Great Bernera Community Development Trust Board Meeting
Date: 28th September 2026 @ 19.30

Present: John Porteous (JP) (Chair). Mark Bryant (MB) (virtual), Neil James Macaulay (NJM) (virtual), Anna Macdonald (AM), Calum Fraser (CF), Brenda Jones (joined at 8.30) (BJ)

In attendance: Jonny Mallabar (JM), Development Officer

Apologies: None

Ref.	Item	Action by
1	**Minutes of Board meeting 12th August 2026**	
	Agreed as a true record	NOTE
2	**Matters arising from the minutes**	
2.1	**Catherine Muir**	
	JP had heard back from Catherine who confirmed she wanted to resign as a Director (Action Closed) JM suggested changing the password on the Trust generic email address every time a director leaves. This has now been actioned with the recent board changes for the trustbernera@hotmail.com account. (Action Closed)	NOTE
2.2	**AGM**	
	AGM activity is now closed. AGM minutes were not sent to Stornoway Gazette in the end as the article was already published and press coverage had moved on.	NOTE
2.3	**Accounts**	
	Section moved to6.1	
2.4	**E-bikes**	
	JM - NFU has been asked to include e-bike insurance within the overall Dubh Thob insurance policy. Awaiting update from NFU. It was also noted that the electrician is being asked to install a power socket into the electricity shed to enable charging of the batteries in accordance with the Fire Risk Assessment report	NOTE
2.5	**Communication - Management of email communications**	
	JM is now monitoring trustbernera email account and forwarding to appropriate Directors as necessary. Password for the hotmail account can be shared on request (Action Closed)	NOTE
2.6	**Estate Buyout - Mapping**	
	JP advised that responses from Murchison Law regarding agreement of the final estate mapping had been slow and was concerned this was a stalling tactic. JP advised Total Design to finalise plan updates. JP advised that HIE won't meet costs of mapping exercise.	NOTE
2.7	**Insurance**	
	JP has put Directors + Officers insurance in place (Action Closed)	NOTE
2.8	**Dubh Thòb**	
i	**Proposed acquisition of land from CnES**	
	JP advised the council that this is now undergoing a community consultation process the results of which will determine next steps. Two options were being discussed, differences in the extent of the transfer. BJ - made the point that we should only buy the land if we have a clear use for it, and that we need to know how we are going to make it better for the users. NJM - mentioned that if the Wind farm happened then there might be a lot of heavy machinery being off loaded, and that fishermen may object to any additional land use. The point was made that we shouldn't put all our eggs into one basket, and couldn't bank on N4 going ahead. JP - action - John sending through details for asset transfer to NJM so that he can take over management of it. MB - made the point that whatever we do we need to keep Dubh Thob alive and vibrant.	JP/NJM

	JP - noted that the council does not currently have any wayleaves with SSEN. This would be a potential income stream if we had the land, which the council was not currently collecting. NJM agreed to take the lead on the consultation with Kirkibost Pier users.	
ii	**Facilities Building**	
	JP - facilities building ramp has been extended. Concrete now needs to be rendered and hand rail attached. The WC door needs replacing as not suitable for disabled users. The contractor (Alex Murray) has agreed to split the cost as it is arguable whose fault it was, because the change was made between issued designs. This leaves us with a bill for £800. JM - ACES electrician has estimated 6 weeks before being able to quote for the work. The board agreed we should seek another supplier. NJM - knew of electricians who may be interested in the work and will make enquiries (Action NJM)	NJM
iii	**Risk Assessment**	
	Legionella risk is managed by ensuring that the water temperature is maintained at 60°C at the tap. NJM mentioned that on CalMac ships a tablet is added to the water tanks periodically JM confirmed with Callum Macaulay that adding a tablet was not possible as it is a closed system and not accessible in that way.	NOTE
iv	**Volunteer**	
	MB asked about involvement of David Macdonald in the community consultation process. JM mentioned his availability had been difficult, but he is still involved and invited to the meeting on the 1st.	NOTE
2.9	**Development Officer**	
	AM - mentioned that the HIE claims process was not all that clear or understood. AM and JM were going to work through the DTAS expenses which should help clarify things. AM - will confirm if the advertising costs for the role can be claimed (Action AM)	AM
3.0	**Pontoon management procedures**	
	JM to arrange to meet Stornoway Port's operations manager for a briefing about how they manage their pontoons (Action JM)	JM
	JM had Action to find out what vessel Insurance companies' requirements are for winter. JP thought that these were to check that the pontoon met individual insurance policy conditions, rather than some specific standard for us to follow. As these can not be known in advance any problems would be handled on a case by case basis. No further action required. JP & JM agreed that Pontoon Management Procedures needed to be formalised and published ahead of next season BJ - revisited this topic and made the point that our current, draft, operating procedures were not sufficient and needed more work to be compliant.	NOTE
4.0	**Buyout procedure**	
i	MB & JM had a meeting with the HIE Community Asset unit where there was advice on how to proceed and lots of support for the challenge ahead. JM - as JP missed meeting JM agreed to set up a followup call with Sandra Holmes so that JP can discuss the advice given, specifically with regards to the mapping approach.	JM
ii	JP - it appears that people are building houses without de-crofting the land, and that is why there have not been recent changes to the Register of Scotland. The decision not to de-croft was due to the landlord being too difficult to deal with. NJM - agreed that the landlord was difficult and he did not de-croft his house for that very reason JP confirmed we are well positioned to proceed with the buy out. Articles are complete and there is a Business Plan, but it needs updating following the community consultation.	NOTE
5	**Dubh Thob**	
	JP - there are plans to improve fendering for outer leg due to being used by smaller boats than originally envisaged, and that there is funding from Crown Estates to fit extra timber. JP - looking into extending the pontoons by 50m. This would provide capacity for drafts of up to 3m, allowing us to accommodate 12 - 15 metre yachts. JM - Grant application submitted to Crown Estates to fund feasibility study. NJM - mentioned potential for service boats to use Kirkibost pier/pontoon to service N4 wind turbines if approved. Cats only draw about 5 feet of water, so could be a good potential income for the pontoon	NOTE
6.0	**Finances**	
6.1	**Bank balances**	
i	MB reported as follows: ACCOUNTS UPDATE Balance on August 12th: £24402.22 Income: £2309.47 Outgoings: £7035.19 Balance on September 28th: £19676.50 Outgoings this month, beyond the usual utilities (BT, EE, Valda, Xero); salary's £4190.21; DTAS	NOTE

