



Minutes of the Board meeting held on
28th January 2026

Present: Gordon Cowtan (Director), Iain Frazer (Treasurer), Anne Hislop (Chair), David Howell (Director), Kayt Howell (Manager), Isla Kinnear (Director), Sharon McMurtrie (Vice Chair), Kirsty Murray (Project Support Officer), Janine Rennie (Financial Consultant), Steve McLean (observing).

AH asked everyone to introduce themselves to SMcL who was attending the meeting with a view to becoming a Director.

1. Apologies

None

2. Any C.O.I. on the agenda items?

None

3. Any A.O.B. items

- a) 2027 – KH
- b) Blister pack recycling (AH)

4. Financial Reports

a. JR & IF

JR shared her screen. The monthly management accounts show a healthy bank balance of £1.3M. £5K has been received from heat sales and a good rate of interest is being generated (£2387). £15.5K has been paid out for grants but otherwise it was a quiet month for expenditure – finance fees, catering, bank charges, low admin costs. There is a small deficit at the end of that period. The total management accounts to the end of December show a good level of income and a good level of expenditure. Costs for repairs at Balgair are much lower than last year. The balance sheet shows healthy reserves and the organisation is being managed really well. DH asked about the grant total for the financial year so far. It is around £117K. The expenditure budget shows that most of the planned budgets are underspent at the moment. The biggest overspend has been on grants. GC asked about the budget for Balgair – general maintenance is overspent and the fuel budget is overspent but other areas are underspent so overall there is a surplus. IF noted that a bill for woodchip has not been received yet – SL is chasing it up but that the electricity bill has been balanced by the heat sales. Overall, the Balgair accounts are looking better than they have ever done.

- b. Draft accounts review – the end of year accounts for 2024-25 have been circulated to the Board to agree and return prior to the Annual General Meeting. JR confirmed that they looked well put together. IF mentioned that some money transfers have now been authorised. The Board agreed to sign them off.

ACTION: KH to email the accountants and confirm that the end of year accounts can be signed off.

- c. Changing financial year to be April to March – the financial year is currently July to June. It would be too short notice to do it for this year but would be possible to work towards it for next year. The Board agreed unanimously to make the change.

- d. Excuse JR

JR left the meeting.

- e. Investment committee update – GC

GC had forwarded the minutes of the last investment committee meeting to the Board prior to the meeting. Cash management platforms had been discussed and IF had done some research into different companies. The group had worked through an investment policy that KH had drafted. The next meeting is in two weeks. The group have suggested to the Board that a significant amount of money should be moved to a cash management platform – this will attain a higher rate of interest and the money will be more secure as there will be less money with a single institution. DH asked about there being a better return but less risk as this is not usually the case. GC explained that the money is not going into stocks and shares but is being spread across a number of different financial institutions to generate interest. The Board can decide which accounts to put money into. SMcM noted that there are some which are

specifically for charitable organisations. The plan is to find out which ones suit the FDT best and decide how much to put in.

Future income - GC had circulated a chart prior to the meeting showing the projection for future income and the effect on spending in the next few years. The Board need to make some important decisions in the next few months about how to manage things moving forward. These decisions will impact on budgeting, grant schemes, etc. GC suggested that the next step would be to develop a more in-depth chart to include more detail. KH suggested a Board meeting specifically to discuss this following the AGM and the next investment committee meeting. The Board agreed. **ACTION: KH to make a note that the next Board meeting following the AGM will concentrate on discussing finances.**

5. Approve minutes of last meeting – 05/11/25

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

6. Actions from last minutes

- a. SL to speak to SW about attending Board meetings and the monthly meetings with himself and GC – ongoing.
- b. GC/SL to draft a letter to Balgair residents to be sent out in the new year. ✓
- c. KH to ask for copies of the photographs and update SK at the Sports Centre. ✓
- d. KH to pursue the idea of a village app further – ongoing.
- e. KH to contact MB to deliver items to her for distribution. ✓

7. Locogen meeting (GC)

GC and KH had met with a senior person at Locogen recently. Locogen are contracted to review the figures provided by Nadara with regard to the FDT's share of the windfarm income. The last two times it has been done, GC has not been satisfied with the work done. He has highlighted figures which he thought were not correct but Locogen have not picked up on them. Both times, Nadara confirmed that GC was correct. At the recent meeting, Locogen were very apologetic and understood the issues. The senior representative confirmed that they would personally oversee the figures next time. GC proposed to continue using them based on this assurance and on the work done by them prior to these two occasions. SMcM asked why Locogen were needed if GC was able to check the figures himself. GC explained that the Scottish Investment Bank had asked for a third party to review the figures at some point in the past and although they are not involved anymore, GC feels that it is still a good idea to continue having the figures reviewed by a company who understand them.

GC also mentioned that it has been difficult to get information from Nadara in a timely manner and so has arranged a meeting with them to discuss this.

