



Date/Time	12 th August 2025 at 7pm
Location	ZOOM (Video Conference)/in person at Trust Office
Attendees	Chair - Neil MacPhail (NMP), Ronnie Baird (RB), Kris Milne (KM), Martin Finnigan (MF), Mark Vale (MV), Coinneach MacKinnon (CMK)
Trust Staff	Phyl Meyer (PM), Inge Armstrong (IA). Rhoda Meek (RM)
Absent, Apologies	

1. Welcome & Introductions

Neil MacPhail (NMP) welcomed all to the Board Meeting.

Apologies from Marshall MacPhail (MMP), Matthew MacDowall (MMD), William MacLean (WAM),

2. Declaration of Conflicts

None declared.

3. Previous Meeting

a. Minutes

The July 2025 minutes were approved KM and seconded by RB.

b. Actions Update

Action #	Meeting Date	Action Description	Action Owner	Deadline	Status
206	June	Supports Proposal Rhoda to send the updated Supporters Proposal to the board	RM	July	Ongoing
205	July	HIE itinerary to be sent to the board	PM	July	Completed

c. Matters Arising

HIE meeting

PM feedback to the board that the HIE visit was a successful meeting with HIE team, with favourable comments on future projects.

Staffing – Admin Assistant

One application was received, and a meeting is to be held to discuss next steps with them.



4. Action take between meetings

The board approved expenditure for carrying out a valuation of Buth Bhaile to obtain market value and rental value.

PM to request valuation for Buth Bhaile

Action 209 - PM

Community Alliance Housing Association – board approved the Trust signing up to the new association (no cost involved).

5. 2025 Budget review

a. Budget Review update

The board discussed financial matters, including a budget deficit of £92,000 over a 6–9 month period, with MV questioning whether this was the planned budget or an actual loss. MF confirmed they are waiting for an FSG meeting on 27th August to determine Tilly funding, which was expected to be similar to last year's £150k.

b. Windfall Fund

The Windfall fund is currently closed until further updates are received about Tilley.

c. Finance Report

6. Working Group Reports

a. Crofters Support Project

IA updated the board on the Crofting Support Project and that one application have been received in July.

b. Housing Working Group

No further updates – the paperwork has been submitted to HIE for the design phase for the Scarinish Housing Project, no feedback has been received back from them.

PM mentioned that he had been approached by local resident to sell housing plots with a rural housing burden, which would require any future homes built on the land to be owner-occupied primary residences. While the resident is experiencing difficulty getting planning approval, they are willing to accept a reduced property value to facilitate affordable housing. The board noted that becoming a designated rural housing body would be necessary to implement this, and they are in the process of contacting the Scottish Government about this status. The discussion also covered potential challenges with mortgage availability and sales processes, with examples from other locations where similar arrangements have been successful.



c. Childcare Working Group

A meeting is to be held with the council on the 14th August. PM mentioned that he is expecting them not to agree to the Trust proposal, or at least not without significant pressure. PM is hoping Brodie can attend the meeting as she is part of the childcare working group and possibility of a HIE representative attending too.

d. Finance Subgroup

Meeting due to take place at the end of August.

e. Vet Project update

RM reported positive discussions with Anna and Mark about transferring the business to a community organization, though there will be a gap in coverage until October when Clyde will provide services (pregnancy tests, blood tests, etc). The board also discussed financial viability assessments for the veterinary practice, with RM requesting Martin to analyse the numbers, and they noted that the British Veterinary Association is interested in supporting the community ownership model.

RM gave options to the board on the structuring of the business, including separating veterinary services from asset ownership, and considered using a cooperative model. The board discussed insurance requirements, potential membership fees, and the need to consult with the RCVS about staffing requirements. They agreed to approach the outgoing vet about transferring the practice at asset value and to prepare information for a community meeting in October.

Next steps are to see if it is financially viable, legalities, meeting with TRD and Highlands and Islands senior vet.

7. Staff Activity Reports

Funding

Solar PV project has been approved – approximately £180k, CARES are paying 80% of the project, and there is a possibility that HIE will cover the remaining 20%. If HIE do not cover the other 20% then it would be requested that the Trust covers the shortfall on behalf of TCEL, this is an excellent investment opportunity for the Trust.

The contractor has completed a site visit and is finalizing costs, which are expected within two weeks.

PM asked the board to approve the shortfall if HIE do not cover the 20% as TCEL currently do not have the funds available – MF requested that at least two of the variables be positive before a decision is made, i.e. will they say yes, how long will it take for them to decide and lastly how much would they grant if they said yes.

PM to respond on the decision from HIE to the board via email

Action 207 – PM



Scottish Climate Engagement fund

This application was unsuccessful, we were hoping to match this grant with the partnership project grant from Open University, to cover the costs of the project officer role, PM and RM will be relooking at this regarding funding, etc.

8. AOB

Bùth a' Bhaile meeting

The board discussed the potential sale of a shop to its current tenant, Elaine, who expressed interest in buying it to expand her business. They agreed to get a valuation of the property and determine if there are any restrictions on selling it due to previous funding conditions. PM mentioned that the sale of the shop may have an impact on the adjacent filling station, which currently relies on the shop staff for supervision. They decided to wait for the valuation results before making a decision on either selling the property or increasing the rent.

PM to revert back to board on the previous funding conditions

Action 208 – PM

9. DONM

9th September 2025 – 7pm.

10. Action Summary

Action #	Meeting Date	Action Description	Action Owner	Deadline	Status
206	June	Supporters Proposal Rhoda to send the updated Supporters Proposal to the board	RM	July	Ongoing
207	August	Solar Project PM to respond on the decision from HIE to the board via email	PM	September	New
208	August	Buth Bhaile PM to revert back to board on the previous funding conditions.	PM	September	New
209	August	Buth Bhaile PM to request valuation of the building, etc.	PM	September	New