

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE HIGHLAND SENIOR CITIZENS NETWORK HELD AT INSHES CHURCH,  
INVERNESS AND VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 30 JANUARY 2023 AT 10:00**

**Present:** Ian McNamara, Chair  
Isla Cuthbert  
David Hannah  
Robert Kay  
Ann McKay  
Donalda Mackenzie  
Brenda Nicolson (Zoom)  
Joan Philip  
Rob Polson (Zoom)  
Irene Robertson

**In**

**Attendance:** Jo Cowan, Coordinator (Zoom)  
Anne McDonald, Coordinator  
Councillor Isabel MacKenzie  
James Turner, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)

**Apologies** – Councillor Bill Boyd, Brian Devlin, Bet McAllister, Lesley McDade and Councillor Thomas MacLennan

**1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were as noted above.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There were none declared.

**3 NEW MEMBERS**

The Board approved the one new individual application received.

**4 NEW TRUSTEES**

There were no new Trustees. The Board noted that due to other commitments Chris Grant had tendered his resignation on 7 January 2023.

**5 MINUTE OF 28 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Minute of 28 November 2022 was approved.

Proposer: Isla Cuthbert  
Seconder: David Hannah

**6 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Chair was pleased to introduce James Turner, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) who outlined the work that HIE did, primarily with businesses but also with communities and social enterprises, across the Highlands and Islands. He gave details of the range of support services HIE could offer to community organisations, referring in particular to the Support for Communities Framework which provided community led organisations with access to expert advice and practical support for specific areas such as project development and strategic and financial planning. He emphasised the importance of strong governance and succession planning for organisations. It was also important for organisations to identify any gaps in their trustees' skills and experience, and to recognise where a risk existed and take action to mitigate the

risk. The difficulties faced by organisations in securing funding, particularly post-Covid, were acknowledged, bids for grants from both the private and public sector being hugely oversubscribed. To assist with their funding applications, organisations should have a clear strategy reflecting their work plans, targets and values, and be able to demonstrate that the work they were doing was effective in meeting their aims.

Thanking Mr Turner for his informative presentation, the Chair welcomed the opportunity to further explore ways in which HIE might be able to support HSCN.

## **7 MATTERS ARISING**

### **(a) Review of Policies**

Isla reported on progress with the review of HSCN's policies, most of which had now been updated. Robert undertook to review the policies on a regular, rolling basis to ensure they were kept up to date and amended as necessary. It was also agreed to introduce a Complaints Register and a Risk Register. A system would need to be developed to allow trustees and employees to access all these documents online; further discussion would take place on the procedure to be implemented. Work was underway to update the Employee Handbook, and it was also intended to produce a Trustee Handbook.

## **8 NEWS-SHEET**

The next news-sheet would be issued at the end of March 2023. Thereafter the Board would review the position and make a decision on whether to revert to a quarterly edition.

## **9 THREE YEAR WORK PLAN 2022 - 2025**

Robert was exploring with the University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI) the potential for a student placement with HSCN to undertake a specific project involving, for example, HSCN's website, digital engagement or the development of a marketing plan.

## **10 OLDER PEOPLE'S CHAMPIONS – ISSUES TO DISCUSS**

### **(a) Road Gritting**

For the Board's information Councillor Mackenzie outlined the Highland Council's winter maintenance schedule. It was acknowledged that the Council had finite resources and therefore had to prioritise certain routes, other routes being treated as resources permitted. Local communities could play an important role, with assistance from the Council, in gritting and clearing pavements and pathways of snow and ice, helping vulnerable neighbours where necessary. A concern was also raised about people in remote and rural areas not receiving home care because bad road conditions made it impossible for their carers to reach them. A proposal was put forward that HSCN consider a winter preparedness initiative to encourage communities to be ready to deal with winter weather. It was agreed to discuss the issue further at a future (August or September) Board meeting, and to include an article in the news-sheet. Involving the relevant authorities and organisations in discussions was also important to draw on their experience and expertise to address the issues highlighted.

## **11 COORDINATORS REPORT**

Anne and Jo reported on their activity during December and January, detailing their meetings with a range of organisations and updating on progress with various projects and initiatives including the Truacanta project, the Dementia Friendly initiative and Self Directed Support.

## **12 MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Reports were received from Trustees on meetings attended as follows:

- Joint Monitoring Committee 18 January 2023 (Chair).
- Trading Standards (Chair, Joan and Robert).
- NHS Engagement 20 January 2023 (Chair, Anne and Jo)
- Highland Health and Social Care Partnership – Strategic Planning Group 23 January 2023 (Chair).
- End of Life Care Together 25 January 2023 (Chair).

- Health and Wellbeing Forum 24 January 2023 (Jo).
- Age Scotland Expert Friends 25 January 2023 (Chair).

### **13 COMMUNICATIONS GROUP**

The Board noted the circulated minute of meeting held on 16 January 2023. The main topic discussed was the review of HSCN's policies and the production of both an Employee and a Trustee Handbook.

### **14 HSCN ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023**

It was proposed that the title for this year's conference would be "We need to talk about.....", a potential topic being scams/scams awareness.

### **15 FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Board received and noted the circulated financial statements for November and December 2022.

### **16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **(a) Great Wilderness Challenge**

The Chair informed the Board that the event would be held on 12 August 2023.

#### **(b) Reports from Trustees**

David reported on the position with regard to foot care provision in East Sutherland. Following the resignation of the practitioner in that area, the Sutherland Care Forum was no longer able to offer its free foot care service.

### **17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Board meeting will be held at Inshes Church, Inverness on Monday 30 January 2023. The Zoom facility will be available for members who cannot attend in person.

Following the meeting the Trustees discussed the Coordinators' annual leave entitlement, currently 28 days (plus 2 public holidays at Christmas and New Year). As both Coordinators had been in post for more than 5 years, the Board agreed that an increase of 2 days would be appropriate, bringing their annual leave entitlement to 30 days. It was also agreed that their leave year would run from 1 January – 31 December.

New employees' annual leave entitlement would start at 28 days, increasing to 30 days after 5 years in post.