8. Balgair report (GC)

In the past month, Nottingham have informed GC that they will not be able to continue working with FCE. SL met with them a few weeks ago so may have more information, but GC has not caught up with him this year yet. SL had already discussed moving to another company anyway. As far as GC is aware the issue is with Nottingham County Council's financial difficulties and nothing to do with the FCE. For SMcL's benefit, GC explained that Nottingham currently manages the billing of each household at Balgair – they record the heat used by each household, send out bills, collect money and pass on revenue from heat sales to the FCE. GC will speak to SL about finding an alternative for Nottingham. He anticipates that the meters in each household will need to be changed. **ACTION: GC to speak to SL regarding finding an alternative to Nottingham for the billing of householders.**

9. Grants (KM)

KM had circulated a report prior to the meeting. She noted that the grant cycles currently finish at the end of March and that this will tie in better with the FDT's financial year when the change happens.

KH had been made aware of a resident receiving two payments for the Fuel Payment Grant and had advised them to contact the EAS to find out how to make a repayment. **ACTION: KH to check that the resident concerned has returned the extra FPG payment.**

10. Enabling others (KH/KM)

- a) Woodland group and Environmental Project Grant – an application has been submitted for an EPG to improve accessibility to land behind Culcreuch Avenue. The EPG has been suspended for now as the criteria was too woolly. KH/KM suggested making a donation to help the project go ahead. The applicant is asking for £1K. The Board discussed the application, and it was confirmed that it does meet the Articles of Association. It was agreed that more information was needed about how the money would be used. **ACTION: KH to get more detail about the project.**
- b) Men's and Hen's Shed – insulation of new shed. They have had a quote for £5K to insulate the shed and are asking for a donation to help with this. The Board discussed the request in some detail but agreed to give the whole amount required. **ACTION: KH to check if they have considered the use of more environmentally friendly insulation such as sheep's wool.**

11. Illuminate – new licences (KM)

The 10 free Microsoft licences which were part of the original deal with Illuminate expire in March. New premium licences would cost £7 per user per month (basic licences £5). KM had circulated a document prior to the meeting outlining the difference between premium and basic. KM had considered staff having

premium licences and Directors having basic licences, but Illuminate were concerned about the security of this. Some Directors pay privately for Microsoft licences anyway. **ACTION: KM to check how many licences are actually needed as some Directors buy their own.**

12. IT recycling (KH)

KH was contacted by a company who will collect old IT equipment for recycling. KH has asked on Fintry Buddies for an indication of how much could be collected and will arrange a collection date. Rather than equipment being left in the Sports Centre, KH would arrange for specific dates to be down there and ask people to put the equipment directly in the FDT shed.

13. Administrator's post (KH/KM)

Informal interviews will be held next week at the Sports Centre.

14. Research projects – decisions required for next steps (KH)

All materials and research had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

- a) Retrofitting (GC) – this fits with the aims of the FDT. KH noted that changes are continually occurring with respect to incentives available and recommended that a part-time energy adviser would need to be appointed to help with this project if it went ahead. A similar project was undertaken last year by FEL so it may be worth speaking to them.
- b) Paths (DH) – the idea for this would be to establish a path to connect Fintry and Balfron. There is a company called Connect who specialise in this kind of project and KH has spoken to another community who has done something similar. It is a massive undertaking that would need a steering group to take it forward including residents from Balfron.
- c) Bursary (IK) – the idea behind this is to encourage residents of Fintry to undertake further education/training for environmentally friendly courses. Decisions would need to be made around how many years of education the bursary would cover, how much would be given per year, how many bursaries would be established etc. It was suggested that this project would be better to be established once the amount of future income is more settled.

The Board discussed the merits/difficulties of each project. The general agreement was to move forward with the retrofitting project, but it was agreed that the other projects would be reconsidered at a later date. IK suggested meeting with students at Balfron High School to make sure they were aware of the range of courses available to them. KH agreed that there are many local people who work in the renewable/environmentally friendly/green industry who may be willing to speak to students at BHS.

15. A.O.B.

- a.2027 (KH) – June 7th 2027 will mark the 20th anniversary of the setting up of the FDT. KH suggested that this should be celebrated over the weekend of 5th/6th June 2027 and that plans for how to do this should start now. Ideas so far include: working out how much carbon Fintry has saved over the last 20 years; creating a small publication of the FDT's achievements; inviting past Directors, other organisations and people who have been involved. KH suggested involving Nadara and asking them to contribute to the celebrations financially and noted that it would be good publicity for them. SMCM pointed out that June 5th 2027 is World Environment Day! KH asked the Board to start thinking of ideas and pass them on to her.
- b.Blister packs (AH) – the teracyde box for blister packs is well used and is saving a lot of plastic from going into landfill. AH suggested keeping it as a permanent feature whilst the other two boxes could change seasonally. It was agreed that the blister pack box should be replaced this time and then there would be discussion about keeping it on permanently.
- c.IK appeared on the BBC talking about the work of the FDT and will email the link to the Board.

Next meetings: Board meeting – 18th February 2026 7.00 p.m. on Zoom
Annual General Meeting – 25th February 2026 6.00 p.m.