

Minutes of Westray Development Trust Board Meeting
Thursday 25th November 2021 at 19:00 at the Old Kirk

Present: Helen Bain (HB)(arrived 19:30), Anne Burgher (AB), Coilla Drake (CD), Steven Drever (SD), Douglas Leslie (DL), Gill McEwen (GM), Louis Pottinger (LP) (Chair), Andrew Seatter (AS), David Stephenson (DS).

Attending: Clare Walker (CW)

1. Apologies: Isobel Thompson (IT). HB submitted apologies, she would be late to the meeting.

2. Minutes of previous board meeting:

Meeting on 28/10/2021

Proposed DS ; seconded – DL

3. Matters Arising:

- Westray surgery would like to pass on their thanks to WDT for the offer of funding the purchase of a porta cabin for covid-19 testing at the surgery but they have been loaned one by Cooke Aquaculture so funding from WDT is no longer required.
- CW informed Peter Needham of the Board's decisions regarding CAW's request minuted last month. PN has stepped down from the CAW Board but has passed on the Board's feedback to the other members of CAW.
- Notice went in the AUK Talk of the digital equipment available to borrow from the WDT office. CW is still awaiting the passwords for administrator access from Hazel Moore but it is hoped these will be received soon.

4. Administration and Finance Officer's Report:

MM hopes to have the final audited accounts from The Long Partnership in the next couple of days as well as a short report which can be presented to the membership at the AGM.

When the accounts were presented to the WDT Board, Alan Long had made a recommendation that the Trust should consider de-registering from the VAT register. The reasoning behind this was that WDT have very little expenditure eligible for claiming back VAT but the process involved consumes a disproportionate amount of man-hours. The Board Agreed that MM should look into how WDT de-register.

The Board Approved the suggested dates for the launch of the Fuel Grant; Monday 10th January 2022 with a closing date of Monday 28th February 2022.

A discussion was had regarding the recent news that the energy company Bulb has gone into administration and the fact that several other small energy companies have recently folded and the impact this may have on Westray customers getting their fuel grant. Consideration was given to the possibility of making the fuel grant payment directly to applicants and it was decided to ask advice from VAO about this. It was also decided that enquiries should be made with Ofgem to establish exactly what processes are in place to guarantee the credit in customer's energy accounts with these folded companies and how long it should take before customers are given new energy accounts with new providers. The Board Agreed that the office team should look into including an option for applicants in this situation to apply for the fuel grant but have payment delayed until such time as they have a new account number. Outstanding applications can be reviewed at the end of the financial year.

ACTION: MM to look into de-registering WDT from the VAT Register

ACTION: MM to make enquiries with VAO and Ofgem

ACTION: Staff team to amend fuel grant policy to enable applicants to delay payment if they do not have a current energy provider and account

5. Operations Report:

Housing – Bayview

The community consultation for the allocations policy is now closed and the results have been collated. There were 14 responses in total. Based on this feedback there were no amendments to the allocations policy required. The Board Approved the final draft of the allocations policy. This will now need to be submitted to Scottish ministers for approval as part of the grant conditions of our funding award from the Island Housing Fund.

We are still awaiting a new completion date for Bayview, this is still because Daniel Harcus is waiting for supply confirmation dates.

A tender brief for a maintenance contract for the WDT assets (office/bargain box, Höfn and Bayview flats) is being drawn up. The Board Agreed that this should be shared with the Housing subgroup before final approval by the WDT Board.

ACTION: IT to submit the allocations policy to Scottish ministers.

ACTION: IT and the Housing subgroup to draft a maintenance tender brief.

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Energy Pathfinder Survey

HES have given a detailed summary of the monitoring and survey work they would like to carry out on Bayview as part of the Energy Pathfinder project which WDT are collaborating with them on. They hope to have most of the monitoring completed before tenants are in the flats but any that takes place after the flats are tenanted is designed to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Board Agreed that there would need to be some form of written agreement in place between HES and any tenants in residence confirming that the tenants are happy to have the monitoring devices in the flat. The tenants should be given written confirmation of what the data collected will be used for. If any visits are required when the flats are tenanted, these should be arranged for an evening or weekend so that tenants are not required to take time off work.

ACTION: IT to inform HES of the Board's decision.

