

Lairg & District Community Initiatives

Minutes from Board Meeting held on 9th December 2021

Lairg Community Hall

In attendance: Kaye Hurrion (KH), Robert Johnstone (RJ), Annette Parrott (AP), Alison Magee (AM), Dr Rosie Reid (RR), Chris Powell, Kirstin Langlois (Project Officer) KL,

Apologies: Iain Thompson (Lairg CC Chairperson)

Item	Action
<p>1. Approve Minutes/ Matters arising that are not on the agenda.</p> <p>The minutes were proposed by RJ and seconded by AM.</p>	
<p>2. Ferrycroft Play Park</p> <p>AM reported that she had followed Angela Platts' advice and had contacted Bill Dunlop at the Highland Council, who had put her in touch with John Mackay (Head of Amenity) who was unable to say whether HLH would take on the maintenance of Ferrycroft playpark, however, it was normal practice for any playparks that Amenity have responsibility for that HC will take over the maintenance of equipment purchased and gifted to them, with a couple of caveats. They would need to agree the equipment being supplied including safety surfacing, and the layout of the park. As they have very limited budget to maintain the parks they would encourage the purchase of low maintenance play equipment.</p> <p>The issue with Ferrycroft is that the HC owns the land but HLH run the centre so it seems to bounce between the two.</p> <p>AM understands that £12,591 of the Scottish Government funds that was allocated to Sutherland are to be used on repairs to existing play parks. There could be a chance of SG funds being available in future years (although this is not confirmed) – if so presumably these would be distributed through COSLA over the next three or four years. There was a discussion about the Place-based Investment Fund which has been reported in the Northern Times as having £50k to go towards the ward playparks. Need to contact HC to find out if any of these funds are available for Ferrycroft, perhaps to repair the climbing frame?</p> <p>RJ mentioned that if we start thinking about other sources of funding, we should have a conversation with Fiona Morrison from SSE regarding the approximately £33K funding that is available to drawdown for a legacy project.</p> <p>The board agreed that a plan of action should be drawn up and circulated to the board, regarding sourcing equipment and funding sources. Eg. the Big Lottery and Awards for All.</p>	KL/ AM

	KL/KH
<p>3. Care and well-being/ Coach House/Solicitor:</p> <p>The Board discussed the new MOU which incorporated the amendments that were made at the November Board meeting. However, there were a couple of points that the Board have asked Susan Clark to clarify with Albyn Housing Association. Hopefully the amended MOU will be back to us before Albyn's Board meeting at the end of December.</p> <p>The Board discussed Iain McIntosh's (solicitor) comments about his opinion on the MOU and it was agreed to ask Susan Clark if she could recommend someone who has experience in this area. KH to liaise with Susan Clark.</p> <p>RJ advised that the sale of the Coach House was completed in November 2021. There are still some items inside the Coach House that will need to be moved and disposed of when the weather improves.</p>	
<p>4. Windfarm corner</p> <p>KH, RJ and Nigel Fraser (Land Agent for LDCI) met with representatives of EnergyKontor, Coriolis Energy and SSE regarding the over sail of the corner of the old SA site at the junction of Main Road/Station Road. Nigel Fraser will liaise with these companies and Albyn Housing Association regarding the works that need doing, time frames etc. Energykontor will be leading on this joint project from the Wind Farms prospective as in the proposed timetable of events they will come through first.</p> <p>Coriolis will liaise with Jackie and Sandy Allison over the Memorial Plaque.</p>	
<p>5. Helping Hands Fund</p> <p>KL reported that there have been 11 applications since we started using the Robertson Trust funds in April – not all of the payments have actually been physically made yet, because the CABS are still waiting on the evidence from 3 of those people. £1990 has actually been awarded, but if the remaining people are eligible it will mean that we have spent £2740. KL will contact the Robertson Trust to ask for an extension for the project.</p> <p>KH reported that 20 residents are currently being supported through the Community Larder deliveries. She thanked the Church of Scotland</p>	

<p>for the donation from the Harvest Festival. She explained that with numbers increasing, we may not be able to rely on KoSDT in the future so LDCI may need to look at trying to establish our own larder in Lairg. KH has emailed James Dunbar who runs Newstart Highland to see if they could be interested in partnering with LDCI to take over one of the units in the industrial estate (previously used by Blythswood) with the Larder being run from there. It is believed that HIE own the units – it could be worth visiting them to see if the space would be suitable.</p>	
<p>6. Health walk:</p> <p>KL reported that the Health Walks that started in September are still taking place once a month – with a couple of regulars who seem to really appreciate the company and being able to walk with others - there are not huge numbers yet but it is probably the most difficult time of the year to attract people outside. KH has placed an order for walking poles, waterproofs, and other equipment to facilitate the walks which will be paid from the George Earl Foundation funding.</p>	
<p>7. Church Hill woods improvements / Shelter:</p> <p>KL has submitted an application to the HC Nature Restoration fund requesting £ 6071 – this would match the £3500 of match funding received from the COMMUNITIES RECOVERY FUND 2. If this application isn't successful we will need to apply to the Lairg Windfarm Fund for the balance as the CRF funds need to be spent by the end of March.</p>	
<p>8. War Memorial Centenary:</p> <p>RJ explained that the war memorial will be 100 years old on 30th of September. Sheila Stewart the Deputy Lieutenant has asked if LDCI could get involved in coordinating a way to celebrate this. KH has mentioned this at the last Lairg CC meeting. We hope to engage with the Learning Centre, History Society, Primary School, Light Up Lairg etc. We are just waiting to hear back from David Hannah of the British Legion. The directors confirmed they were happy to participate.</p>	
<p>9. Aires Project</p> <p>KH discussed the Aire and confirmed that the project has been placed on the shelf for the moment. There is no suitable alternative location. There was a discussion about putting up signs to publicise the nearest facilities at Woodend and Falls of Shin at Ferrycroft during the summer season. (Signs had been placed at the public toilets previously.</p>	

<p>10. Volunteer Awards:</p> <p>KH reported that LDCI as an organisation as well as a number of individuals from the community have received awards in the SSE Volunteer awards that were held online at the end of November to thank people for helping out in their communities during the pandemic.</p>	
<p>11. Tree Planting/ The Queen's Green Canopy</p> <p>KH explained about The Queen's Green Canopy project and how LDCI will be working with a number of stakeholders to participate in a tree planting strategy for the Lairg & Kyle of Sutherland area. This may involve investigating whether the eight acres of land at Ferrycroft is suitable for planting, and possibly helping to coordinate volunteers.</p>	
<p>12. AOB</p> <p>KL mentioned that the second Sustrans application had been submitted and we will find out the outcome in January.</p>	