

Assynt Development Trust Limited**Minutes Board Meeting 3:00pm Thursday 29th April 2021 Zoom Video Conference Call**

Present: Willie Jack, Nigel Goldie, Marianne Hutchison, Boyd Alexander (joined late) In Attendance: Ewen McLachlan, Adam Pellant Apologies: Sarah-Ann MacLeod Conflicts of interest None	What Decision Required?
<p>Strategy discussion</p> <p>WJ introduced a strategy discussion before the board meeting as it had been agreed at the previous meeting to discuss the strategic direction of the trust. NG feels that ADT has established a presence in Assynt but we need to look further ahead than our day to day activities to ensure that we get to our destination; ADT is now a land owner and what are our respective visions generally and for the Assynt Glebe development? EM feels that Covid has certainly got in the way over the past year, but the affordable housing development at the Glebe is a great opportunity for the trust including real economic development. AP feels that the trust needs to review its development plan and we would need to consult locally about this, maybe through an online survey. The business plan that would follow is simply a 'how-to deliver' plan. MH feels the trust needs to expand its connections and bring on new directors; she wondered if the vision document produced in 2019 by Catherine McWilliam could be of use. NG feels that the trust needs specific policies for climate action, while Assynt needs to consider the recovery from the pandemic and dealing with issues around resilience and lack of economic self sufficiency. WJ feels that the trust must obtain core funding and possibly seek to develop community benefit schemes such as renewable energy which can provide funding for local organisations. This could include working with Assynt Foundation. NG wondered whether there is a need for the chairs of all local organisations to meet again to share current business and development ideas. AP wondered whether this should tie in with the NW2045 strategy that is currently being developed. NG agreed that NW 2045 could give value to our processes to develop a route map and milestones for our journey. He feels the trust needs to create the means to generate income; compared to some groups the trust is lucky to have the Mission income and we should build on this to become self sustaining. EM advised that the NW2045 will include workshops in June and will publish the report by the Summer and to be successful it will include collaborative working and partnership. MH feels that through looking at the NW2045 report we need to zoom into what Assynt needs and wants. Whilst the directors feel that they cannot take this on at present maybe this will take place once the NW 2045 report is delivered. With that in mind AP and EM start noting down key issues at present and then revisit after publication.</p>	<p>Board EM/ AP</p>
<p>1. Minutes of Board meeting of 25th February 2021 Proposed MH Seconded NG all agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
<p>2. Matters arising (not addressed elsewhere on the agenda) None</p>	
<p>3. Climate Action</p> <p>a) Beach Cleans MH told the meeting of the Million Mile Clean challenge which is being promoted to the end of May. It was decided to promote this via FB</p> <p>b) MH discussed the next Climate Conversation – No progress on this yet as everything is on hold due to tourism reopening. WJ suggested that MH post any updates directly on to the new website.</p>	<p>MH/ EM MH</p>
<p>4. Finance & Business</p> <p>a) Accounts 2019/20 Tim Wright has been emailed and phoned but no progress has been made to date. Consequently the AGM will be delayed.</p> <p>b) Finance reports for March 2021 Reports from Edwin January to March actual figures agreed by the board.</p>	<p>WJ</p>

<p>c) Assynt Resilience Group Report WJ – the trust received a grant of £9,000 from the Communities Recovery Fund through HIE. The food larder opened for use on 26th April and MH said she felt very happy that this has been provided. EM feels that the larder is quite a radical step. The signage is still to be put up on the larder and we are waiting for those involved as volunteers to develop operating protocols. WJ said that he feels that this is one of the most important projects that the Development trust has achieved to date and it is important to publicise that it is open and the opening hours. The larder is also fully insured by ADT's policy.</p> <p>d) New website The new website will soon be up and running. EM said that he feels the preview is better than the old website. The purpose of the website includes it becoming a depository of information about the Trust and its activities and meetings.</p> <p>e) Louis Gouveia Fund There has been a joint application from two local individuals to fund travel costs of £225 associated with writing retreat and photography elements of a planned music project about the Assynt Crofters' Trust buyout of 1993. Members of the board asked that an opinion be sought from representatives of the group who used to operate the fund. It was felt that funds like the LGF need to change over time but at present the application might be outwith the remit of the fund.</p>	<p>ARG</p> <p>WJ</p> <p>AP</p>
<p>5. Development</p> <p>a) The Mission freehold acquisition Highland Council had arranged for an energy performance certificate to be produced as part of the Mission community asset transfer; the board agreed to pay for this EPC if necessary. Completion of the transfer is scheduled for 7th May.</p> <p>b) The Glebe Land, Lochinver</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion took place on 30th March. ADT received £65,750 from SLF and this was transferred to MacLeod & MacCallum the same day with £65,000 paid to Church of Scotland with the remaining £750 being put towards M&M's fees; the balance of fees of around £4,250 is still outstanding. 2. An application for funds to pay for further site investigations was made to the Rural Housing Fund last week 3. Footpath survey – the board agreed to commission Chris Goodman to produce a footpath scoping survey of the Glebe land at a cost of £360. 4. Medicinal leeches. WJ advised that the conservation director of BUGLIFE will be visiting Assynt to check for the possible presence of medicinal leeches on wetland near the road through the Glebe in August this year. <p>c) Cludgie Waste Project –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phase 1 of the project is almost complete and the last grants and payments should be made very soon. A fresh water tap needs to be connected and this work has been contracted to a plumber from Ullapool. 2. Assynt Leisure can now repay £15,000 Highland Council bridging loan and repay ADT £8,850 (less the ward discretionary fund grant of £1,500) 3. Phase 2 can now be considered as funding has been awarded by HCCF as match funding for the earlier RTIF 3 grant award. The Trust is still waiting for the legal paperwork for both grants. A decision needs to be made on when to proceed with the project, now or later after the summer. Agreement is about to be received from RTIF and within the next week or so from HCCF as well. 	<p>WJ</p> <p>WJ</p> <p>WJ</p> <p>AP</p> <p>AP/AL</p> <p>AP</p>

