

# Fife Coast and Countryside Trust Board of Management Meeting

Kinghorn Coastal Office, Kinghorn

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024

In attendance: Stephen Carter (Chair, SC), Jill Miller (JM), Rhona McInroy (RM), Sheila Boardman (Treasurer, SB), Jeremy Harris (JH), Ed Heather-Hayes (EHH), George Eaves (GE), Tom Quayle (TQ), Cllr James Leslie (JL), Phil Teale (PT), Cllr Brian Goodall (BG), Caroline Warburton (CW), Fiona Partington (FP) (Minutes) Cllr Colin Davidson (CD), Sarah Lonie (SL), Cllr Fiona Corps (FC), Neil McCormick (NM), Suzanne Roberts (SR), and Caroline Warburton (CW)

Apologies: Robbie Blyth (RB)

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

SC brought the meeting to order and welcomed all.

- Apologies were noted from RB
- JH spoke to the Board Christmas gifts

SC noted that he would be standing down in March 2025. Independent Board Members had been invited to express interest in taking on the office of Chair at the least meeting. SC proposed that JM (who had expressed interest) be appointed as the new Chair of the FCCT Board. His suggestion was met with unanimous support and JM accepted the role and will take over formally at the next meeting.

**Decision:** JM to assume the office of Chair of the FCCT Board at the meeting scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.

## 2. Declaration of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest noted for any agenda items of this meeting.

## 3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted as accurate, proposed by SR, seconded by PT and adopted as an accurate record.

## 4. Matters Arising

JH led the discussion of the matters arising, noting 1 completed action and 2 actions progressing.

## 5. Health & Safety Report

JH & FP spoke to the H&S report noting the following in addition to the submitted report;

- an additional referral to OH for work related stress, and
- HR informed about a member of staff suffering from a recent flair up of sciatica, noted as likely exacerbated by their tree planting work.

FP went on to note that GE has been spearheading a movement towards reporting near misses and improving H&S knowledge within his team, FP finished by speaking to the pattern of increased OH referrals and usage related to line-managers being reminded about this option as part of the Trust's policies.

## 6. Risk Register Review

JH presented the risk register, noting 5 changed risks and 5 existing risks. FP gave the Board an update in regard to FCs response to their recent minor data breach whereby a non FCCT member of staff was accidentally assigned access to FCCT SharePoint libraries. FC resolved the issue and have put measures in place to prevent further occurrence. JH went on to speak to recent discussions with FC regarding RNLI costs. JH went on to note the continued lack of movement in regard to the Coastal Centre due to financial constraints noting similar issues in regard to capital funding for vehicles, noting a request for funding had been submitted to FC for vehicles.

JH went on to note the changed risks remarking on a reduction to Risk ID009 (Health & Safety) due to the HR Administrator post being filled and the H&S work being carried out by GE. An increase to Risk ID011 (Attract & retain key staff) was noted due to delays in evaluating key posts. JH noted a reduction to Risk ID024 (HMH café) due to initial good response to the letter of notice. Discussion followed. NM spoke to the capital funding for vehicles. JH expressed an interest in FCCT making use of vehicles no longer required by partners such as NHS.

### **Action:**

NM to explore whether NHS can transfer or sell vehicles to FCCT as part of their planned disposal.

SL queried if FCCT will be capturing emissions of vehicles, TQ noted this would be included within the Green Team work. GE spoke to the range limitations of EVs that has presented a barrier. NM spoke to constraints related to charging infrastructure. Discussion followed. SL suggested that there might be funding available for charities to move to EVs.

### **Action:**

EHH to look into funding for EVs

BG spoke to FC's perspective in regard to capital planning, asking if FCCT might produce a document noting capital and revenue priorities that may then be circulated by the secretaries to each political group and profiled by FCCT's Board members who are part of those groups. JH noted that FCCT includes this information in the communities and neighbourhoods reporting and provides further information to the Council Leader. JH stated he will develop a document that can be shared more widely.

### **Action:**

JH/SMT to produce a members brief outlining FCCT's Capital and Revenue funding priorities as soon as possible and pass on to political group secretaries.

RM asked for a timeline for establishing FCCT emissions. Discussion followed. Progress will be reported at next Board Meeting

### **Action:**

TQ & EHH to define scope of emissions to be considered and feed into green team so that a realistic target can be set for establishing a sensible baseline. EHH & TQ to check feasibility with FP in consideration of available data and capacity/tools to analyse data.

