

**Comrie Development Trust**

**Board Meeting**

**Monday 25 January 2016, CDT office, 7:30pm**

**DRAFT MAIN MINUTES**

- 1. Attending:** Christian Campbell, Fiona Davidson, Bob Hughes, William Levack, Chris Palmer, Andrew Reid (chairing), Sharon Rice-Jones, Blair Urquhart

**Apologies:** Helen Buchan, David Robertson

**2. New Trust Members**

**Full Members:** Janette Barnes; Mattias S Pedersen; Doris Petrie; Millie Robertson; Emma Robertson; Jessie Robertson; Keir Rodan; Gerry Rodan; Peigi Rodan; William Wilson

**Associate Members:** Rafael Arribas; David Atiyah; Timothy Bunce; Thomas Cairney; Laura Caldwell; Eve Caldwell; Juliet Caldwell; Glen Clarke; Tim Elliott; Martyn Greene; Peter Hepburn; Gordon MacPherson; Stuart McDonald; David Neill

**3. Minutes of AGM and Board Meetings – AGM 8.12.15; Board Meetings 14.12.15 and 11.1.16**

Final versions approved

**4. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**5. Decisions by e-mail**

There had been no decisions by e-mail.

**6. Matters arising from the minutes of 14.12.15 and 11.1.16**

a) Community Council

It was agreed to request to attend the Community Council meeting on 7 April to discuss joint working between the Council and CDT, and to determine representation and any proposals at the CDT Board meeting on 29 February. It was also agreed to discuss, at that board meeting arrangements for the attendance of Sandra McRitchie, Community Council chair at CDT board meetings.

b) Findhorn Village Conservation Company – visit on 20.1

Fiona Davidson and Blair Urquhart from CDT board, along with Emma Margrett had met with great from Findhorn. There had been an interesting and useful exchange of information, including a reference to the potential for staff funding from Big Lottery active communities fund.

c) and d) in Confidential Minutes

## **7. Communications**

### a) LEADER conference, Aviemore, 11 March

It was agreed that CDT could not make it a priority, against other current demands, to join SIS in presenting and leading two workshops at the LEADER conference in Aviemore on 11 March

### b) Gwynedd Rural Innovation

It was agreed to respond positively to the requested by Gwynedd Rural Innovation to visit Culybraggan Camp during the week commencing the 14th March to coincide with the CARES Conference in Glasgow. Fiona Davidson and William Levack would be available for this visit.

## **8. CDT Board**

### a) Election of Chair

It was agreed to arrange a roster of chair persons to chair board meetings, whilst continuing with efforts to recruit additional members to the Board including someone who may become the Board Chair. Andrew Reid requested to provide information about the relevant statutory requirements, and to make up a roster of people willing to act as Board meeting chair, after checking with Board members about their willingness to take on that function.

### b) Board structure

It was agreed that Board members would supply Andrew Reid with comments on the draft board structure, which had been circulated, and that a summary of those comments would be prepared in advance of Board discussion at some future date.

### c) Recruitment to Board and Working Groups

It was agreed that finding additional voluntary support to assist the work in making funding applications was crucial. It was suggested that the Project Planning and Fundraising Group might invite certain other people to join existing members – Bob Hughes, Sharon Rice-Jones, Christian Campbell, Andy Heming, Naomi Clarke and Andrew Reid. This group should consider the potential for grant funding from “Grants for Community Led Activity” one of the Big Lottery funding streams.

## **9. Finance**

### a) Update

### b)

Bob Hughes reported that the Tudor Trust had agreed to:

1. Write-off the remaining £55,000 of the first loan of £100,000 - including accrued interest on the remaining part of the loan due June 2016; and
2. Defer repayment of the second loan of £100,000 until 2021 (from 2017) with no pressure to repay the loan even then. The interest payable at 3% over base is below commercial rates for an unsecured facility.

### c) Independent assessment

Bob Hughes noted that the major funding applications would require to outline the current financial position of the Trust and its financial plans. An independent assessment of these financial plans would strengthen the case for grant funding. The current evaluation process underway with the Heritage Lottery Fund in relation to the self catering development would provide one source of independent assessment. Bob recommended that the Board seek a second independent evaluation through Just Enterprise, a charitable body supporting third sector organisations, and this was agreed by the Board.

d) Major Funders' Meeting

Bob Hughes reported on the intention to invite attendance a funders' meeting from representatives of: the Scottish Government or Government Minister, Dr Aileen McLeod; Fraser McGowan, Investment Team Leader, in the Perth & Kinross Council Environment Department; and the Scottish Land Fund. It was hoped to tie this in with the independent assessments of the CDT budget and financial plans.

e) Debtors

Bob Hughes reported on the position concerning debtors at Cultybraggan Camp. In relation to some of the serious debts, and certain debtors who had reacted with some hostility to his work, it was agreed to pursue the engagement of a debt collection agency. The Board expressed its appreciation of the work of Bob Hughes both in this area and rolling out developments in service charges.

