any form to join us.

The report was proposed by AS and seconded by Ian McKinnon.

Accounts

LS read an overview clarifying the way the general Trust finances and the Shop accounts are dealt with. Different accounting standards and reporting methods were needed due to the change of status of the Trust. As the conversion took place part way through the year, two sets of accounts were required to satisfy both Companies House as previously and the FCA (Financial Services Association).

Lismore Community Trust is a Community Benefit Society, registered with the Financial Conduct Authority No 9134. Company No: SC376707. Registered Scottish Charity No. SC041461. Registered office: Bachuil, Isle of Lismore, Oban, Argyll, Scotland PA34 5UL Email: lismorect@gmail.com



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The Trust has registered for VAT, PAYE and NEST pension contributions. As the shop is a sub group of the Trust VAT rules will now apply to the whole of the Trust's transactions. The accounts were prepared as one account by Ainslie Smith and Co but for clarity two financial reports have been prepared.

Main Trust account

Movement on this account has been small. The main payments were for the Housing and Pier Projects which were reimbursed by the Scottish Land Fund. A small grant was received from community Shares Scotland to cover the cost of the Shop share launch. The cost of meetings which was £548.00 is no longer being met by Lismore Community Council. Over the year a small loss was incurred as the telephone boxes were the only source of income. The Royal Bank of Scotland has caused ongoing problems and it was agreed that funds would be moved temporarily into the shop Coop account until a second Coop account is set up shortly which will be used solely for the Mian Trust account.

Opening balance	01.05 23	£8,353.26
Closing balance	30.04. 24	£6778

Shop Account

This was explained by Jane McClusky (JM) who took part in the meeting via Zoom. Figures and an explanation of performance were given and a reported loss on the first almost six months of trading of £6,965. Sales revenue however for the four months May to August was 50% higher than forecast.

JM also reported that the Post Office was being transferred to the Trust on September 30th.

The accounts were proposed by IM and seconded by Scott Barr.

There followed a discussion of various aspects of the running of the shop including a possible curtailing of the opening hours in winter such as closing on Saturday at 4pm. There was a query about management decisions and JM replied that the Management Board made the day to day decisions and if anything needed further approval went forward to the main Trust Board. Volunteers and the shop workers were also listened to but there may be a need to make quick decisions. Legally there had to be two directors on the Management Board. Currently these were LS and AB. JM was asked about her role and she explained that she was involved in direct shop decisions and mentoring staff rather than strategic decision making. A comment was made that there was a need to continue promoting the shop to the community. There was a query about the result of the shop survey and it was confirmed that this was being awaited. The comment was made that those who had shares had a responsibility to make use of the shop particularly in the winter when there would be less tourist use. Suggestion was made that it would be useful to have some form of advertising at the North end of the island as many of those who came to the cafe were unaware of the shop being a little further on. There was advertising on social media and it was also suggested that special offers etc were kept up to date on Facebook. Jane Hough volunteered to undertake the social media publicity.

There were a number of queries as to the precise role of JM. It was explained that she was the book keeper for the shop and also had a voluntary role with oversight of the day to day

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running of the shop on behalf of the Trust Board and was available to act as a mentor for the employed manager and undertaking such required activities as Formal Appraisals.

There was a query about stocking of a particular item which appeared to have not been satisfactorily dealt with and it was agreed that there needed to be feedback on requests that were not taken forward.

There was a query about how the volunteering was working and the reply was that there was not a problem with the Booker run at present but it was a serious point to be considered going forward. The experience of the Heritage Centre was mentioned which was that when volunteers dropped out others seemed to offer to come and there was a need to be optimistic as the Community did not want the shop to fail.

In reply to another query LS explained that it was possible to have up to seven named drivers on the Community Stores vehicle insurance which was corrected by a member to four. It was mentioned how helpful it was to have volunteers on Thursday afternoons to help unload the main weekly delivery. Also to go to Point for the pick up of supplies on Mondays. JH volunteered to put this on Facebook.

