

Minutes of Westray Development Trust Board Meeting
Thursday 16th January 2025 in the Community Classroom

Present: Geordie Thomson (GT) (Chair), Peter White (PW), Anne Burgher (AB), Gill McEwen (GM), Coilla Drake (CD), Louis Pottinger (LP), Douglas Leslie (DL), Margaret Rendall (MR), David Seatter (DRS), Kirsty Sinclair (KS)

Attending: Gina Rendall (GR)

1. **Apologies :** David Stephenson (DS)

2. **Minutes of previous board meetings:**

Minutes of Board meetings on 7 th November 2024	Proposed GM, Seconded DL
Minutes of Board meeting on 25 th November 2024	Proposed PW, Seconded GM
Minutes of Board meeting on 3 rd December 2024	
Note to amend venue – should be Westray Parish Kirk and not Community Classroom	Proposed DL, Seconded MR

3. **Matters Arising:**

Board approvals since board meeting 7th November 2024 via email

Cleat Restoration Trust – after seeking legal advice from Burness Paul it was confirmed that the grant conditions remain the same and the CRT were informed by letter on 2nd December 2024.

4. **OPS Manager/ AFO report**

i. **AFO**

Finance Sub Group Report: The sub group met to finalise the Schedule of Financial Delegation (SFD) to bring to the Board for approval. This is later than hoped due to staff illness and should be available earlier this year. GR presented this years budgets and SFD. **The board agreed to** approve the 24/25 SFD.

Audit: Presentation of accounts was made on 25th November and minutes proposed and seconded as above.

Financial Activities by Month: July to November reports were included in the board papers along with a budget report for projects. Nothing concerning to note.

Fuel Grants: The shortened application time means that the first week back was pretty much taken up with Fuel Grants. 249 applications received this year which is 9 less than last year. All grants processed. Payments all made apart from Highland Fuels and any grants with queries. These will be made by the end of the month.

Timing was tricky over the Christmas break, and it would be better if we could bring it forward but still try to avoid AGM time.

VAT: De-registration is now through, and our last return will be submitted this month.

ii. **Housing**

Training Mhairi Noble (MN) attended the Scottish Letting Day 2024 and attached a report from the trip with the board papers. Sessions attended were: Do you know what to expect from the First-tier Tribunal (FTT), EPC – Energy Performance Confusion, Your tax return – Key insights and top tips, Talking Deposits and In conversation with Scotland’s Minister for Housing, Paul McLennan MS. There were also various exhibitors at the event where MN was able to gather quotes, information and make connections.

PAT testing: Quotes for training were provided. MR asked if there was any issue with landlords testing their own properties.

ACTION - MN to find out.

Bayview

Three more applications. One candidate scored zero and the other two three.

ACTION – GR to contact DandH Law and ask two candidates for more information

Jerusalem

Purchase: Date of purchase should now be 24th January 2025.

Renovation: Building warrant has now been applied for. Tenders were received and all higher than we had anticipated, which seems to be the trend at the moment. All three contractors have been contacted and are willing to see where changes could be made, there is now a new date of the 24th of January 2025 for revised quotes.

iii. **Community Spaces:**

Community Hall

Feasibility: CDF money still to draw down, waiting for some of the work to be done.

Purchase: Previous owner is still working at clearing the property. This should be complete by the 24th of February 2025.

New Build: Plans are being worked on. The decision to hold off on applying for demolition was made while we explored funding options. Davie Campbell (DC) and Cindy Mackenzie (CM) will be in Westray on the 21st of January 2025 so will update at the next board meeting.

Insurance: The building is covered under our insurance.

Sailing Club Shed

Servitude and Disposition: We received another email asking how we would like to proceed.

ACTION – GR to discuss with Stewart Rendall, Cooke Manager and Eddie Nicholson, Lows.

Golf Club:

Feasibility Study: CLLD and CDF grants received for the feasibility of the project. DC, CM, Bily Groundwater (BG) and Luke Fraser (LF) will be visiting to start their work on the 21st of January 2025.

iv. **Development Plan**

Eve White has started this piece of work and GR is to get back to her, meeting set for next week.

v. **Hofn**

Water heater is now installed and working great.

Turbine inverter – Burray Boatyard were out before Christmas but didn't have everything they needed so will be coming out again. GR and DRS have been contacting them to see when they will be coming but no response as yet.

