

# STRUAN COMMUNITY TRUST

## Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting

### Chairperson

Donald G Beaton  
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### Vice Chairperson

Mr J MacKinnon  
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### Secretary

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### Treasurer

Mr Brian Morris  
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**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012

**Time:** 6.30pm

**Venue:** Struan Primary School

**Present:** Donald Beaton, Christine MacLennan, Brian Morris, John MacKinnon, Alison Munro & Linda Henderson  
Representatives from Vattenfall: **David Rodger** (Senior Communications Advisor) & **Ross Cant** (Onshore Site Manager)

**Apologies for Absence:** Marion MacAskill

### 1. Welcome

After introductions the meeting was opened by Chairman, Mr Donald Beaton with a welcome.

**David Rodger** tabled copies of **Vattenfall Communities Leaflets Issue 3 / Winter 2011** for distribution in the community.

Mrs Munro asked the meeting if they had any objections to Mrs Henderson also taking notes, as her hearing was impaired. No objections.

### 2. Concerns raised by Community at AGM

Mr Beaton outlined the issues raised from the AGM in June last year.

- (a) Criteria for Individual grants. Under the present criteria the Trust had felt unable to approve two applications from young members of the community for funding for educational courses. The general feeling of the community was that other Trusts receiving such grants **are** able to approve such grants. **Mr Rodger** said that Edinbane have **not** made such grants although they are looking to find a way to do it.

**Mr Rodger & Mr Cant** were informed by the meeting that Struan Community Trust (SCT) received a letter from **MSP David Thompson** after he had received a complaint from the parent of an applicant to the Trust for funding for University fees had not been approved by the SCT. They suggested the Scottish Communities Foundation may be able to support such things including apprentices – businesses being supported to employ locals. The 3<sup>rd</sup> party aspect of this may allow wind farm funds to be used. They emphasised that there are innovative ways of using the wind farm money. For example, **Ross Cant** said that applicants could look for matching funding from other sources but Donald Beaton stated that the Deed doesn't allow the Trust the power to raise funds to attract other money.

**Mr Ross Cant** explained that he has taken over from **Mr Tony Francis** as **Onshore Site Manager** and has responsibility for Edinbane Wind farm, which was the Company's first site. He is relatively new to Community Benefit funding.

He felt that it all hinged on the phrase "Benefit to Community" and they are able to seek legal guidance.

As an example Ms Henderson explained that she had proposed that a Life Long Learning group set up totally independent and with its own constitution and personnel could apply to the SCT for funds but itself run a bursary scheme to raise the skill level in the area. It wasn't simply – did an individual benefit the Community, say by returning to work here. It was about raising skills levels, creating access and opportunity. The meeting were in full support of Mrs Henderson's idea.

**Mr Rodger** and **Mr Cant** indicated that they did not see this as simply interposing an artificial device which had been **Mr Francis's** advice and asked for copies of correspondence regarding this.

**Action DB**

- (b) Is the Deed of Community Benefit fit for purpose or should it be re-negotiated although it was agreed at a Public meeting by all sides? This led to a discussion around the relative roles of the SCT and Vattenfall's advisers. There was a sense that the Company had a veto over the SCT's decisions and that there should be much more flexibility. Mr Morris felt that decisions should be made by the Trustees' not **Vattenfall** and wished it noted that he was unhappy being told by **Vattenfall** what the Trust can and cannot do.

The Chairman explained that he reported back our decisions after every meeting but didn't seek agreement to what we had done. Mr Beaton has only contacted **Vattenfall** for guidance on the criteria regarding Individual applications, at the request of a meeting of the Trust. Mrs Munro emphasised the Trust is also answerable to the community.

**Mr Rodger** emphasised that Vattenfall do not want to be part of the decision-making process but want to be comfortable with the mechanics of making of the payments. They can give an opinion but it is not for them to veto any decision. **Vattenfall** can give an opinion but it is for the Trust to make judgements on applications. He suggested that SCT could review the Life Long Learning decision.

The meeting noted that the SCT area comprised 120 households with about 199 adults registered on the 2011 electoral roll. In a small community it was felt that the Trust should be able to soften its approach.

### 3. Proposal from Treasurer regarding funding Broadband/ phone line rental

Mr Morris stated that in his initial idea he had quoted a cost for 160 households, but in fact there are only 120.

**Mr Rodger** had checked with **Vattenfall** legal team and they confirmed that the idea would comply with our agreement but that they were concerned with the amount of money that would be committed.

Mr Morris said that it would benefit the majority of the community having free Broadband or free line rental. He also went on to say that he did not wish to be involved personally in the set up such an idea and he had wanted to test the reaction from **Vattenfall**.

**Mr Rodger** said that **BT** had a "Corporate Social Responsibility" and the initiative could be raised with them emphasising the island community. **Mr Cant** suggested provision of free laptops would be an example of educational support and companies could be negotiated with to get very good deals.

John MacKinnon said there were likely to be other wind farms in the area and a reduction in electricity bills (proposed at an early stage of SCT's existence but rejected) would benefit absolutely everybody. The feeling was that the idea of paying BT was not any different than paying Scottish Hydro?

**Mr Rodger** said that with Broadband there was an element of education and skills that would support such an application.

Also micro-renewable supplies would probably be looked on favourably.

Ms Henderson suggested that the Trust really requires a Community Benefit Development Officer, but at present the way that the Deed is set up the Trust she had been advised that it would be very difficult to act as an employer. Mr Cant asked if there had been an administration element to payments? There was not.

### 4. AOCB

Miss MacLennan asked if it would be possible to supply computers to the School given that it is an area covered by HC funding. for Corporate Social Responsibility.

**Mr Rodger** was amazed if the Trust couldn't help the school in this way.

Mr Beaton asked **Mr Rodger** if he could attend the Trust's meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2012. Mr Rodger noted the date and hoped to be able to attend. He hoped to be a regular visitor to Skye – on the Island every 6-7 weeks. He has a background in Press and PR and said that SCT should celebrate its successes and Mr MacKinnon pointed out the press coverage of the War Memorial upgrade – a project which had stimulated Edinbane to look at doing a similar project.

**AGM date** is set for Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012. **Mr Rodger** noted the date.

**Mr Rodger** informed the Trustees that **Vattenfall Veterans**, (long time people who have worked in the company) are coming to Skye in May 2012, exact date yet to be confirmed.

Also he can take requests for visits and tours round the Wind Farm e.g. from school groups. It is expected that these can be accommodated after Easter.

**[John MacKinnon leaves the meeting at 7.30pm.]**

Mrs Munro tabled an advert that had been placed in the **West Highland Free Press** on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012 by Dunvegan Community Trust, advertising their “**Employment Development Grant**”.

Mr Beaton asked if, as Dunvegan are a Charitable Trust, would this make a difference as to how they can make Grant?

This was discussed and the general thought was that, in light of the matters discussed in this meeting, that this was an idea that this Trust could do.

In closing the meeting Mr Beaton expressed the Trustees' thanks to **Mr Rodger & Mr Cant** for being able to attend. This was reciprocated by **Mr Cant** who also thanked the Trustees' for all their hard work and efforts.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.40pm

#### **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Monday 23rd April 2012 Struan Primary School 7.30pm.