



**MEETING OF THE WESTERN ISLES DEVELOPMENT TRUST
(COMPANY NUMBER SC271462)**

Minutes of Meeting of Western Isles Development Trust Date & Time:
5pm, Thursday 17 March 2022.

Venue: Remotely by Microsoft Teams only.

PRESENT

Nominated Members

Norman A. MacDonald (Director and Nominated Member) Chair
John MacKay (Director and Nominated Member)
Sheena Stewart (Director and Nominated Member)
David Muir (Director and Nominated Member)
David Wake (Director and Nominated Member)

Elected Members

John Mitchell (Elected Director for Harris and Ordinary Member)
Anne Bird (Elected Director for Uist and Ordinary Member)
Betty McAtear (Elected Director for Barra & Vatersay and Ordinary Member)
Donnie Morrison (Elected Director for Lewis and Ordinary Member) (Vice Chair)
Hazel Mansfield (Elected Director for Lewis and Ordinary Member)

APOLOGIES

Catriona Murray (Director and Nominated Member)
Fiona Stokes (Director and Nominated Member)
Calum MacKay (Elected Director for Harris and Ordinary Member)
Katie Denehy (Elected Director for Barra & Vatersay and Ordinary Member)
Norman MacDonald (Director and Nominated Member)
Stewart Wilson (Director and Nominated Member)
Iain Archie MacNeil (Director and Nominated Member)
Iain Maciver (Director and Nominated Member)
Kirsty MacCormick (Elected Director for Uist and Ordinary Member)

IN ATTENDANCE

Allan MacDonald (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The meeting was quorate.

2. DISCUSSION ON WIDT BUDGET AND FUNDS

This meeting was organised to deal with this item only. Bar the urgent item at AOCB, any other business is to be dealt with at the next meeting on 31 March 2022. The matter was discussed in detail with input from all directors in attendance. Points made include the following:

- Board was initially asked whether there was anything wrong with the current position. If that were identified it would inform decisions going forward.
- There should be an impact assessment on the use of WIDT funds.

- An annual budget should be set budget with a cap on the various funds. OSCR graph shows losses every year.
- Annual losses reflect the objective of the current Board. This has eroded the monies held in cash at the bank and it was right to do this.
- In respect of the Main Fund, it is likely that a number of community halls funded in the early 2000s are now falling into a poor state of repair and will be looking to WIDT to assist – therefore, more applications from such halls will be expected.
- Small Project Fund should require match funding.
- That should depend on the level of support needed – if the full £2K is needed, match funding should be a necessity, however for lesser sums that should not be necessary.
- Preference should be given to those who have match funding.
- That reflects the current position. WIDT should not change what's going well. Preference for match funding is fine.
- Re Main Fund applications, WIDT should require an indication from applicants that they have looked for funding elsewhere rather than going straight for WIDT.
- It would be good from an audit perspective to introduce a formal scoring of applications. That would improve accountability.
- There is sufficient experience on the Board to decide applications without scoring.
- It was explained that scoring was undertaken previously. Initially by the subgroup who advised the main board of the results and thereafter by the entire board. It was explained that most directors did not undertake the scoring and it proved difficult for the administrator who needed to spend a lot of time chasing scoring returns that were often not completed. Ultimately it was decided that directors should undertake scoring and use it to inform their own decisions, however the scores were not collated like they were initially. This practice was then discontinued as scoring was not being used. The templates are still held for the scoring and are available for directors to consider.
- Perhaps scoring should be considered when the budget becomes tighter.
- Why change what is currently working very successfully?
- WIDT needs to set a minimum cash balance. I.e. £85,000.
- Board agreed not to make the Small Projects Fund prohibitively difficult to access. As it is working well it shouldn't be changed.
- Likely that new directors will be coming on to the board after the Comhairle elections in early May. Therefore it may be best to wait for the new board to be in place.
- That means that these decisions would not be made until the May meeting at the earliest. It is better not to delay further.
 - **It was decided that a paper should be put to the next meeting in order for decisions to be taken on these matters in due course.**

3. AOCB

- i. The Chair advised of the request from Dalmore Lairholders for the release of Transocean monies (under £1,000) for emergency works.
 - **Board happy to release the funds held for the community of Dalmore subject to sight of invoice from contractor.**

4. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- **Thursday 31 March 2022 using Microsoft Teams.**

END.