



A meeting of NCDC was held on: Monday, 7th September 2022, at 7:30pm, at the Ollaberry Hall

Present – Bob McGeady (RM - Chair), Alistair Williamson, Margaret Roberts. Harry Haslam, John Alex Cromarty, James Titcomb, Bill Manson

In Attendance – Charlotte Slater, Iain Davidson, Yoyo Buchet

1. Apologies – None

2. Approval of Minute – Minutes of meeting on 20th June 2022 were approved by RM and seconded by AW

3. Financial update – BM reported that all was as expected with the finances and that he would meet next week with ID/CS to firm up the budget for the year and that the updated Financial Policy should be completed in advance of setting new procedures.

Action: CS/ID to have meeting with BM to complete policy and budget

4. Hillswick shop update – JAC/CS updated the board. Contract for some staff still to be finalised. CS/ID to complete this week. It was felt that staff situation was settling and JAC wished to note that Leigha had made huge improvements to the organisation and was doing a good job.

Action: ID/CS to complete contracts

5. Nortenergy update – HH/MR reported that sales were still not at predicted level but were doing well. £1.1 – 1.2m turnover projected by year-end . There is an ongoing issue with enquiries for the English hub with people unwilling to pay delivery. Problem at Nantwich Hub with delivery cost was still being investigated with agent there looking into purchasing their own truck. Still considering building cost into kit price. Potential entry to US market is proving difficult but efforts are ongoing. Timber prices are still increasing which will mean increased kit prices. Shed is still awaiting completion certificate.

6. Growing Local Project – YB reported that latest series of cookery workshops had been very successful with good feedback from those attending. SFAD has requested that NCDC participate in Food Festival with YB giving a talk on fermenting. Due to several participants withdrawing, the planned Makers' Market at Ollaberry Hall has been postponed with an alternative date being sought for October. There has been good recent progress with the app and CS has organised an event at Ollaberry Hall on 10/09 to gather participants for a social evening and recording of material for the app. The Peerie Polly, originally destined for Ollaberry shorefront is now going to Stucca. Recent entries for the photographic competition are being judged and will be used for a Growing Calendar. RM asked if the workplan

included seeking further funding to continue the project and, with Charlotte's help, this is the case. It is hoped to tie it in with application for well-being projects.

7. Old Urafirth School Project – CS is awaiting correspondence history on the matter from Coin Gair of Planning. Meeting with Planning Dept. had been positive and general impressions were that junction with main road would only require improved visibility. Fiona Stirling had given CS a contact for assistance with Housing Needs Analysis. Scottish Land Fund appeared to be enthusiastic about helping to fund the project. Crown Estates money may also be available. Planning Dept. have suggested a pre-application meeting to discuss.
CS to continue liaising with Planning Dept.

8. Weaving Shed – ID reported that there were difficulties in pursuing the current Creator-in-Residence's exhibition and workshops at the Gallery but alternative plans were in place and ID would continue to assist

Action: ID to continue liaising between GJ and artist

9. Matters Arising –

Mem. & Arts. – A draft document had been received from DTAS but they are about to produce an updated version. As NCDC only need this in time for Stage 2 funding, it should be okay to await this.

Climate Week – Open afternoon at Bruckland to highlight the project (25th). Could also show off the Electric Van, Charge Point and e-bikes as well as promote future plans

Action: ID to pursue

Bruckland - Security Cameras still need to be addressed
CS to liaise with MH on planning application for new set-up
Board agreed to purchase current infrastructure from Nortenergy
Despite not yet being advertised, word was out about the wood from Windfarms, with several enquiries being received

Newsletter – CS aims to issue on 09/09/2022

Action CS to issue newsletter, liaise with Maree (after annual leave?)

11. AOCB – HH raised 2 topics: Potential for p/t handyman at Bruckland for various projects and potential purchase of former crab factory at Ronas Voe.

- a) Handyman – HH felt there was potential for a p/t position to carry out several of the projects which were being considered, e.g. a repair service, using the windfarm wood to create items for sale, assist with energy efficiency projects. This led to considerable discussion and an expansion of ideas, including plastic recycling, woodchip shredder, briquette production. All agreed that a formal job-specification would need to be drawn up

Action: HH to work on Job Spec

- b) Crab Factory – HH reported on a visit to the former Crab Factory and meeting with current owner who was keen to sell. Some directors noted that it was available, but at a substantial cost. HH reported that owner would be willing to consider a rent-to-buy option. The buildings were in very good condition and of high quality. It was believed that it would only require substantial cleaning to be ready for use. HH suggested that multiple small, local businesses could be operated from there. CS reported that 2 people had already enquired about renting a space somewhere in Northmavine. MR reminded the board that such a project would require a full business plan which, in turn, would require community consultation. The significant discussions which

followed raised many points including: so far, no-one had found an idea that could make the site pay, it was worth considering the potential of multiple businesses leasing units, hydroponic production could allow year-round provision of produce, renewable energy could be utilised on a relatively large scale. There was a degree of scepticism among directors but agreement to look in to the potential. It was also agreed that the first steps would need to be community consultation then a business plan.

Action: HH to progress the idea

Well-Being – CS reported that she has a meeting coming up with a view to seeking funding which could link the Growing Local project with a repair café and community transportation

Community Fridge – We now have fridges and 2 volunteers to oversee the project

Brae: The Place – CS reported that NCDC staff were meeting with the consultants the next day, to exchange ideas

Stucca site – BM sought approval to progress with seeking outline Planning permission for the site. This was approved

Action: BM/CS to progress

Accounts – BM informed board that he would contact A9 to try to get the audit carried out a little sooner this year

Action: A9 to be contacted

12. Date of Next Meeting – 24th October 2022

Meeting ended: 20:45