



**A meeting of NCDC was held on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025, in the Club Room of the Ollaberry Hall.**

**Present** – Bob McGeady, Margaret Roberts, Kelly Robertson, James Titcomb, Stephen Moore, Alistair Williamson, Bill Manson, David Brown and Craig Johnson

**Apologies:** John Alex Cromarty

**In Attendance** – Charlotte Anderson & Karlyn Garrick

The board of directors all received a small report for current projects and the trading subsidiaries, the meeting tonight is to discuss potential future projects.

Previous minutes were approved by Margaret Roberts and seconded by Alistair Williamson.

- 1. Hillswick Shop** – Stephen Moore wanted to further update the board, that there has been interest in the latest job vacancy at the shop, and they are following it through. SM said he was looking for some sort of cashflow/investment from NCDC, the shop manager Michel Tordoir has taken it on himself to put his own money into the shop so that the shop can get orders through the local wholesalers. SM said he needs to be paid back ASAP. SM will be speaking to MT about this.
- 2. RM** wants to get the meeting with Charlotte, Maree Hay (Polycrub) and other members of nortenergy. CA told the board she had a meeting with Just Enterprise earlier in the day, which proved very informative. MH has said she needs £100k of working capital. Just Enterprise said they would send over a draft memorandum to CA. MR says the way forward is a meeting with MH, NCDC and A9 about funds.

**ACTION: CA to organise meeting**

- 3. R100** – Craig Johnson updated the board that R100 is pretty much closed, and nothing will be happening in Northmavine, though he says there is new funding with Openreach. He said they can put Northmavine out to tender so Openreach applies for it, though it is still £850k, Openreach could bridge the gap but it could be up to 4 years. CJ has also contacted Shetland Broadband, who asked the SIC if they could use the mast at Sellaness, however the SIC have said no. Shetland Broadband is only looking to use the infrastructure. RM asked if Shetland Broadband would write up a report. CJ said he has asked Shetland Broadband to come up with a design which NCDC could pay for. Currently the SIC gets approximately £20k from Shetland Broadband. CJ added that NCDC would need to have a plan in the event of faults to minimise downtime.

RM thanked CJ for his contribution [email sent around directors last month]

- 4. Tourism** – the board agreed that CJ's proposal for a 'Northmavine Way' could be done. CJ has already pitched the idea to Visit Shetland in 2019 but they weren't interested, they wanted a route from Sumburgh to Unst. RM asked if this could be linked in with the tourist app that CA had received funding for in 2023. CA agreed, she has had a meeting with Ability Shetland to look at the trails and rate accessibility for those with limited mobility. CJ said we have a lot of AirBnB's in Northmavine as well as the hotel and Johnnie Notions. CJ has a map already drawn out with the route starting at Mavis Grind, the idea is to keep off the main road though dipping in where needed and stops along businesses like the Ollaberry Shop. WM asked CJ to share his map with the board when he can. CJ's emails had also mentioned the Hillswick Shop looking into better tea/coffee facilities which SM is looking at.

**ACTION: CJ to share his 'Northmavine Way'**

- 5. Renewables** – RM stated that the rent on the crab factory at Swinister would be £25-30k plus insurance. CJ has been asking around in the community as to what the building could be used for. He added that the building couldn't be built for £1m in the current financial climate. CJ suggested a survey to the community

on what the future of the building could look like. RM suggested a meeting with Michael Laurensen who owns the Crab Factory building to find out what he wants from the building.

Hydroponics could be something to look at but difficult to judge as Tesco's will always be cheaper. MR wondered if it would be a Community Asset Transfer, though there's no certainty of funding from SLF. CA said any applications to the SLF needs to be in by end of March 2025. RM queried about North Yell's industrial units. CJ added that solar panels could be placed on the roof of the building. WM agreed a survey should be put to the community. There is also Maree Hay's Twaroes water project. CJ has noticed an increase in the volume of water in the burn near to his house and that NCDC should revisit MH's project. However, the new water works currently being built will be pumping more water from Roer Water. DB asked about the land around the factory and if that would be included – this could be potential for campers, toilets, washing facilities which could coincide with the 'Northmavine Way' mentioned earlier.

