

WATIF Board Meeting Minutes 10th April 7pm

		Action Points
1	<p>Welcome and apologies.</p> <p>Present – Trustees: Tabatha McCree-Cox (chair), Geraldine Hamilton, Patrick Baxter, Wendy Innes, Doug Schreiber</p> <p>Pat Mavor (CO), Helen Boath – Treasurer, Leanne Taylor (minute taker)</p> <p>Apologies – Charlie Campbell, Alistair Marshall, Alison Bell</p> <p>Tabatha welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that we had invited 2 observers to the meeting Gail McFadden & Anita Esslemont however unfortunately they were unable to attend, they have been invited to attend the next meeting if they wish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote for Coopted Trustee Doug Schreiber was unanimous yes by all board members present. 	
2	<p>Minutes of Board meeting for approval – 6th Feb 2025</p> <p>Approved unanimously</p> <p>AP3: – Resilience team to review plan and take back to board in April- outstanding</p>	AP1 – Resilience team to review & feedback to board via email in May
3	<p>Operational Workstream Update Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ops – With part of the 10k grant from Social Enterprise we have purchased an EPOS system and covered the fees for the 1st year. With the remainder of the grant, we have purchased a system called Upshot which is a volunteer monitoring and evaluation system that we seen when we visited Beith Development Trust which will make Jules and Steph's jobs much easier, Tabatha checked the security of the system and it ticks all the boxes. • Transport – Susan leaving was a concern however Pat confirmed that all has been working well using volunteer drivers and staff for bookings. • Tearoom – Went over report. Spoke about how Diner night was a success and a good learning opportunity for the team. The tearoom is requiring significant monthly subsidising from the charity funds. Pat and team reviewing options for efficiencies. • Community Projects – Discussed report and the need to keep looking at accessibility for all areas. • Community Workshop – Went over report, discussed H&S and lone working. Patrick would like to look at ideas for activities that are income generating. Geraldine asked if users paying for materials and Patrick confirmed this is being considered. • Environment/Paths – Spoke about land at Auchengray and Loanhead being made accessible. Pat says that it will cost WATIF significant funds so may need to be phased. Doug said you can get various path designs now. Pat said we need to also be thinking of not just what is needed now but for the future. Tabatha said that some 	

	<p>path designs worth considering would be the mesh netting army use or the temporary pathways they use at agricultural shows. Discussed the kids play park and may look at doing something ourselves – Doug reminded the team to get accessible users to sign off and check the facilities design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Impact – Discussed report and Tabs advised that Steph has been doing a lot of work around individual reports and would people like these to be sent which everyone agreed, and Doug said the more evidence we have to support what we are doing the better. • Volunteering – We have corporate volunteer days to organise with NatWest who are looking to return and Edinburgh Airport. Doug asked who VASLAN and Covey were that were mentioned in the report and Pat confirmed who they were. Jules is currently working with 3rd parties to assist in getting a befriending project set up. • Grants – activity has been quiet – Doug asked if we advertise them widely which was confirmed. • H&S – Good news that no accidents reported since last meeting. Well done to Patrick and all involved on H&S for community workshop. • Verbal Update Loanhead Farm including Cowbyre stage 1 – Pat explained that funders happy that £130k spent as planned by end of March. Will now look at how the next £200k grant can be spent. Architect and QS looking at plans to extend farmhouse for more useable space for tearoom and larger kitchen. All subject to planning and building warrant. Current activities to cost out toilet pod for barn and once the figures are available, she will engage with the funders and feedback to the board. Consideration is required to understand how the 2nd phase fits into business plan. Phase 1 Contractor has been fantastic with works so far. Pat explained to Doug what original plans were and why the need to phase the project due to the funding gap, restrictions on WATIF funds and the economic environment. • Verbal update Community Dinner & Chat – Pat went over the paper that has been pulled together after strategy day and dinner and chat. Once we know where our key themes and priorities are we can decide what to work on. Pat thought it was interesting that people were keen to engage in the process and understood the need for income generation. Feedback around the boards activities was raised and increasing communication on what the boards does was thought to be a good idea. One suggested area was a Chair's blog <p>Geraldine asked what Chairs Blog is – Tabatha confirmed an idea for the Community Matters newsletter so people know what the Board have been doing. This links to a need to detail out our communication and engagement strategy so that we have a clear understanding of how this will work now and in the future as Loanhead expands and activities across WATIF are developed</p> <p>Tabatha and Pat have met with an independent contractor who offered to work with us to pull together all areas of communication and engagement. The view was that this is an important area and with the correct evaluation framework could create some powerful information to help the board make decisions in the future. Doug confirmed that the independent aspect for the work gives us a non-biased view. Helen said this would help with our funders too and that from an audit side of things communication is getting more focus and understanding and measuring its impacts.</p> <p>Doug asked is there an index for what corporate responsibility is, Tabatha confirmed no records for this areas to date and that WATIF should be using some measures especially around social impact but we haven't to do date done this – one of the better companies at this are Lidos who use the Scottish National Framework. This is an area the strategy will help us shape going forward</p>	<p>AP2 – Tabatha to send Steph's individual reports.</p> <p>AP3 – Tabatha to send round paper</p> <p>AP4 – Board minutes to be posted online now that new website has been launched. Ilka/Leanne</p>
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Finance

- Q1 figures – underspend of £25k compared to budget. Forecast for the year underspend of £51k.