	conference £537.24; IT equipment £1903 (Accountancy Note: Salary, DTAS Conference and IT Equipment are all fully funded by HIE) Income this month, beyond BAU; donation from Ewan Kennedy £1000.00.	
ii	**Outstanding debtors (money owed to the Trust)**	
	Approximately £4k of aged debtors BJ - made the point that it is important we chase aged debt from a reputational perspective. JM - took action to set up meeting with Donna at CIB to work through aged debts and move us to a known and actionable position	JM
iii	CF - has managed to unlock the TSB account. He thinks a bank mandate still needs to be put in place as no updates have come through. JM - suggested we wait to make any further changes after his probation period as that will end in a month, and then the plan is to allow him to have full access to manage the account.	NOTE
6.2	**Pontoon Profit & Loss**	
i	JM - stated that although the pontoon was at near capacity it was unlikely to be profitable when all costs were included, such as the £2700 maintenance fund which should have been set aside each year. MB - raised the question of revised pricing for next year and whether that would cover the shortfall. It was agreed that revised pricing should be presented to the board for approval at the next meeting. JM - took the action to produce a P&L specifically for the Pontoon and a suggested pontoon rate card for the next meeting.	JM
ii	BJ - Mentioned marketing in the yachting press and whether we could advertise with, or get help from, the government tourist organisation called Sail Scotland. JM - raised a concern over the marketing budget itself and that we should proceed cautiously and where possible make use of sailing forums and online discussion groups. JM - took action to come back with a marketing proposal	NOTE JM
iii	Vending Machines There was a discussion about vending machines and whether one could be put at the facilities building as a service for Yacht customers. JM mentioned that Peter Fleming had been considering this as well for customers using the electric vehicle charger. MB - mentioned the idea of an Honesty Box and Careen's experience of Bernera Bakes, which had been tried in the past. BJ - mentioned that a QR code could be used to make it easier to pay, and Mark had set this up for the BCA AM - suggested we should start small by selling some items to gauge demand.. Discussion concluded that this could be something which could grow based on demand and no immediate action was taken	NOTE
7	**AOB**	
i	**Consultation**	
a	JM - raised the community engagement and the need for a flip chart and food and wine. It was agreed that he could procure both from Stornoway and expense it.	JM
b	BJ - mentioned the next stage of the consultation plan to have a drop in desk at the community centre. A discussion was held about timing it to coincide with the cafe's winter opening times and this was seen as a good idea, and could simply involve a table in the cafe when open. JM - suggested whether this should be a shared activity JM - suggested we could also consider a breakfast meeting to try and attract people we are not currently reaching. A discussion was held on the difficulty of involving the crofting community.	NOTE
iii	**Scottish Legal Complaints Commission**	
	MB - had written to the SLCC about the trust wrongly being named as the defendant in the original Kellerman writ. SLCC had responded that we have a valid complaint and MB was submitting a claim for our legal fees and time and energy spent defending the case.	
8.0	**Date of next meeting**	
	Wednesday 21st October, 7.30pm	