



## Minutes of meeting on 30.04.25. Bowling Hub. 7pm

**Present:** Anne Hislop (Chair) Sharon McMurtrie (Vice Chair) Iain Frazer (Treasurer) Janine Rennie (Financial consultant) Gordon Cowtan (Company Secretary), Isla Kinnear (Director), Jane Wild (Administrator), David Howell (Director), Kayt Howell (Manager)

1. **Apologies.**

Kirsty Murray (Project Support Officer) – Annual Leave

2. **Any COI on the agenda items?**

None

3. **Any AOB items.**

None

4. **Financial reports**

**JR** presented the bank's financial situation, noting a reduction of about 70,000 and a healthy balance of over a million. She highlighted the donation to Fintry Community Energy and the grants given out. Janine also discussed the expenditure, including Bilsland fuel and plant maintenance. She mentioned the possible need to update the admin charge due to stamp purchases.

Janine also reviewed the budget, noting slight overspends and underspends, and the need to classify categories differently. She suggested a review of Sage and adding more categories for better reporting. KH and GC expressed interest in a future call to discuss the budget and categories with Janine before presenting to the Board at the next meeting.

Janine concluded with an update on the financial situation, stating that everything was looking well on track and being managed professionally.

**IF** reported all was well with the banking, that a good return was being given on the high interest accounts.

**Investment Subgroup.** GC -The first meeting is planned for Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm.

**Next year's draft budget.** GC and KH have had a first run through of next year's budgets. Just broad budget figures now which can be fine-tuned after the Board agree on which grants and projects to develop.

With no further questions regarding finance, Janine was thanked and excused from the meeting

5. **Approve last minutes of Balgair only meeting**

Approved.

6. **Actions from last minutes.**

- Update reserves policy **GC**

- GC suggested that the policy be approved as it stands.
- AH suggested it be added to the agenda for the Investment group meeting.
- GC agreed.
- ACTION: GC to add to the agenda of the IG meeting.**
- Edit STEP Home working policy **KH & AH**
  - AH & KH have edited the policy provide by STEP to be more appropriate to our home working staff.
  - **ACTION:KH will send a link in her sign off for reference.**
- 7. **LAST Balgair update from GC.**

**GC** is finally standing down as consultant for Balgair and will return to the Board as an Associate Director and continue as the Company Secretary from May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

Gordon was pleased to be handing over to Steve Luker and Scott Walker to manage the Balgair project. GC reported that the last snagging issues from the new HIU installations were currently being dealt with. Future reports will be from Steve. Gordon was thanked for his time managing the project.
- 8. **Grant update. KH**

KH took the board through the suggested updates to their grant programs.

  - **Renewing Log grant for October 25- March 26**
    - The board agreed to continue with the Log grant next winter. JW suggested bringing the start date forward to September, which was agreed.
    - Staff will review price increases in August and consult the Board to agree any increase in the grant allowance per bag before launch.
    - ACTION: Staff to check on price increases and change social media to make the launch in September 25**
  - **Renewing FP grant for October 25- March 26.**
    - The board discussed the potential discontinuation of the grant in the future as it had never been intended to be carried on past the immediate response to the Fuel crisis three years ago - with GC expressing discomfort about its long-term nature. Many were becoming reliant on the grant. They agreed to continue the program for at least another year and to have a clear justification for any future changes. The Board also discussed the importance of being flexible and altruistic in their approach. They decided to consult with EAS (Energy Action Scotland) before making any announcements about the grant program in the summer newsletter.
    - ACTION: KH to set up earlier meeting with EAS.**
  - **EE grant**

Will continue on a rolling program from April – March
  - **New grants for consideration**
    - Gardening grant (20 x £1k)

The Board discussed a gardening grant aimed at improving sustainability and biodiversity. The project would be open-ended, allowing participants to propose their own gardening projects. The budget for the project was set at £1,000 per grant, and ring fenced at 20 in number for this year. The team also considered partnering with a local men's shed to help with gardening tasks as suggested by JW. IK stated that the project's focus was initially on food production but also included wildlife conservation and accessibility for all ages. The team also discussed the possibility of hiring a handyman for those who cannot do DIY work themselves. It was agreed to look at discussing with local tradespeople if they would be happy to be included.

**ACTION: Staff to edit application with contacts and begin discussion with Fintry Men's Shed.**

**APPROVED**

- Renewables install grant (5 x £5k)

The Board discussed the need to support the install of both new and replacement renewable systems. KH proposed a trial of a 'Renewables Assistance Grant' with a maximum of five recipients in the first year. The Board agreed that applicants would not be able to apply for the EEG and the RAG for the same project.

**ACTION: Staff to develop application process for review**

**APPROVED**

- Green Project Grant (10 x £1k)

The Board discussed the potential for a Green Project Grant to replace the community and business grants. Again, this would be an open-ended grant format to encourage homeowners, groups and businesses to develop their own projects. Staff would assess applications to see if they met with the Trust's objectives and any controversial ideas would be brought to the Board for finally decision on awards. The idea of a subgroup to make decisions on grant applications was also raised.

Again, there could be no doubling up of applications of grants for the same project. The Trust would need a good way of cross-referencing applications.

**ACTION: Staff to develop application process for review**

**APPROVED**

**9. EV charger replacement. KH**

KH reported that some issues remained and had contacted EVOLT on behalf of the Sports Club to have the unit repaired as it has flashed red since installation. Use has been down as many assume it is broken.

**10. School woodland. KH**

KH told the Board that all was going ahead with the planned tree surgery, and how delighted the school was to receive our help. IF asked if the tree surgeon could invoice FREE to recoup the VAT.

**ACTION: KH to contact tree surgeon.**

**11. Tree project. Round 2. JW**

JW reported on the great response and positive feedback from those who took part in the Tree Offer. There were a few who had missed the event as it was done in such a quick turnaround, so staff proposed to offer a round 2. This time we would give two weeks for people to put their orders in. We would only

take new orders and not repeats. The Board approved to proceed on that basis.

**ACTION: JW to produce social media posts and manage new applications and orders.**

**12. Postal campaign. JW**

JW outlined the postal campaign process. The Trust hope to receive some feedback and new membership enquiries.

**13. Strathclyde Uni projects.KH**

All set for next Tues. 6<sup>th</sup> May. There will be around 30 at the event.

The University have thanked us for all our support in the projects.

**14. Terracycle – 3 bins KH**

KH proposed boosting the village access to recycling for some of the more difficult to process items using TerraCycle.

**ACTION: ALL to send KH preferred top 3 choices of boxes.**

**KH will ask Sports Club for permission to site bins and cost up project for approval at next meeting**

[TerraCycle.co.uk](http://TerraCycle.co.uk)

**15. Workload and research – KH**

KH proposed a workload and research agenda for the next meeting, focusing on budget, finance, and selecting projects for the coming year.

Projects should be selected to undergo a period of initial research by staff to establish broad timescales, costs, partners, capacity etc. The Board would then be able to approve or decline to proceed based on results of the research. **ACTION: Staff to plan next meeting and provide a draft budget for the Board, workload updates and projections, and a selection of suitable projects to carry forward.**

**Next meeting – WED 28<sup>th</sup> MAY. 7PM at the HUB. – JW to book.**