Helen advised one of the things we need to be considering is our income. Our main source of income is the windfarms however this is a fixed amount and covers most of our operational costs but not all of them. Helen and the team will be reviewing this and will split project and core costs out so that costs profiles can be clearer and where grants are allocated with revenue vs capital funds and the allocations that can be made to core costs. Tabatha confirmed that there have been cashflow issues and by splitting these costs out we can see exactly where we stand and understand exactly what we have to spend across projects vs keeping the lights on.

Treasurer and Finance team will be looking at alternative funding, reviewing the budget, reviewing operational costs and will report back to the Ops sub group in due course.

Also confirmed that it's not easy out there for any organisations at the moment.

Doug asked taking away capital costs where are we net to breaking even? Helen confirmed this is what we're looking at but an estimate would be £50k adrift between wind turbine income and core costs outlay.

Tabatha said it was worth noting that Pat and the team are trying hard to bring in what they can from additional grants – currently £83k to date. It was noted that £65k of grant applications had been unsuccessful to date. Helen said we're fortunate that we did get funding and although Cowbyre project scaled back we will have a workable space.

Patrick asked if we are communicating this to the public enough?

Tabatha said as a board at the AGM should we discuss this with our membership and Pat said yes however follow up with a hard copy for people who aren't at AGM.

Doug said if we're smart and focus on the positives, not all doom and gloom, more support may be forthcoming.

Pat said maybe think of short video's to be played at AGM maybe approaching Universities who could have students to help and Helen said she may know someone that could help us.

Wendy suggested also videoing volunteer days, kids etc with their consent so people can see what we're doing. Podcasts and webinars also suggested

Tabatha said in terms of finance we have a hard couple of months coming our way but confident that we will find solutions. Helen said that if we want long term sustainability, we need to cut our costs where we can.

Annual report not quite there will come out by email in May and board to confirm by email happy with it.

AP5 – Helen to email pat with contact details

AP6 – Tabatha to email annual report to board once ready.

5	<p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job descriptions and Roles & Responsibilities have been sent to all as part of updated Trustee declaration document – completing action form the Board effectiveness review Deputy Chair role still vacant Recruitment ongoing for an additional co-opted trustee. Went over Board performance review. It was noted we could increase our communications as a board – what we're doing and why we're doing it. Consider constitution to be reviewed at end of year Confirmed that all info has been submitted to Disclosure Scotland for PVGs.. Covered off key themes from strategy day and that next date would be 8th May with the view to launch new strategy in November. Risk register – went over those for April review and updated 	AP6 – Tabatha to send Board Performance Review for actions.
6	<p>Organisational Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing update – Pat dropped 1 day a week for personal reasons. Staff Training – update on dates for various topics – details noted below <p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding training date – 12th June 1.30pm – 4pm First aid training date – 15th May 9am – 4pm Neuro diverse training – Jules looking into providers Cyber essentials accreditation- in progress GDPR training – staff & key board members –providers being considered as previous person has retired. Patrick stated that woodworking/community workshop/machine training will be needed at some stage 	AP7 – Ops team to send on dates once available
7	<p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auchengray Church Centre – all trustees retiring at end of June. Public meeting was held to discuss options and future. Wendy confirmed that there are a few local people that have approached the Fisher's to say that they would consider taking it on as a management committee to run on a day to day basis with possibly WATIF being the umbrella body for governance and compliance. The management team would look at dropping the church aspect to make it inclusive for all. <p>Doug asked if making money and it was confirmed that there is capacity for it to be money making and that there are solar panels installed which would generate income.</p> <p>Pat said that it would be awful to see it close and with a management team in place we could make it work.</p> <p>Helen said that she'd been involved with a hall that moved away from the church and they were fine with it.</p> <p>Tabatha said that more due diligence was still to be carried out but asked as a Board would we be wanting to go forward with this with a management committee in place. Board agreed happy to continue discussing.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heathland Windfarm Update – Shared ownership being investigated further target is 2030 but it is progressing again. Doug confirmed that ownership is a far better option and that it would need to be a separate entity. • Loanhead Cattlegrid – Pat advised we have been negotiating with Robert Struthers and Suzanne Higgins at Loanhead Cottage and there had been a recent meeting with all parties, Doug, Tabatha and Pat. A potential solution may have been reached where fencing and double gate instead of cattlegrid could be installed. Doug volunteered to create a plan of how this would work, fencing lines and gate positions. 	AP8 – Doug to create plan design for new gates and fencing area for Loanhead entrance
8	<p>Date of next meetings- Save the Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy evening Thursday 8th May 6.30-8.30pm • AGM Friday 16th May 6.30 for 7pm • Trustees meeting- Thursday 17th July 7pm • Trustees Meeting – 11th September - 7pm • General Meeting with community – 6th Nov - 7pm • Trustees Meeting – Draft Year End /Draft Forecast Budget for 2026 - 26th Nov 7pm • Trustees Meeting - Year End and 2026 forecast Budget sign off – 10th February 2026 	AP9 – Tabatha to send next dates