

**Lairg & District Community Initiatives  
Minutes from Board Meeting  
15<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

Present: Kaye Hurrion (KH), Robert Johnstone (RJ), Annette Parrott (AP), CM), Kirstin Langlois (KL) Project Officer. Also present for Items 1 & 2, Louise Skinner (LS). Ashley Hinshaw (AH), Scott McRae (SM).

Apologies: Norman McLeod, Alison Magee, Dr Rosie Reid

<b>Agenda items</b>	<b>Action</b>
<p><b>1. Approval of Minutes/ Matters arising not on the Agenda</b></p> <p>The minutes from the meeting on the 2021, were approved by RJ and seconded by AP after the following <u>matters arising</u> were noted:</p> <p><b>Website</b> RJ asked if KL had had a chance to look at website providers yet. KL said not yet as she has prioritised other work which has had deadlines, so it is on a to do list.</p>	KL
<p><b>2. Ferrycroft Playpark</b></p> <p>KH welcomed LS, AH and SM who have joined the new umbrella group to organise the refurbishment of the Ferrycroft playpark. KH explained that this group had met Valerie Houston from KoSDT to get advice and to discuss the approach to take moving forward. LS explained that they haven't received a plan of the park from THC, and they need this to be able to approach funders and suppliers to be able to get designs drawn up. Members of the group have done recces of other playparks for inspiration.</p> <p>LS mentioned that she had spoken to parents at Golspie who had mentioned another contact within THC called Evan Sinclair.</p> <p>KH explained that the North Highland Initiative has CISP grants of £1000 which could be applied for to get started.</p> <p>KH noted that Alison Magee has offered to support this project as she has experience in Playpark developments from her work at THC.</p> <p>KH to chase Linda Munro and Phil Tomalin for plans. She will also ask Graeme Ross from HLH which part of the park is to be refurbished as there is a notice that indicates that it might be getting repaired.</p> <p>When the plans are received LS &amp; playpark committee to work out how much funding will be required.</p>	KH           Playpark committee

<p>RJ raised the issue of liability – LDCI needs to take advice on how we can avoid liability further down the line if the equipment fails or causes injury. Who will be responsible? HLH?</p> <p>KL to ask KoSDT what was done with the Edderton Playpark. KH to ask Rory Dutton from DTAS for advice.</p>	<p>KL</p> <p>KH</p>
<p><b>3. Lairg Emergency plan</b></p> <p>The telephone tree in the plan has been updated.</p> <p>Fraser Macneil has asked if the convert socket? was put in place so a generator could be plugged in to the Community Centre directly if there was a power outage. There was a discussion whether the generator that would be be borrowed from Lairg Gala week would be able to run the whole hall.</p> <p>RJ thought that SSE would be bringing their powerful generators so it would not be needed, but he will check with Sandy Sutherland who was involved with the centre when the plan was put together.</p> <p>KH mentioned that KoSDT had asked to attach the Lairg Plan to their Resilience plan. KH felt that it was not appropriate to do so due to people’s contact details and GDPR issues, but she said that perhaps contact names could be added to represent Lairg if there was an incident that might cross the borders of the community council areas.</p> <p>It was felt that if there was such an event that meant that people from the Kyle of Sutherland area could not use their halls in the Bonar, Invershin, or Rosehall areas that it would be more appropriate for them to go to Tain as there is more capacity there.</p>	
<p><b>4. You Are Here/ Church Hill Wood signs</b></p> <p>The NHI Visitor Management signs have been signed off and are at the printers (Acorn Signs) in Inverness. We are waiting to find out when we can pick them up. Re the Church Hill Wood signs, Kirstin is still working with Marlyn Price on the completion of the final boards as Lairg Windfarm fund logo needs to be added.</p>	<p>KL</p>
<p><b>5. Aires project</b></p> <p>RJ mentioned that we have approached Scottish Water to assess the suitability of the land at Ferrycroft to see if it could be a potential site for a simple motorhome waste disposal point as there may be sewers at the Football pitch and the ground is level. Signposting people to the area may be the biggest issue.</p> <p>KL explained that Visit Scotland’s Rural Tourism Infrastructure fund has just opened for Expressions of Interest for projects being delivered between November 2021 and 31st March 2023. This is a fund designed to support projects that focus on improving the visitor experience in rural parts of Scotland that are facing damaging pressures on their infrastructure, or negative impacts on communities</p>	