## **9. Cultybraggan Self Catering Development**

a) Heritage Lottery Fund – Stage Two Assessment (Business Plan, financial model)

The HLF stage two assessment meeting, following the submission of the Business Plan, design details and other background information, is due on 28 January, and will be attended by Bob Hughes and Ann Petrie. This is designed for HLF to examine the proposed project in more detail, including its finances. Andrew Reid suggested that the Business Plan submitted no more fully reflects the Trust views of the need to appeal to a broad range of potential users of the development, that the design has changed in the direction proposed in the consultation process, that there are still issues with the methodology adopted in the financial projections, and that questions are now arising because of the substantially increased capital requirements of units - no longer bunkhouse style but designed at four-star standard for couples, families and groups - capital estimates have risen by £290,000. With the consultants reporting only a limited funding now available for their work, the CDT Board will need to review future work. It was agreed Chris Palmer should discuss appointments/fees with Ray McMaster.

b) Society Rules

It was noted that when a meeting is called, possibly in mid-February, to formally establish the new Society, the opportunity may be taken to pursue the changes sought by the CDT Board to the draft Rules of the Society.

c) Draft Partnership Agreement

The final proposed terms of the Partnership Agreement between CDT and CBS were not needed for the Stage 2 process with HLF. It was agreed that to finalise the CDT views about the proposals within a process of work that will conclude with CDT and CBS discussions and agreement.

d) Society Board

The Board of the new Society would be elected at its inaugural meeting. It was agreed that the CDT Board should prepare for making its three nominations to the CBS Board. In agreeing to have his name forward, Bob Hughes indicated that it was important to have continuity from the current Planning Group and he therefore hoped for the continued involvement of Fiona Davidson and Andrew Reid, at least for a period. Interest in joining the CBS Board was also expressed by Christian Campbell and Blair Urquhart.

## **10. Staffing Matters**

### **a) Office and Systems Review**

A review of the CDT administrative systems for filing and computerised communications and data holding had been established with staff assessing systems and proposing developments. A meeting would be convened with volunteers to assist with finalising the review, and to support the implementation of review conclusions

### **b) Staff update**

All staff had been informed of the conclusions reached in the 11 January Board meeting as related to their future employment and work location.

### **c) Volunteer support**

There would be a need for substantial volunteer support with the deletion of the Administrative and Communications Officer post. This would also be considered in the office review.

## **11. Estate Management**

### **a) Estate Management Working Group**

The Estate Management Group would make the necessary arrangements to provide an office within huts three and four at Cultybraggan Camp and for the move there from the present Comrie premises. It was also reported that the hut 15 renovations are progressing well.

### **b) Grazing Let on Hill Land**

The Board agreed to the extension of the grazing let on the hill land.

### **c) Birch Tapping trials**

The Board agreed to the trialling of Birch Tapping on the hill land. This would bring some financial benefits to the Trust, both within the trialling stage and if long-term work resulted. Sharon Rice-Jones said that there might be grant funding available to support this, and it was agreed that Derek Robertson should be asked to speak to Sharon if he wanted to know more about this possibility.

## **12. Sports/Events**

### **a) Strategy Update**

Sharon Rice-Jones indicated that the legacy funding for planning village developments was to be progressed through a consultancy service.

### **b) Events**

The proposed event involving S&T vintage and classic motorcycle rally group on 5/6/7 August was supported by the Board. The Board also noted other booked events: May – Hands-On History; June 3/4 – Paranormal Tour; June 12 – Strathearn Marathon.

Concern was raised about event clashes with other camp activities. It was agreed that Andrew Reid should pick up the issue of the provision of information about the Google drive calendar.

## **13. Any Other Business - Item in Confidential Minutes**

## **14. CDT Board dates for 2016**

29 February; 28 March; 25 April; 30 May; 27 June; 25 July; 29 August;  
26 September; 31 October; 28 November; 19 December.

## **15. Date of Next Meeting – 29 February 2016**