

Comrie Development Trust

Board Meeting

Monday 29 February 2016, CDT office, 7:30pm

MINUTES

Meeting arrangements:

Chair: Chris Palmer

Minutes: Fiona Davidson

Future chairing roster noted: March – WL; April – SR-J; May – BU; June – RH; July – AR

Future minute taking roster noted: March – SR-J; April – BU; May – RH; June – CP; July FD

1. Attending

Board Membership: Members welcomed Mark to the Board. He summarised his work experiences.

Present: Helen Buchan; Christian Campbell; Fiona Davidson; Bob Hughes; William Levack; Mark Lynch; Chris Palmer; Andrew Reid; Blair Urquhart

Apologies: Sharon Rice-Jones; David Robertson

2. New Trust Members

Full Members:

Anna Blackie; Lorna Chapman; Emma Dalrymple; James Donaldson; Cristy Gilbert; Elinor Green; Alison Inglis; Roddy MacDonald; Joseph McRitchie; Mark Riddell; Pauline Toole; Mairi Urquhart; Lottie Van Grieken;

Associate Members:

Louise Scott; James Donald McLeod; Iain Banks; Kathleen Gibson-Kelly; Maureen Gibson-Kelly; Alison Craig

3. Minutes of Board Meeting 25.1.16 - Approved

4. Declarations of Interest – None

It was agreed that there is a need to establish whether share ownership in the Cultybraggan Heritage Self Catering Society requires formal declaration by CDT Board members and what implications there are for CDT decision-making.

5. Decisions by e-mail - co-option of Mark Lynch as Board member approved by e-mail.

6. Matters arising from the minutes of 25.1.16

a) ROC Bunker

Confirmation given that a letter had been sent to Mark Deadman, owner of the UKMWO Bunker, copied to his solicitors and his agents, Rettie, noting the CDT right of pre-emption and from the original sale disposition that CDT must be informed of any sale price accepted by Mr Deadman, with CDT given 21 days to match the offer. It was also noted that there had been a response through Joanna Tinson, Sales and Marketing Assistant of Rettie & Co indicating that Mark Deadman would be interested in an offer directly by CDT in the immediate future. It was confirmed that CDT would not make an early offer, but would consider the position if an offer came from elsewhere, and that the Board is aware of potential offers from certain CDT members.

- b) Community Council – representation and joint working proposals for 7 April

Board members, who expressed an intention to attend the Community Council meeting on 7 April, were: Helen Buchan; Christian Campbell; Fiona Davidson; Bob Hughes; William Levack; Chris Palmer; Blair Urquhart

- c) Sandra McRitchie - CDT meeting attendance

It was agreed to invite Sandra McRitchie, Community Council Chair, to the next CDT Board meeting.

7. Communications/Correspondence

- a) Community Land Scotland

Bob Hughes reported on a good visit, involving Emma Magrett and Andrew Reid, by the Community Land Scotland Chair, Lorne MacLeod, and Development Manager, Linsay Chalmers. They had taken away a good impression of developments to date and plans for Cultybraggan Camp,

- b) Fundraising Regulation in Scotland - Consultation

It was decided that CDT does not have the capacity currently to respond to this consultation report.

The PKC Main Issues Report out for consultation to revise the Local Development Plan proposes that Cultybraggan Camp should become a Simplified Planning Zone to encourage business and commercial development there. It was agreed to consult Ray McMaster, who has previously carried out work on this, and to take the CDT response forward through the Estate Management Group, with Board approval by e-mail as necessary.

8. CDT Board

- a) Recruitment - Board Chair/Members and Working Groups

The hope was expressed that the Repairing Lease scheme would draw in volunteers. It was agreed to seek volunteers through CDT website and contacting Community Council and other local groups to explain CDT functions and activities.

9. Finance

- a) Assets and budget estimates

Bob Hughes reported that at 31.1.16 CDT had cash assets of £60,386, consisting of £43,093 of unrestricted funds and £18,293 of restricted funds. Taking into account projected income and expenditure for February and March, the unrestricted current assets projected for 31.3.16 was £24,858, not including the cost of moving and setting up the CDT office at Cultybraggan.

b) Transitional Funding

Transitional funding was being sought to cover the projected CDT deficit, reducing over a five-year period, through a Big Lottery Medium Grant for Community Led Activity. The application result was anticipated in mid-April. Other grant sources required exploration and applications.

c) Roseanna Cunningham

Bob Hughes and Andrew Reid had a very constructive meeting with Roseanna Cunningham MSP, who had agreed to communicate with Scottish Government Cabinet Secretaries about the CDT financial position, and also with Tasmina Ahmed Sheikh MP about the potential for UK government support and for parliamentary cover during the pre-election period when there would be no MSP.

d) Energy Savings Trust

There had been a very productive meeting with Ken Brady of EST, along with a technical assistant, who had carried out a technical work at the camp, and discussed the financial position, and the potential to make the budget related to the biomass boiler cost neutral. They had also suggested merit in exploring the involvement of Andrew Bissett in finding creative uses for the unused heat.

e) Just Enterprise

Following an application for consultancy assistance to provide an independent evaluation of the Trust's current financial structure and financial management and of its 10 year budget projections, Just Enterprise was providing five days of free consultancy time and would be providing a full report at the end of March.

f) Procurement Policy

Comments were being sought on a draft CDT Procurement Policy and a decision by e-mail might be requested on the final draft.

g) Major Funders – Strategic Partnerships.

