

Strathpeffer Community Association Board

Special General Meeting

21st September 2020 at 7.00pm, Zoom Video Meeting

Present : Peter Walling (chair) Sheila McAulay, Miranda Wharam, Kate Derbyshire, Kit Bowen, Andy Moffat, Val Moffat, Ron McAulay

Apologies : Karen Evans, Georgie Millar, Alison Wood

Purpose of the meeting.

Late in 2018, the Strathpeffer and District Community Council engaged consultants to produce a Community Action Plan for the Community. The process that followed involved various consultation events with the community at different stages of the editing and production of the plan. The Plan was published in mid-2019 and one of its main recommendations was that a development trust be established covering the Strathpeffer and District area.

What would a Development trust do?

Within the community there are a large number of different groups progressing different projects for different purposes. Each is seeking funding from the same pots. A development trust creates a vehicle that the entire community can get behind to maximise funding for the community as a whole by presenting a joined up approach in any funding applications. It also provides the correct kind of company or charity through which funding can be channelled from sources such as wind farms, etc. There are already two new proposed wind farms that the community council is in discussion with which (if successful) would generate additional funding for the community through community benefit schemes. The current funding from the benefit scheme operated by the EDF Corriemoille wind farm fund could also be channelled through the trust.

There are many examples of successful trusts in local communities such as Garve and Ullapool where substantial funding has been obtained and used to the benefit of the local community.

Why use the Strathpeffer Community Association Company as the trust?

The Community Council had thought about setting up a separate stand-alone charity (SCIO) or company but it was suggested that given there were already a number of charitable companies or SCIOs in the village (e.g the SCA Ltd., the Peffery Way Association, the Strathpeffer Pavilion Community Trust and the Museum of Childhood), it would make sense to convert one of the existing companies rather than create another. Amongst other benefits, this would avoid creating additional costs for the community of operating another company. It also begins to address the task of pulling together some of these groups to work more closely together as is already happening with the latest Heritage Lottery Funding work.

Motion 1 – Do the members agree in principle to the company becoming a development trust which will operate for the benefit of the residents of the Strathpeffer and District area?

Motion 1 –Vote unanimously carried.

As an interim step, a number of amendments to the current constitution of the company are proposed. They are highlighted in yellow in the previously circulated document. These amendments do not require any prior approval of Companies House or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Approving these amendments would assist with showing clear intent to create a trust and would help with the progression of projects such as the Heritage Lottery Fund application and a second application to the Town Centre Fund for further funding for the Square improvements. The SCA could be used as the vehicle for these applications even though further amendments will probably be needed to the articles of the company at a later date.

Motion 2 - Do the members agree to these amendments to the constitution?

Motion 2- Vote unanimously carried.

Advice received from the Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS), suggests that the current articles of the company and the constitution are rather dated and old fashioned. They have suggested that if the company is to operate as a full development trust, the articles should be updated and as part of those updates, the object of the company should be amended or expanded. It is also possible that the name of the company may need to be amended to incorporate a reference to the development trust (e.g. Strathpeffer Community Association (incorporating Strathpeffer and District Development Trust) Ltd. or simply Strathpeffer and District Development Trust Ltd.).

Changing the name and/or objects of the company will require prior consent from both Companies House and OSCR. This process can take some months to complete.

Motion 3 – Do the members agree that such amendments should be made and prior consent of both Companies House and OSCR be obtained before the matter is brought back to another Special General Meeting (SGM) for approval of the members? This second SGM would be held at a date in around six months to a year from now?

Motion 3- Vote unanimously carried.

Meeting ended.