

**Kincardineshire Development Partnership
Board of Trustees Meeting – Thursday 4th February 2021 at 7.00 pm
Zoom Meeting**

Minutes

Present:

Ron Sharp – Portlethen Town Association (Chair)
Bridget Scott – Bettridge Centre
Isabella Williamson – Arbuthnott Community Council
Walter McMillan – Portlethen Men’s Shed
Mairi Eddie – Benholm & Johnshaven Community Council
Andrew Newton – Stonehaven Tolbooth Association
Ian Hunter – Stonehaven and District Community Council
Sandra Davison – Mearns Area Partnership
George Cruickshank – Newtonhill, Muchalls & Cammachmore Community Council
Marion McNeil – Crathes, Drumoak & Durris Community Council

In Attendance:

Jacky Niven – KDP Development Worker
Margo Titmuss – KDP Admin

Apologies:

Bob McKinney – North Kincardine Rural Community Council

1. Welcome

The Chair, Ron Sharp, welcomed all those present to the first full Board meeting in over a year, and thanked them for attending. Ron explained that the Sub-Group had been handling business in the interim. He thanked Jacky & Margo for keeping everything running smoothly, and for supporting our communities.

Ron advised that Alasdair Shiach, the Mearns Community Council representative, had resigned from the Board. Kirsty Alchin, KDP Windfarm Admin, has also resigned to take on a full-time position, and the Board wish her all the best in her new role.

Apologies were given from Bob McKinney

AOCB

- Mill of Benholm

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the formal meeting of 27th February 2020 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. They were proposed by George Cruickshank and seconded by Mairi Eddie.

3. Matters Arising.

(4) – Monthly Reports – Finance

Andrew and Isabella confirmed that the windfarm spreadsheets are now in order.

(9) – AOCB – Staff Appraisals

Mairi advised that Jacky’s appraisal has not yet been completed, however Margo’s has.

Margo has taken on additional responsibilities; including windfarm admin and funding requests. Her basic weekly hours increased from 10 to 16, with the possibility of up to 20 if necessary.

It was agreed during the meeting that Margo can work up to 20 hours per week without asking for approval; anything over to be approved in advance.

Action – Margo’s contract to be revised (ME)

4. Monthly Reports

Finance

December report provided in advance. A query was raised on the windfarm balances which was explained.

Given the change to the funding from Aberdeenshire Council, Andrew provided the following summary:

“Income

Reduction in AC SLA	£8,400
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Savings

Reduction in staff	£5,200
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Change in phone utility	£492
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Vacate Courthouse	£3,646
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Total	£9,238
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Initial saving: £9,238 - £8,400 = £838

Extra expenditure

Home working for staff	£624
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Post-box facilities	£180
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Total	£804
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Reworked saving: £838 - £804 = £34

In summary the loss of the SLA funding is matched by savings and although I have not factored in a cost of living wage increase for staff I am comfortable with the financial situation for 2021/2022.”

It was agreed that KDP must look for alternative funding streams for the future.

New Members

There have been no member applications received since the last meeting.

5. Sub-group / Committee Reports

Governance

Andrew advised that KDP should have held the AGM in October, however OSCR has provided dispensation until March 2021. Therefore it is essential that the AGM is held next month.

There is a potential issue with holding a virtual AGM, and Andrew has contacted OSCR for clarity.

Windfarm Subgroup

Isabella provided a brief update as follows:

Meikle Carewe closed end January

Hillhead of Auquhirie closes end February

St John's Hill closes end March

For the time being, decision making panel meetings will be held virtually, and Isabella and Margo are working together to find a way to do this.

Ron highlighted his gratitude that the funds had reopened, allowing money to be distributed to the groups who need it.

6. KDP Development Officer Report

The Development Officers' Activities Highlights were circulated in advance of the meeting.

Both Ron and Mairi thanked Jacky for the considerable work she had undertaken, especially her involvement with the Third Sector Strategy Group.