Youth Support Workers: Edith Costie has resigned from her post as YSW, Edith has been involved with the Hofn before it was the Hofn. When Seatters Gallery was used as a tester, so well over 25 years of supporting the Hofn and Young folk. There will be an event planned to mark all of her work and start the recruitment process for a new YSW.

ACTION – GR to organise an event and advertise for new YSW.

vi. **Bargain Box**

Payment has now been made for the first year of rent.

vii. **Accessible Westray**

The wheelchairs and rollators finally arrived in December. Thanks to R Rendall & Co for delivering, Cooke Aquaculture for allowing us temporary storage space and PW for helping GR build them. They are stored with the Tri-shaws at the moment. Sarah Cowe (SC) has been working on paperwork so that they can be borrowed by members of the community.

ACTION – SC to finalise paperwork and advertise.

viii. **Climate Action Plan**

The public consultation was postponed as December was far too busy. GR attended and passed the carbon literacy training course. A format for the report has been produced with the background information included but will need the audit information and public consultation results.

ix. **WDT Audit**

GR, DL, CD and GM met with Sheila Tulloch (ST) and Victoria Simpson (VS) from Anderson Strathern to work on board governance. The overall feeling was that we are in good shape the following points were made:

Articles of association: There is no rush but tidy up and propose at our next AGM.

- Members Application process says that it has to be done in writing, it would be helpful to have this say email as well.
- More clarity on virtual/hybrid meetings
- Improve director termination provisions. The new charities act has widened the disqualification criteria, and this should be thought about when clarifying these points.
- Use gender neutral and more inclusive terms such as they.
- Check through some of the cross referencing as some of it is wrong.

Objectives of the Trust/Provision of support for Housing.

- VS felt that they were very broad which means we can assist in a variety of ways and that anything is possible really. She discussed mission drift- which is when projects are too far away from the objects of the Trust and something directors and staff should always be aware of.
- Victoria advised that with their broad objects there may be issues with support for housing. OSCR would want it to be quite specific and tailored. VS would be able to put together a case and present to OSCR for advice.

ACTION – GR to gather more information and send to VS

Business Loans

- A short discussion was held around the Business Loans and GR will provide more information around this.

ACTION – GR to provide more information

Trustee Eligibility

- The board is elected by members not selected.
- We can ask for advisors to sit in on board meetings when appropriate.
- It was explained that all directors fill in a Declaration of Interest form. During a meeting if there is a conflict of interest, they declare it and leave the meeting temporarily.

ACTION - GR to make this clearer on minutes.

x. **Highlands and Island Climate Hub – Beach event**

John Berry reported to the office that the beaches are looking good with some work to do at Aikerness after the last storm. He is also organising his thank you event soon.

xi. **Orkney Towns Fund**

They are advertising for an officer now, who will wade through applications. There is still however time to put ideas forward.

xii. **AGM**

The AGM was held on the 3rd of December, not a huge turn out but not a very nice night and it's December. A clear presentation from Ivan Houston of Scholes and a few questions regarding the Hall and Jerusalem for Davie Campbell while we had coffee. Supportive evening.

xiii. **Mark Hull and Flora Robertson visit**

GT, GR and WRE directors Willie Bain and Andrew Seatter attended the meeting. A look at the social impact, good and bad, of renewable energy has had on our community. An interesting afternoon.

xiv. **HIE Visit**

GT and GR met with Shona Flanagan (SF). A good opportunity to discuss up and coming projects, share practice and get some really good advice.

Graduate Placement The board agreed to discuss the opportunity to have a Graduate who could look at the feasibility of dealing with our own waste in Westray.

Green Grant this may be an opportunity for funding toward solar panels on our buildings to reduce energy costs.

ACTION – GR to meet with HIE and discuss both the Graduate Placement and the Green Grant and report back to the board.

xv. **CDO Call**

GR met in person with CDO's from across Orkney in December. GR finds these meetings invaluable, a supportive and informative sharing space.

Chessa let us know that Ruth Kirkpatrick is now Team Lead, Orkney. She used to be Head of Business Growth and knows Westray. We will be meeting with her and Katrina Wiseman, Area Manager, Orkney and Shetland) on a CDO call soon.

There will be a Transport Conference on the 27th and 28th of February 2025 and they will be asking for representatives to attend. At this point it is just a save the date. GR and PW would be free to attend at this stage.

xvi. **WDT Grants - Review**

When the Fuel Grants are over this will be a priority, with a June 2025, deadline for GR and SC to work out a proposal to clear up grey areas and also incorporate the feedback from the conference.

