



A meeting of NCDC was held on: Wednesday, 26th October 2022, at 7:30pm, at the Ollaberry Hall

Present – Bob McGeady (RM - Chair), Margaret Roberts. Harry Haslam, John Alex Cromarty

In Attendance – Charlotte Slater, Iain Davidson, Yoyo Buchet, Mandy Hunter

1. Apologies – Alistair Williamson, Bill Manson (WM)

2. Approval of Minute – Minutes of meeting on 7th September 2022 were approved by MR after she had requested an amendment to Item 5 referring to “potential for the US market” and was seconded by

Action: ID to amend Item 5 in September minutes

3. Financial update – Due to WM’s absence from the meeting, an up to date summary of the Budget sheet was shown to members and a message was passed on from WM that he would email directors next day regarding his plans for banking

Action: WM to email

4. Salary and Contracts – It was confirmed that ID’s contract was to continue on from initial 2 years which had expired. It was agreed to hold over review of salaries until end of meeting

5. Hillswick shop update – JAC updated the board that staffing issues appeared to be settling at the shop but a new Chair still needed to be appointed. Trading-wise, it was just about breaking even year to date and Leigha was gaining confidence in her role. ID reported that he was going this week to assist Leigha with payroll and was happy to continue doing so as long as was necessary

6. Weaving Shed update – ID reported that the Artist Residency during August and September had proved difficult to manage with an apparent clash between the Artist and GJ. While there were faults on both sides, GJ’s decision to have friends staying in the Gallery during the residency and excessive noise from his flat directly above appeared to be among the main problems. ID also reported that he and GJ were going to be reviewing the Residency program, the website, the accommodation and the future uses of the Gallery over the winter period.

7. Nortenergy Update – MR reported that margins were being squeezed due to increasing costs and MH was currently working on a price increase. MR also reported that they were showing a £100K profit, year to date. HH reported that the operators of the Nantwich Hub had recently bought a Hi-Ab which would roughly halve their delivery costs. This had

received positive feedback from potential customers. Completion certificate for shed had still not been issued as a disabled parking space was required but this was progressing. Sales for the year 2022_23 were projected at £1.3m. Supply of materials was improving which should alleviate the need to over-stock on site which impacted on profits. The entire compound is required to be fenced and gated. A query was raised about the wood supply and this is expected to end in a month or so.

8. Growing Local Project – Yoyo and Mandy jointly reported on the project. They began by handing round a draft poster for the app which has been taking up a lot of their time recently. Directors were happy with the title, “Be-Nort da Grind” and they were told that some of the interviews had already taken place, with some still to be done. The next major task on the app would be editing before passing to ? for recording.

There was then considerable discussion around next steps in the overall project. With Mandy and Yoyo now halfway through their tenure, they were reviewing the past 6 months and deciding on next steps. Some of the main problems they had come up against were with siting the proposed community polycrubs at Ollaberry shore and Stucca in Hillswick. The Ollaberry one was now unlikely to go ahead as some residents did not want it sited there and a recent mailshot to Stucca residents had elicited zero response. The GL team perceived a reluctance in members of these communities to oversee a project and felt that placing a Polycrub somewhere and leaving the community to get on with it was not working, suggesting that it may be better to employ someone to create and cultivate a community growing space; invite people in the community to come along and help; sell the produce through the local shops and put surplus to the proposed community fridge, building on any success and, ideally, handing it over to volunteers once established. Directors agreed that the old Urafirth School site could be a likely site. There was considerable discussion among those present how this might work and it was noted that there were working models to learn from, such as those at Ardnamurchan and Tain in the Scottish Highlands. It was also agreed that the program of workshops and events such as the produce show should both continue and be built on. Directors were keen that, if the funding could be found, the project should continue beyond its initial 2 years and agreed that Yoyo and Mandy should produce and circulate a draft proposal for further discussion.

Action: Y/MH to work on draft proposal

9. Old Urafirth School Update – CS reported that Paul Harrington had stated that, if SLF were to fund a Housing Needs Analysis, then 3 quotes would be required. There was concern how this could be achieved before the deadline of 31/10 but one director pointed out that we could request quotes from companies outwith Shetland too. PH had also suggested that the SIC may be wrong in advising that NCDC would need to take over the maintenance of the access road but directors were of the opinion that this was to be expected.

Action: CS to obtain quotes for HNA

10. Funding Applications – With reference to Item 9 above, CS reported that she and AW had met with Fiona Robertson and she was willing to do the HNA with a quote of £4.5K. It was also noted that Crown Estates have £500,000 available in grant funding for winter activities which could be used by the local halls. CS reported that she had contacted all the hall committees with this information but had not yet received any responses.

11. Matters Arising – N/A

12. AOCB – RM proposed that last year’s voucher scheme should be repeated but doubled up with one payment in early December and another in mid-December. He also proposed

that it be expanded to be redeemed at any Northmavine business. Following discussion, it was agreed to stick to shops only and to have Phase 1 issued mid-December and Phase 2 in mid-January so that both recipients and businesses could have a boost for their Christmas supplies/businesses and another to help them through the post-festive month. Some of those present had not received Harry's proposals from previous meeting so it was agreed to send out to all

Action: Staff to prepare voucher scheme; HH to send out proposals

13. Date of Next Meeting – 30th November 2022

Meeting ended: 20:50