<p>due to significant increases in visitor numbers. So the Aires project should fit the criteria.</p> <p>If we want to apply for funding for a Design Grant of up to £5,000, Expressions of Interest must be submitted before the 30th April 2021.</p> <p>In order to get the full £5000 – we need to show that we have match funding of the same amount.</p> <p>It is hopeful that we could get at least £1000 from NHI’s CISP to go towards that match funding.</p> <p>The deadline for Stage 2 submissions will be 1st September 2021.</p>	<p>KL</p>
<p><b>6. Care and Well Being</b></p> <p>RJ reported that he and Susan Clark had a useful meeting on 30 March 2021 with Scottish Government (SG) and Highland Council about the Care and Well-being project. The meeting had been asked for by the Scottish Government.</p> <p>In attendance were Neil Moir, Programme Coordinator for Scottish Rural Housing Fund (SG), Steven Paterson, More Homes Divisional Coordinator (SG) and John McHardy, Housing Development Manager (Highland Council).</p> <p>There were 2 parts of the Scottish Government represented - Rural Housing who channel funding into community housing and More Homes who work with Highland Council on the Highland Wide strategic housing plan.</p> <p>SG advised that they had been discussing these houses with Albyn but they had some questions including things like allocation. It was agreed that this was something to be resolved if indeed Albyn built and owned all 8 houses.</p> <p>It is clear that these houses are on the list as “wanted” by everyone but what is the issue at present is the cost as there is a benchmark for the houses as far as More Homes are concerned.</p> <p>Susan articulated her frustrations about the length of time it had taken Albyn to get anywhere on this and SG explained that Albyn were effectively building a new team so there was a bit of a learning curve ongoing.</p> <p>However, SG believe that the only way to move this forward is for Albyn to get out to tender all 8 houses and get tendered costs back so that all parties have cost certainty. At that point costs can be reviewed along with a funding package and thus work out the best way, between all parties, to fund and then own/manage the houses.</p> <p>Since the meeting Steven Paterson spoke with Colin Callum at Albyn. He advised that they are currently waiting on quotes for professional services for the project as their initial quotes were for only Albyn’s proposed 4 units and not the whole site. This process should be concluded by the end of April and the project will then go out to tender.</p> <p>Once costs have been received then Steven Paterson’s preference would be for LDCI and Albyn to determine how both organisations would like to proceed and make that proposal to the Highland Council and the Scottish Government.</p>	

<p>From the point of issue of tender this will probably be about 8 weeks before costs come back.</p> <p>Susan will contact Albyn once she has confirmation that Albyn are going to tender to set up a meeting to talk about programme, land valuation and heads of terms.</p> <p>RJ also spoke about the 3 Wind farm companies (EnergieKontor, Coriolis &amp; SSE) who want to secure access rights over the corner of land that meets Main Street with Station Road. Proposals of how much land they require have now been forwarded to Nigel Fraser but on different scale maps. RJ has instructed Nigel Fraser to have all 3 proposals highlighted on one map. This would enable us to see how much land they require and whether this would have any effect on the foundations of the Care and Well-being homes.</p> <p>LDCI would need to be conscious that the trees in this corner of the site will more than likely need to be removed and that when it comes to landscaping, in 30 years time the Wind farm companies will return to put the corner back to its original state.</p>	
<p><b>7. HHF</b></p> <p>KL reported that we have had 10 applications to the fund over the past month in response to the postcard drop. Five have been from Lairg.</p> <p>Four came from outside of Lairg CC (Lochinver, Assynt &amp; Kinlochbervie) and they were referred to the Sutherland Helping Hand Support.</p> <p>Of the six that have applied from Lairg, one has been processed (and has received a tumble dryer.) Two have gone through the interview with CAB, and CAB was waiting to receive their evidence.</p> <p>Two of the other applicants – haven't responded when they've been sent further information – perhaps they realised that they wouldn't be eligible. Another of the applicants is somebody who's received a grant within the last year but they can reapply in the summer.</p>	
<p><b>8. AOB</b></p> <p>RJ suggested arranging a litter pick, there was discussion regarding whether this is allowed at this time? AP suggested as a board six of us could do it together. KH will suggest a date.</p> <p>KH is going to ask Light up Lairg to help in a clean-up of the cemetery in lieu of using the coach house rent free.</p>	KH

Close of meeting