5. WRE Report – From Clare Walker, AFO

i. **FITs**

Latest FIT reading have been submitted to Scottish Power and £94,803 has been received. The next readings are due around mid-Jan.

ii. **Gift Aid**

So far, this financial year WRE have made no gift aid payments to WDT. WRE will be required to make donations of £605,345 to WDT to extinguish its corporation tax liability. Confirmation of gift aid payments will be discussed at the next WRE Board Meeting. GT reported that at the meeting the board agreed to gift aid £605,345 to WDT.

iii. **Turbine**

While carrying out maintenance on the turbine on 24th October, Enercon found some discolouration on the generator and made the decision to curtail the turbine to 50% until further investigations can be carried out.

Enercon has been slow to respond to requests for updates and there have been few moves to rectify this issue which has meant that the turbine has been curtailed for a significant amount of time now. An update received from the technical team before Christmas indicated that there is a problem with 1 or 2 coils in the generator.

Christmas Eve the turbine had an excitation charging error, after a few engineer visits they finally thought it was sorted, however when they attempted to power up the turbine it continued to revert to heating mode.

The engineers were contacted before they went on the ferry, but they informed Jeemie Stout (JS) that they were expecting a call from Germany with instructions. The turbine remains at a standstill.

iv. **Decommissioning**

GT informed the board that a discussion around decommissioning was held and as discussed with Ivan Houston at the accounts presentation WDT will look at how we will be able to support WRE in the decommissioning of the turbine when the time comes.

v. **Financial Year end:** Accounts were approved and signed on 25th November 2024.

6. **Forward Planning Update**

No update from the group.

7. **Wellbeing Report**

Community Fridge: 159 users over October and November and 1.8 tonnes of food waste saved. There has also been some toiletries donated so we have added a tub for that.

Learning Link: Erika Pottinger (EP) met with Walter Gorman and Chrissie Mathews in October as they were keen to provide training opportunities in Westray. They are meeting with other interested parties in Westray soon. Hopefully some exciting courses can be held locally. EP asked for anyone with skills they might like to share on the island, so far no responses.

Wellness Classes: The three classes ran through until December which meant the VAO Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund is now finished. Zoe Williams will continue with the Weight Management and Chair Exercise groups. GR to contact the Wellness Pool Session users to see if they would like this session to continue and then perhaps contact Westray Community Association to see if that is achievable.

Training: EP has attended the Henry Training which means she can support parents to be able to provide a healthy start for babies and children. She also has the contact details of the local coordinator and can refer people. She also attended Motivation, Action and Prompt training (MAP) of Health Behaviour change training. This training enables her to support people to make positive changes to their health and lifestyle.

Island Wellbeing Project – What next meeting: Some advice from the research they are doing now is that One to one support visits should stop as it's a safe guarding issue and that a new SCIO isn't a feasible option. One to ones hasn't really affected us as most people come to the office and we haven't offered the type of support that they were concerned about. There are more 1 to 1 meetings planned to discuss things individually with the researcher.

Creating links: EP has been out and about visiting Kalisgarth to help with some crafts they were doing and organised a Christmas apple for all the bairns in Westray. EP will be attending the Hub again when she can.

8. Sub Group Reports:

Garden – GR provided the Board with costs for the new layout for year 1. To enhance the layout of kedar unit: by building raised beds which are accessible to all, addition of a tap and more sockets at the other side, some garden furniture and play mats was £6383.76 excluding labour.

GR made an application to Safe Deposits Scotland after MN highlighted the fund after her trip to Edinburgh. This was unsuccessful.

It was noted that there isn't enough in the budget to cover the costs of this work and run the garden this season. The board agreed to go ahead with the electrical and water works at this point and to keep looking for funding and ways to reduce the cost at this stage.

ACTION – CD to look at alternative ideas to bring the cost down

ACTION – GR to apply to VAO Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing fund

ACTION – GR to ask Daniel Marcus Construction to do the electrical and water works

ACTION - GR is still to explore a new way to sell produce

9. Correspondence

- i. **Thank you cards:** The board noted that several thank you cards had been received from members of the community over Christmas which was gratefully received.
- ii. **Membership applications:** The board had received two applications for membership, one from Gary Byers and another from Anne Byers. Both applications were accepted.

ACTION – MN or SC to send letters to both.

10. AOCB

None

11. Date of Next Meeting 5th February 2025

Meeting closed at 9pm