<p>AP advised that we do not have to fully retender as we have consent from RTIF although not yet HCCF.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. KS at Assynt Leisure and WJ feel that the phase 2 contract needs to start as soon as possible. 5. Lease extension with Highland Council is being dealt with by Corra Irwin at M&M. <p>d) Crown Estate Scotland WJ, EM and AP met CES's Partnership Manager Tom Mallow on 24th March on Zoom and separately with Phil Tomalin and Pablo Mascerenhas. The follow-up meeting has been delayed until next week.</p> <p>e) Achmelvich Project A site meeting was held on Thursday 22nd April at Achmelvich car park with Alex Dickson ACC, Alastair Stewart HC, Andy Summers HLHR, Ray Mackay ACG, Sarah-Ann Macleod ACG/ ADT, Ewen McLachlan, Adam Pellant and Willie Jack ADT. AP gave an update on the project idea which would include a redevelopment of the car park and upgrade of the toilet facilities, possibly including showers and interpretation facilities. The RTIF deadline for expressions of interest which would then qualify for a £5,000 match funded design grant is 14th May. There was a board discussion of the minimum and maximum budgets for single site and multi site projects. The discussion also covered the project in general and ownership or lease or transfer of the site from Highland Council. BA felt the project was a good idea and while NG could see the merits in the projects he was concerned that it has risen opportunistically although there was every reason to pursue the project. The board agreed to submit an expression of interest to RTIF and to follow up with Assynt Community Council seeking a financial contribution to the match funding. The board also agreed that a local steering group should be established with the Highland Council, Grazings committee, Highlife Highland Ranger, SYHA, Assynt Community Council, local residents and business owners.</p> <p>f) Broadband Nothing has yet taken place but WJ has been in discussion with Cameron Warren and HIE</p>	<p>WJ/ EM/ AP</p> <p>AP/ EM</p> <p>WJ</p>
<p>6. Culag Park Update Update MH & WJ</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first cut of the grass took place yesterday and is now looking good. 2. MH and WJ will follow up with Assynt upkeep over the closers on the kissing gates. 	<p>WJ</p>
<p>7. Discover Assynt Update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed spring 2021 Zoom Tourism meeting – report EM Due the opening up of tourism planned for mid May everyone is very busy at present and it was agreed to postpone the tourism seminar. 2. EM advised that the Sutherland community partnership has established a tourism sub group. 3. EM explained that the idea for Discover Assynt is to grow into a N x NW DMO which would then be supported by HIE. 4. HIE has expressed interest in backing the idea of a digital Ranger across Sutherland 5. EM has applied to NatureScot for portable toilet s to be sited at Ardvreck Castle/Inchnadamph 	<p>EM</p> <p>EM</p> <p>EM</p>
<p>8. Development Officers Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Report from Adam: AP advised that he is finishing off the Scotland's town partnership fund grant document summary. All the funds received were spent through ARG b) Report from Ewen 	
<p>9. AOB</p>	

<p>a) Democracy Matters update For information only</p> <p>b) EM and WJ met with Maree Todd prospective SNP parliamentary candidate. EM showed her around the Glebe and explained to her about the proposed housing project.</p> <p>c) Assynt learning – the Board have been informed that the Big Lottery fund grant will cease in March 2022 and following this there is no more funding for courses at the learning centre. The board wished to know more about this.</p> <p>d) Minute secretary/secretary – the board felt we should advertise for a new minute secretary. WJ to look out the previous advert and circulate this new opportunity.</p> <p>e) Heritage signs – BA and EM updated the board on the CALL heritage sign project.</p>	<p>WJ</p>
<p>10. Proposed date of next meetings</p> <p>Late June?</p>	