Bargain Box

There have been ongoing issues with the roof of the bargain box leaking, however, the most recent attempt seems to be watertight but will be monitored over the coming weekend when we are forecast particularly bad weather. Shane Scott has now submitted the building warrant for the Bargain Box and this has been paid for.

Höfn

The Höfn reopened on 5th November 2021. While arranging an office mobile phone, IT has ordered a second device to be used as the Youth Support phone. This will be held by whichever Youth Support worker is on duty and means that there will be one number to contact the Youth Support team and also means that the team aren't required to use their personal mobile phones for this duty.

Graduate Placement

Kieran Fowler has started in post and has had his induction and is spending this initial period getting to grips with the garden project. Once he has found his feet he will submit monthly progress reports to be included in the Board papers.

HB arrived at the meeting at 19:30.

6. PEG

CG03-2021 – Westray Heritage Trust (WHT) – Financial Stability of Westray Heritage Centre (WHC)

DL declared an interested and left the room.

WHT submitted a Community Grant application to PEG for funding over the next two years to enable WHC to reach a financially stable position as covid restrictions and the consequent lower number of visitors to the centre has derailed previous plans for financial stability to be achieved by 2021.

PEG scored the application 12.6 with a recommendation to award funding of £12,000 in two annual instalments of £6,000. The Board Agreed with PEG's recommendation.

DL returned to the meeting.

CG04-2021 – Sandy McEwen – Roadside Bulbs

Funding was being sought for the purchase of a bulk load of flower bulbs which would be made available to anyone in the community to pick up free from the island shops to plant on Westray's roadside verges on a volunteer basis. Funding for this has been granted in the past, however, PEG felt that using the grant scoring matrix this application didn't score highly enough for a recommendation but the feeling among PEG was that it was within the spirit of the CTF to receive funding. The Board Agreed and suggested that this grant should be included in the 3 yearly rolling award.

PEG scored the application 11.3 which is usually a referral back to the applicant. However, the Board Approved the funding request of £400 for the next three years subject to the conditions of the 3 year rolling award.

ACTION: CW to inform the applicants of the Board's decision.

7. AGM

The Board Agreed that the current level of covid-19 cases is such that they feel it is safe to hold next week's AGM in person providing the covid-19 prevention measure put in place are adhered to.

8. Westray Processors Business Study

WDT has received a request from Westray Processors for funding towards having an independent business review conducted to explore options and produce recommendations for creating a sustainable business.

IT has been in discussions with VAO who confirmed that it would be within the remit of WDT's charitable objectives to provide funding as it would maintain or improve the economic infrastructure in Westray but that funding from WDT should be considered once other funding avenues have been explored. The Board Agreed with the advice from VAO that WDT could provide funding towards the business review if funding cannot be found from other sources. The Board asked the staff team to point Westray Processors in the direction of some other funding bodies.

ACTION: IT to inform Westray Processors of the feedback from the Board.

9. Correspondence

- a. A letter addressing the WDT Board on a number of issues including the need for podiatry services, employment of a hairdresser to service the island and concerns over cruise ships numbers was received from a Westray resident. IT has drafted a response which outlines the measures WDT are currently taking to address some of these problems which the Board Approved.

ACTION: IT to reply with the approved draft letter.

10. AOCB

- a. The Board noted that a membership application has been received from Harmandeep Gill

- b. An application had been received from a WDT member to stand for election to the Board of Trustees. Unfortunately, this application was received too late to inform the membership prior to the AGM next week. Therefore, the Board Agreed to organise an general meeting in the early part of next year in order for this member to stand for election.

ACTION: CW to inform the applicant of the Board's decision and arrange a GM for early next year.

- c. The Board Agreed that the borrowing term for the digital equipment should be flexible according to the users need with a date for returning the equipment to be set when booking out. DS queried whether there would need to be a change to the offices insurance cover to accommodate this kind of borrowing.

ACTION: CW to amend draft conditions of use document.

ACTION: CW and MM to check the office insurance policy.

- d. With AS stepping down from the WDT Board at the AGM next week we are required to appoint a new WDT Trustee to the Board of WRE. The Board Agreed to revisit this early next year once the new WDT directors have been appointed.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will be held on Thursday 13th January 2022.

CW left the meeting at 20:10.

12. WDT Board Only

L. Y. P. P. P.