7. Changes to SLA

Agreement has been reached with the Infrastructure Committee that the Rural Partnerships will each be paid £22,500 per annum for the next two years. It still must be rubber stamped by the Full Committee, and there is no reason to expect this not to happen.

There was no consultation with the Rural Partnerships during the process. The Rural Partnerships have met a few times, but nothing agreed for moving forward.

Reid Hutchison has assured the Rural Partnerships that the Q1 payment will be paid whether the new SLA is signed or not. He has advised that a meeting will be held before the end of March to agree the new SLA.

Need to speak to the Area Manager to establish what they want for the £3000 which has been confirmed from the Area Committee budget.

Jacky was adamant that KDP must continue to service our communities, but that it will be essential to find alternative funding sources for new projects and initiatives.

Mairi voiced concern that the SLA may become more focussed on Economic Development not Community Development.

Ron reiterated that KDP must continue as if it is business as usual.

8. The Way Forward

Ron began the conversation with a question – ‘How is KDP going to survive?’

Jacky believes there are two routes to explore. The first is to explore the opportunities that have arisen from opening doors to work she has been doing already. Funding could be found to develop these projects. The second is to empower people. For example, working with the community ladders to help people out of poverty.

Mairi commented that it would be very sad if we lost the community effort that has materialised because of Covid. She believes that legacy funding is needed to address the many issues that have been uncovered as result of Covid, but that existed pre-Covid. Mairi feels there is an opportunity for KDP to work with communities to help them facilitate change.

Ian suggested utilising community building as a potential opportunity.

Both Mairi and Ian felt the change to KDP’s funding is a positive opportunity to look at new avenues. That KDP is perfectly positioned to reacting quickly to need, and utilising everything that has been learned over the last few years.

9. Windfarm Admin

Margo gave a brief explanation on the changes being implemented to allow the Community Funds to be administered remotely, utilising technology. This is to address the current Covid restrictions, and in the spirit of becoming more environmentally friendly.

10. Sheriff Court Building

Ron confirmed that the lease on the Sheriff Court Building will be terminated at the end of March. Both Jacky and Margo are happy to continue working from home. Economove will empty the office and store all the furniture and paperwork until a decision is made, in the future, on whether an office space is required.

Andrew has given advice on what paperwork needs to be archived, what can be kept electronically and what can be destroyed. Jacky and Margo will sort out the paperwork in March.

A post box is to be supplied by STP to allow KDP to retain the Sheriff Court Building as a postal address. This is to cost £15/month.

Action – Ron to write to STP to formally terminate the lease.

11. AGM

Ron explained that as the AGM was postponed from November, the Sub Group had agreed to stay in position until the AGM could be held.

It was agreed that the AGM must be held in March, and that a date should be agreed as soon as possible.

Action – Jacky to ask Reid to officiate at the AGM

Action – date to be agreed and invitations to be sent – Jacky, Ron, Margo

12. AOCB

Mill of Benholm

Ian Hunter asked for clarification on the situation with the Mill of Benholm asset transfer application. Mairi advised that Mill of Benholm Enterprise had withdrawn the application as the Board felt it very unlikely they could satisfy the funding conditions set by the Council, especially as several funds have been suspended due to the pandemic. North East Scotland Preservation Trust (NESPT) is to enter discussions with the Council re taking ownership. Mairi believes this would be a very satisfactory outcome as NESPT have much experience with this type of heritage project and Mill of Benholm Enterprise would be keen to work in partnership with them. It was discussed that there are considerable issues surrounding asset transfers, with the process being too arduous. Examples of groups that have experienced difficulties were discussed. Ian Hunter suggested that this may be an area where KDP could provide support.

Trustees of KDP

It was discussed that as some Community Councils are currently experiencing difficulties, that KDP may need to look beyond Community Councils for representatives to ensure a good geographic spread.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will be the AGM. The date and time to be confirmed. The AGM will be held on Zoom. A Sub-Group meeting will be held at the end of February if necessary.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Minutes taken by Margo Titmuss

I, RONALD SHARP hereby confirm these minutes reflect a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed: _____

R. Sharp

13/5/2021 Date: