

IGHT Board meeting

Monday 16th January 2023 at 7pm
Trust Office / Microsoft Teams

Present: Andy Clements (AC), Jane Clements (JC), Fergus Christie (FC), Jane Millar (JM), Jon Grunseth (JG), John McDonald (JMcD), Viv Oliver (VO), Ian Pinniger (IP), Ian Wilson (IW)

Apologies: Graham White (GW)

Minutes: Jane Millar

1. Chair Welcome & Apologies

IW welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from GW.

2. Countryside Ranger Service

Casey-Jo Zammit (CZ) presented a proposal about the Ranger Service and Woodland Management Plan. A copy is appended to these minutes.

CZ met Ian Dow, ACT Woodland Coordinator, to discuss the Rainforest Restoration Project. Mastercard are looking to off-set their carbon emissions and have approached ACT to deliver a project to achieve this and ACT are proposing IGHT is one of the project recipients/partners. This project would result in trees being planted across IGHT land and be fully funded and managed through ACT. IGHT and community members would be involved in the planning and implementation stages. The project is a 5-year contract and IGHT would be responsible for monitoring. The board agreed that a meeting with Ian Dow of ACT should be arranged as soon as possible.

CZ submitted a paper based on the community consultation feedback on the Ranger Service and what the primary focus should be. CZ has prepared an outline of potential job duties and costs and has requested the board review this and firm up a Job Description prior to a new contract being issued for 1st April 2023. The board agreed to discuss and review this information.

3. Gateway to Gigha

Craig Whyte (CW) joined the meeting to present an update on the timescale and budgetary issues for the Gateway to Gigha project completion. The final phase of paths has secured planning permission however there are roads conditions which will incur additional unexpected costs. The board agreed to a maximum of £10k overspend on the project if necessary to bring it to completion, however the project should continue to keep a tight control over the budget. These planning conditions are also likely to incur additional time in securing the accredited contractor, therefore the project is seeking a 2-month extension from funders, bringing the completion date to 31st May 2023. It was agreed that the capital works should be completed by end of April, giving the project the month of May to submit final paperwork and claims. The project needs to conclude as soon as possible to allow the Trust's cash position to stabilise.

CZ and CW left the meeting.

4. Monthly Management Report

The November & December 2022 Management Reports were received, and no questions were raised.

5. Staffing Update

Financial support

Quotes have been received from accountancy firms and a consultant to provide 3 services – financial support, preparing annual accounts, and the annual audit. IP proposed Geoghegans accountancy firm, as did FC. The board recognised that RA Clement provides years of knowledge on the IGHT group, however Geoghegans could bring a fresh approach and all services under one firm. The board agreed to move forward with Geoghegans. JM is to follow up with Geoghegans and IW to speak with RA Clement in the coming week.

Gardens team

The board approved offering Morgan the Assistant Gardener/First Gardener position following the completion of her current apprenticeship contract.

The board are aware that Maurice has been a good addition to the team and will review the annual budget and funding opportunities before proposing to offer a further contract.

Annual wage review

Delfinity have been providing IGHT with HR support since 2018 at an hourly rate of £67.50 + VAT.

Delfinity have agreed to continue to provide their services at this rate.

Delfinity can carry out a staff salary/wage review ahead of April 2023. They use a UK wide databased and Scottish benchmarking system to review salaries and will then make recommendations directly to the board. Delfinity expect this to take half of a day to produce this. The board approved to move forward with this as it will remove conflict from board and staff members when reviewing wages.

Maintenance Team

Malky is retiring in September 2023; therefore, the board need to consider the maintenance team vacancy. Once financial support is in place, the budget can be reviewed which may determine what type of vacancy the board can advertise.

6. Gigha Hotel and Craft Workshop 3

AC had a meeting with Ken on Friday. They discussed some complaints received. The bar is still not completed or opened yet.

JC, VO, and JG are to meet with Andzela late on 18th January regarding Craft Unit 3.

7. Housing

VO said the Home Hunt is to be reviewed. The Allocation group are to come back with recommendations initially, then VO and Shona to provide some suggestions before taking this to the board to review. It was agreed there is a need to define key workers again and include this within an update policy.

8. Income Generation proposals from VO

VO has prepared a paper on suggested income generating projects. A copy is appended to these minutes.

Tiny Homes

VO proposed that the board investigate Tiny Homes which is affordable modular and off-grid homes provider which are delivered almost ready built. IGHT could borrow money to deliver a number of these homes which could then be leased to businesses on the island who need to accommodate staff. There is also potential for volunteer accommodation which could also be let as visitor accommodation when vacant. The board will review the information gathered by VO and discuss at their next meeting.

Renewables Officer

VO proposed GREL/GGPL consider employing a Renewables Officer to focus on the future planning of these companies as well as reviewing other community initiatives. The GREL/GGPL board are meeting on 23rd January and will discuss this.

9. Agricultural support

IGHT was approached by Bell Ingram who provide a range of services, including agricultural support. They have presented a proposal of their services and fees for ad-hoc support. Their costings are slightly less than Bidwells were previously, therefore the board agreed for AC to proceed to using their services on an ad-hoc basis. Quotes should be received in advance of any specific project.

10. Board Matters

Training

Delfinity can provide board training following a skills audit which is tailored to the board's requirements. This is expected to be 2 days work at Delfinity's hourly rate. The board approved to move forward with training.

2023 Draft Action Plan

The board agreed to review and make suggestions for their next meeting.

Subsidiary Companies

The GREL/GGPL and GTL boards are meeting in the next week. It was agreed to speak with the new Accountants in the coming months to review the future of the subsidiary companies.

11. Working Groups

FC is to start up the Memo & Arts working group again.

12. Correspondence

Gordon Brown provided some initial information on Woodland Management Plan. This is to be reviewed further and in conjunction with the ACT proposal.

13. AOB

VO requested that Director Register of Interests need to declare any leases including woodland and agricultural land.

Next meeting date – Monday 20th February 2023 at 7pm.