## 7. Committee Reports

JH/SR spoke to the Comms & Fundraising meeting noting good progress with Actions. Discussion followed regarding due diligence and reputational risk related to funding and donors of various kinds. JM noted that policy around funders should tie in with the ethical investment policy as these matters

are related. SR requested that Board members interact and share social media, noting FCCTs increasing presence on LinkedIn.

**Action:** Board members to interact with and share social media

BG spoke to methods of increasing public awareness of FCCTs charitable status, suggesting a more proactive approach. JH spoke to the strategic focus of strengthening relations with FC and building project revenue, noting that these are both working well and an expectation that coming months/years will see the focus shift to revenue generation (making use of the Trading Subsidiary as necessary) and developing philanthropic contributions as suggested by BG.

SC spoke to the HR & Remuneration meeting noting ongoing evaluation of SMT roles. JH spoke to the staff survey noting 29 responses and a plan to analyse data and report to the next HR & Remuneration meeting. Discussion followed.

CD left the meeting.

JH went on to discuss his attendance at the scrutiny committee, noting good questions and levels of interest from Elected Members and some positive feedback.

SB spoke to the Audit & Finance meeting noting the deficit in the period principally related to the timing of project funding and delivery. SB went on to note that the predicted costs show an improvement due to income from the Shared Prosperity fund. SB explained the rationale for holding appropriate levels of reserves noting OSCR best-practice and cash-flow challenges, and unforeseen expenses. SB went on to note that £250k will be moved into a higher interest bank account, noting recent discussions around ethical banking and work the Green Team have been doing around the environmental impact of banking. A&F will continue to consider FCCT's banking provider. SB went on to note the procurement policy and limits and decisions taken at A&F. RM asked for clarification of the unrestricted funds graph and asked what unrestricted funds are being spent on. EHH spoke to FCCTs current practice of relying on project income to cover the budget deficit. SB spoke to the lack of predictability for capital funding and core cost funding on a year-by-year basis. Noting that the graph illustrates the need for the organisation to retain healthy levels of unrestricted funds. Discussion followed.

NM raised a query about risk in relation to finances and if there is a need to be more granular in noting finance related risks implicit to the discussion about unpredictability of income. JH explained the role that the A&F committee play in managing financial risk at a granular level and agreed to consider with the Committee and SMT the wording in the Risk Register (Risk ID002). JL asked the value of the long-term investment. SB noted this as £603k as per A&F meeting in September, noting ongoing change. Discussion followed.

**Action:** JH to consider with the A&F Committee and SMT the wording of Risk ID002 in the Risk Register.

## 8. Executive Team Reports

FP spoke to the Support Services Report.

TQ spoke to the Conservation & Engagement Report.

JH & GE spoke to the Operations Report.

EHH spoke to the Development Report.

**Action:** TQ to notify the Board when the Claire Balding recording goes live.

SR raised influencers, for discussion, CW noted that her team can check out influencers in regard to suitability.

**Action:** Audrey & Marjory to check in with CW about influencers.

BG spoke to a path diversion at Inverkeithing replacement High school (in Rosyth) noting a request to the Council to get confirmation from the developer about where the route is diverted to.

CW flagged that JH and RB attended a group that CW chairs regarding motorhome management. CW thanked JH and RB noting there may be an opportunity to charge a consultancy fee if future meetings emerge.

CW stated that the Rural Tourism Infrastructure fund received circa £4 million and asked the team to start thinking about what might be put forward for that fund.

JH ended this segment by speaking to the aspirational targets slide noting orange as changes, green as keep and red as gone. CW suggested changing the wording of the red selections rather than removing them.

**Action:** JH to amend the wording of aspirational targets that have been deemed unachievable.

## 9. AOB

None noted. Meeting End.

Date of the next meeting: Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at Kinghorn Coastal Office

## Summary of actions & decisions:

### **Actions:**

- NM to explore whether NHS can transfer or sell vehicles to FCCT as part of their planned disposal.
- EHH to look into funding for EVs
- JH/SMT to produce a members brief outlining FCCT's Capital and Revenue funding priorities as soon as possible and pass on to political group secretaries.
- TQ & EHH to define scope of emissions to be considered and feed into green team so that a realistic target can be set for establishing a sensible baseline. EHH & TQ to check feasibility with FP in consideration of available data and capacity/tools to analyse data.
- Board members to interact with and share social media.
- JH to consider with the A&F Committee and SMT the wording of Risk ID002 in the Risk Register.
- TQ to notify the Board when the Claire Balding recording goes live.
- Audrey & Marjory to check in with CW about influencers.
- JH to amend the wording of aspirational targets that have been deemed unachievable.

### **Decision:**

- JM to assume the office of Chair of the FCCT Board at the meeting scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.