Direction as to the appointment of Independent Examiner

The Board had recommended the continued use of Ainsley Smith and Co of Oban. This was proposed by Sebastian Tombs (ST) and seconded by IM.

Setting of Annual Subscription

The Board had suggested that there be no annual subscription and this was proposed by Julian Wormleighton (JW) and seconded by IM.

Election/re-election of Directors

The present board comprised AL, PM, BM, LS, AB, AM, AS and Kate McCluskie (KM) - co-opted. That all these be re-elected was proposed by JW and seconded by IM. AL made it clear that it was possible to support the Trust without being on the Board. A thank you was minuted for all the hard work done by the Board.

There was a query as to how long Directors could stay on the Board. LS replied that as the Community Trust had converted to a different entity all Directors had started again. Going forward one third would retire at each AGM. LS to check how long a director can serve.

There was a query as to what had been done to ask contributory share holders to be Directors. AL replied that he did not know the answer. There was apparently a 12 week rule which AL agreed had been missed but it was stated that this would be rectified in the future. LS explained they had been taking advice and checking with DTAS to ensure that the Trust was abiding by the rules for the AGM.

AOB. Questions and open discussion

a. Housing Report

AL gave an overview of progress on the affordable housing project. Planning permission had been granted on November 14th 2023. Nine conditions had been attached which were

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mainly standard but the one crucial one was the private water supply .AL explained how there had been discussions with concerned local residents and there had been a satisfactory way forward agreed involving upgrading of the existing supply and the potential of a new borehole. The condition referring to the upgrading of the access road to Newfield Terrace was being challenged. There is a nearby electrical supply and broadband services are available and there is a possibility of making changes to the access road to maximise the potential of the site, and satisfying the needs of the sustainable drainage system. Stage Two funding from the SLF will allow the purchase of the site with the Rural Island and Housing Fund (RIHF) providing an anticipated 80% of the building cost. Additional funding would come from Argyll and But Council, Scottish Energy Community funds and a commercial mortgage. Once the viability of the Project had been fully investigated and a budget prepared the Community would be consulted before any commercial loans were taken out and to ensure continued Community support for the Project. The Wee House Company had been identified as the preferred supplier for the build. The process for the allocation of the completed homes had yet to be decided. The forecast for completion of the properties was the end of 2025. AL was the lead in the Project with Julia Fayngruen his assistant working on the funding applications.

There was a query about the planning permission at the Achnacroish site. Several assessments had been done, it had been agreed to use the Wee House Company and Stage one funding had been received from the Scottish Land Fund. The next step was to purchase the land. It was commented that the Wee Houses Company should be contacted to find out how much of the preliminary and ongoing administrative work they could undertake eg dealing with the Council, Building regs, Planning permission etc. There was a query as to whether the Wee House contract would be a fixed one and the reply was in the affirmative.

b. Shop and Post Office report

JM had already given a report on the shop whilst going through the accounts. BM reported on the problems that there had been with the Trust taking over the Post Office. There had been four stages: BM and AS had been interviewed as suitable partners, and there had been a great deal of paperwork and forms to go through. The good news was that the hand over was officially to be September 30th and a Post Office advisor would be in all week for staff training purposes.

c. E bikes

Julie Livingstone and Frances Willis were responsible for these. The App was working. There was a query as to where they were kept and it was explained that there was no specific location but the App pinpointed the locations left at which were mainly at Point and Achnacroish. There was a query as to where this information was to be found and it was agreed that it needed to be reposted. It was stated that visitors could use them. AL to enquire as to what could be for those without Smart phones and it was suggested that it could be done on a lap top.

There was a query about the Island Plan, Emergency Plan etc and AL replied it was important to bring the various groups together on this. RB interjected that the Lismore Community Council intended to convene a community meeting to discuss this later in the autumn.



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Thanks to the Board was minuted with particular thanks to JM for her professional overseeing.

A speedy recovery was wished to AB. who had held the Trust together over the past few years.

AL closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.

IM proposed an official vote of thanks to AL for chairing the meeting which was seconded by JW.