It was suggested, against the scale of funding required to deliver the CDT's 10 year strategy, that there would be merit in considering establishing strategic partnerships with major funders.

Bob Hughes noted that meetings had been arranged with Triodos and Social Investment Scotland to further explore the funding potential from those two sources.

9. Cultybraggan Self Catering Development

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

The assessment meeting in February attended by Bob Hughes, Ann Petrie, Will Reid and the architectural, marketing and financial consultants, had identified a range of issues which required further work, but that this could not be completed the initial deadline – the end of February – and therefore the further deadline being pursued was now the end of May. This would put back the renovation work and opening time for the project into 2018.

b) Funding Requirements – Capital Shortfall – Project Manager – Camp Infrastructure

The target market revised from bunkhouse to four-star/family had increased estimated refurbishment capital costs by £200k. In addition, funding would be needed for a Project Manager and for upgrading camp infrastructure (sewage and electricity), all being pursued.

c) SKS Market Study and Financial Modelling

There were concerns about the work carried out by SKS on a market study and financial modelling, with the final reports and financial projections still seeming to be inappropriately influenced by data concerning the bunkhouse model. Discussions were under way with SKS to secure occupancy and cost information about self catering accommodation.

d) Planning Application

The planning application for the self-catering development had been submitted to Perth & Kinross Council will hold

e) Society Annual Meeting and Management Committee

At the first CHSC Annual Meeting, eight shareholders had been elected to its Management Committee. Of those, two were also CDT Board members. It was agreed that one of those two, Blair Urquhart, would take one of the three CDT Board places on the Management Committee, along with Bob Hughes and Helen Buchan.

f) Society Rules

The decisions made at the Society Shareholder's Annual Meeting had been to approve the first set of amendments to the Society Rules proposed by the CDT Board, with the second set of amendments not reaching the required two thirds majority.

g) Partnership Agreement

A Partnership Agreement would be required between CDT and CHSC.

h) Lease Agreement

Work was being pursued by Ray McMaster concerning the lease agreement between the CDT and CHSC. The terms required to be agreed between the organisation as part of the HLF fund application process.

i) CDT Administrative Support

The CDT Board would seek to respond positively to any request for admin support from the CHSC Management Committee.

10.

Staffing Matters

a) Office move

The Estate Management Working Group is co-ordinating the office move to Cultybraggan Hut 3 to take place in the last week of March. Barclay Carmichael may be able to provide filing cabinets.

b) Office and Systems Review

The review of office systems and administrative arrangements is progressing. Andy Heming (Finance Officer) has been working with Jack Birrell on providing the financial system which would provide a more integrated approach. The staff group are working with Neil Rodan on e-mail and other communication systems and electronic records, and with Fionna Weaver on the paper records, for which the staff group are producing an index. Fionna is also working with Katie Malloy on all of the administrative systems, including reception procedures, which volunteers will need to be organised to carry out from April. Fiona Weaver will also work with Helen Buchan on volunteer arrangements, including recruitment, training and coordination. The new arrangements will need to include work on communications to maintain the CDT website and continue with member e-bulletins to maintain continuity of contact with the community. A recruitment process for office volunteers is urgently required.

11. Estate Management

a) Hut 46 – potential for bunkhouse use

Blair Urquhart agreed to prepare costed proposal for use of Hut 46 as bunkhouse accommodation for volunteers and other groups for the period until the hut is required for longer term heritage purposes.

b) Xchange Scotland - residential workspace for unit 67

A board member raised concerns about the suitability of Exchange Scotland to be part of the R&L scheme and requested a meeting with Exchange Scotland - Naomi to be requested to arrange a visit by the company to discuss their proposals with interested Board members.

c) Protocol for Consulting CHG

The draft protocol for consulting Comrie Heritage Group about development proposals by hut and other camp users is to be further developed before final approval.

d) Disclosure Scotland

The question has arisen about whether CDT staff and camp volunteers require disclosure checks. The view from members of the Estate Management Group was that this was not necessary, although required by various groups using camp huts and other facilities.

e) Data Protection Registration

The Estate Management Group will investigate whether CDT requires to register under data protection legislation, following the installation of security cameras at the camp.

f) Hut 1

Questions were raised about the way that Hut 1 was used by the Ramblers Association.

It was noted Hut 1 has been found closed on numerous occasions. William Levack will pursue this.

12. Events

a) Calendar

It was noted that work is underway to arrange permissions to make entries to the events calendar, and to make the calendar publicly available on the CDT website

b) Car Boot Sales

Questions were raised about the arrangements being made for car boot sales on certain weekends at the camp. Reassurance was provided about the parking and other arrangements and the payments being made to CDT for these events. It was agreed that Car Boot Sales should be accepted on a trial basis.

13. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

14. Date of Next Meeting – 21 March 2016