

Lairg & District Community Initiatives Minutes from Board Meeting held on 24 Nov 2020

Present: Robert Johnstone (RJ), Kaye Hurrion (KH), Norman McLeod, Annette Parrott (AP), Chris Powell (CP), Kirstin Langlois (KL) Project Officer

Apologies: Rosie Reid,

Agenda items	Action
<p>1. Approval of Minutes</p> <p>The minutes from the meeting on the 5th March 2020, were approved by AP and seconded by RJ.</p> <p>The minutes from the meeting held on 29th October 2020 were approved by KH and seconded by RJ.</p>	
<p>2. Care and Wellbeing</p> <p>RJ reported that he had attended a Zoom meeting with Susan Clark and with Morag from Albyn Housing. Albyn still wants to confirm who owns the car park – it is believed that it belongs to the Highland Council. Albyn had compared the units in Lairg with those in Nairn. Morag and Susan will meet to look at costs. They are trying to find out from the Surveyor how he got to the original cost of the land – how did he get that figure and will he share that with us? Is the cost inflated based on the evaluation of the land? There is a follow up meeting planned for the 17th Dec. Morag is still hopeful to progress with the project and they are going to make the other parties aware (e.g. City Deal Funders) to ask if those funds can be reserved.</p> <p>NM asked whether an announcement should be made to the public to give an update that planning permission has been granted, there was discussion between the directors, but it was felt that it was best to wait until the partners could be confirmed.</p>	Susan
<p>3. Magazine</p> <p>KH reported that she is looking into funding over the next few weeks, but the magazine will be moving to a monthly publication in the new year.</p>	KH
<p>4. Joint Funding Application with KoSDT</p> <p>The application has been submitted and the panel should be meeting in the next few weeks.</p>	

<p>5. Station Path</p> <p>KL reported that the application to the Sustrans Places for Everyone Fund was submitted on the 6th November. The programme has received more bids than they have funding for in 2020/21 – so it could be very competitive.</p> <p>If LDCI is successful in receiving funding - the total budget is estimated at £366,269 of which we will be requesting 70% - £269,185 from Sustrans, which will mean that we will have to raise £97,083 of match funding.</p> <p>There was a discussion about where to look for match funding. KL said that she has a couple of funds (Scotrail cycle fund and the Sport Scotland Cycling Facilities fund) that she hopes to apply to but she said she would wait the outcome of the Sustrans application first. KH asked the directors to think about trust funds as there will also be applications for the Care and wellbeing project to think about.</p>	
<p>6. Church Hill Wood</p> <p>KL reported that she is in the process of writing the funding application just now to the Lairg Windfarm fund for the Signage – so that should be submitted shortly.</p> <p>KH added that she and RJ have had discussions with Sarah Forrest from Lairg & District Learning Centre. They have funding from to put up an outdoor covered workshop space and are hoping to locate it in Church Hill Wood. This would tie in nicely with the ideas that had been in the report that KoSDT had produced – to generate more community engagement within the wood. The next step is to walk through the wood with Sarah to agree the best location.</p>	<p>KL</p> <p>KH / RJ</p>
<p>7. Aires</p> <p>RJ spoke about how there have been problems with Camper vans emptying waste in the area throughout the summer, and discussed the possibility of developing an Aires (serviced site for Camper Vans) on the LDCI land at Ferrycroft because there are already services going to the football pavillion (water, electricity), so it shouldn't be too costly to take the services across. He has approached Andrew Mackay from the Community Council who is supportive of the idea, and will hopefully inform councillors Linda Munro. He has asked KoSDT to do a scoping document, as they have done for a site at Bonar Bridge. They should have something produced by the end of February, and this has been costed at seven days work. KH is to check with David Watson how many days LDCI still has owed. A couple of board members had reservations about the actual site location. NM mentioned that the Highland Council seems to be supportive of developing tourism infrastructure. RJ added that they are looking for landowners to offer land.</p>	
<p>8. Coach House</p> <p>RJ spoke about how the Coach House needs to be tidied and made safe – especially the windows. KoSDT have been asked to produce a site survey scoping document which should be completed by the end of November, which will</p>	

<p>hopefully come up with more options/ideas for the space on what it could be used for. This will be forwarded on and hopefully discussed further at the next meeting.</p>	<p>RJ</p>
<p>9. Helping Hands Fund:</p> <p>KL reported that in the first round of the Helping Hand Fund – people just had to say that they had been affected by Covid, but following discussions with CAB – for this second round of funding from Foundation Scotland - we have introduced the same criteria that KoSDT uses in their hardship fund to ensure that we are giving the grants to the people who need it the most. This means that CAB now checks that they are receiving benefits and their bank account is checked too.</p> <p>In this new round of funding from the Rosehall fund we have had 5 enquiries – but so far we have only granted one of the applications. Two of these applications have been from people from Altnaharra. Jim Johnston – the community councillor for Altnaharra has been informed –and he was going to raise it at their CC meeting. These are pending.</p> <p>1 enquiry from Lairg – has been recommended for a grant and this is being processed. AWARDED 1 enquiry from Lairg – pending 1 enquiry from Lairg – rejected as they have already received a grant in May through the KoSDT Hardship fund.</p> <p>KH spoke about the Helping Hands fund and about how it might move forward – whether it should be expanded to allow white goods.</p>	
<p>10. Bookkeeping and Accounts</p> <p>RJ explained that that the learning centre had been doing the bookkeeping, but that they are unable to continue this service. Mackay & Co will do this in the interim until the next financial year. After that we will perhaps try to employ a local bookkeeper. The audited accounts have been circulated. RJ explained that LDCI's Total Funds available on 31.03.20 as stated in the audited accounts is: £222,590 broken down as follows:</p> <p>Unrestricted funds £205,721* Restricted funds £16,869</p> <p>*£158,239 worth of the unrestricted funds are Tangible fixed assets which is tied up in the value of LDCI's land for the 'Well-being project'.</p> <p>Therefore £205,721 minus £158,239 equals £47,482 of unrestricted funds (cash). However, the majority of this money has also been ring fenced for ongoing projects which have been broken down in our 2020/21 budget as follows: Contractors fees: £8,081, Well-being fund: £24,453, Winterfest event: £4,000, Office running costs: £6,200. This leaves £4,748 remaining in our budget as Reserves.</p> <p>The directors were asked if they had any questions. No one did so they will be presented at the AGM.</p>	
<p>11. AGM 2nd December 2020</p> <p>KL will send Zoom link. The Community Council have been asked to join.</p>	

<p>12. A.O.B.</p> <p>KH is in the process of applying to the Robertson Trust for the £6000 running costs and is in dialogue with them. However, the criteria for this funding is very poverty driven. The Helping Hands fund fits – but it might not be enough to be successful. If this is not successful LDCI needs to think about which Trusts to apply to for this.</p>	

Close of meeting