**ACTION: CA to speak to Alice at NYDC**

**CA to source MH's Twaroes project**

6. **Growing Local** – MR is sceptical that businesses will not take our produce. CJ said the hotel is going through 8 large bags of tatties from the south end a week. WM thought there would be several crofts in Northmavine that used to have parks that were once upon a time rigs. MR said the hotel would require field growing, which is out with our grasp just now. CJ said he doesn't want to see the funding and the project wasted. MR is keen for Northmavine to be a self sufficient as possible. RM asked if we were looking for dormant polcrubs that could be used for growing, CJ & MR both agreed they were keen to see this happen however the two gardeners Kev & Luke have a lot on with getting the large Polycrub ready as well as the sites up at Eshaness and Stucca, with Stucca needing the most work. MR suggested asking people for surplus produce, as many local growers sometimes end up with more produce than required and only a short window for it to be used. RM suggested putting a note in the next newsletter to ask people what they are growing and add that NCDC would buy it off them if they end up with surplus produce.

**ACTION: KG to add this to the newsletter**

7. **Northmavine Lamb** - MR is Sure this was looked at when Tom Morton was working at NCDC. MR would be able to get prices from Scalloway Meat for butchery. The factory would be ideal for this as there are large chills and freezers. MR suggested Ronas Hill Lamb.
8. **Housing** – John Alex Cromarty passed on to MR that he'd been reading about 3D printing for innovation funding, could NCDC explore this? MR also said she had heard about tiny homes and if this could work for Stucca, local firm DM Joinery builds similar small chalets. RM said that they are approaching the SIC that the site is already serviced and that this would be SIC's contribution. CJ said the folk he had spoken to would either want modular homes or a serviced site they could buy. Serviced sites could be sold for £50k. CA spoke about the Orkney Development Group where all the Development Trusts in Orkney come together to discuss their projects. CA said the HIE had spoken about doing this in Shetland, but it was still yet to happen. CA set up the Shetland Development Trust Group earlier this year and they had their first meeting 2 weeks ago. Like NCDC, Fair Isle & Bressay have both been declined support from the SIC however NYDC were approved for RHIF funding. CJ spoke with councillors Emma MacDonald & Andrea Manson who have both said they don't want any part of NCDC's housing plea. WM said although the small chalets would be readily available it'll take a moment until they were in place.

**ACTION: CA to set up meeting with Councillor Andrew Hall**

**CA to set up meeting with Rosalyn Fraser who deals with Community Asset Transfers**

9. **Nortenergy** – nortenergy has offered to sell all the containers/portacabins located in the Bruckland compound to NCDC for approx. £8000 including VAT. MR says this is the book value for the items. The board agreed to buy the containers.
10. **Zappi Charger** – MR wants CA & KG to monitor the energy costs at Bruckland. CA is unsure if the solar panels are working or not. After a lengthy discussion it was thought that NCDC would need to purchase a



battery for storage for the surplus energy to go to before it goes to the grid. NCDC aren't getting any payments, but are being charged quite high.

**ACTION: CA to contract Nordri**

**11. Eshaness Lighthouse** – CA is awaiting the floor plan from Hazel Sutherland (Shetland Amenity Trust) everything else is ready to go to the planning department. CJ suggested getting joiners in to rip out the workshops and get painters in to get the building ready to be used. RM suggested the board and the community getting involved with renovations to keep costs low. CA mentioned that she had spoken to Just Enterprise about the Lighthouse coming under the Hillswick Shop which they thought would work in fine.

The date of the next meeting will be online on the 26<sup>th</sup> March as the hall is already booked. The date of the AGM is Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> March in the Hillswick Hall, the hall will be doing a Soup & Sweet.

The meeting ended at 9pm