



Date/Time	8 July 2025 at 7pm
Location	ZOOM (Video Conference)/in person at Trust Office
Attendees	Chair - Neil MacPhail (NMP), Ronnie Baird (RB), Kris Milne (KM), William MacLean (WAM), Martin Finnigan (MF), Marshall MacPhail (MMP)
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 Matthew MacDowall (MMD), Mark Vale (MV), Coinneach MacKinnon (CMK),

2. Declaration of Conflicts

None declared.

3. Previous Meeting

a. Minutes

The June 2025 minutes were approved NMP and seconded by KM.

b. Actions Update

Action #	Meeting Date	Action Description	Action Owner	Deadline	Status
201	March	Expenses and travel policy The drafted/added to finance control procedure policy for next board meeting	PM/IA	April	Done
205	June	Buth Bhaile Meeting to be arranged with Elaine Date has been arranged	PM	July	Completed
206	June	Supporters Proposal Rhoda to send the updated Supporters Proposal to the board	RM	July	Ongoing

c. Matters Arising

No matters arising



4. Action take between meetings

A staff severance agreement for reasons of ill health was agreed via email since the last meeting and has been actioned.

5. 2025 Budget review

a. Budget Review update

We are still in the same situation regarding Tilley, which is still producing steadily at 66% of maximum capacity, with further repairs still due by Enercon. Recent funding results have been positive with Bòrd na Gàidhlig offering the full amount which was applied for - £99,000 over the next nearly 3 years. This will cover most of the salary of RM and contribute towards a Gaelic youth worker assistant role. Still awaiting word on our application to the Climate Engagement Fund, and on our full application to CARES for community renewables generation funding for the solar PV project at the Business Units. PM updated the board on the progress of the solar and battery project at business units, which received interim funding from SSEN to proceed with grid connection and noted positive results from contractor tendering for the project.

b. Windfall Fund

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

c. Finance Report

No further updates. RB requested a breakdown of the legal fees within the finance report – which was provided at the end of the meeting but will also be circulated by Shari.

6. Working Group Reports

a. Crofters Support Project

IA updated the board on the Crofting Support Project and that two applications have been received in July, one being approved and paid out and the other requires further paperwork.

b. Housing Working Group

PM updated the board on Scarinish housing project, in particular with where the funding is up to. RB suggested that as this Board will be responsible for financial sign-off it is important that they see more detail on the final breakdown of fees and funding – PM agreed and suggested that we should be in a position to have this by the September board meeting.

The board also discussed/explored alternative housing options, including a potentially attractive offer to purchase a house from West Highland Housing Association, and/or developing self-built plots – although we know there are significant challenges in making self-built housing financially viable. The board agreed that we should continue to explore all housing options in parallel, which are likely to meet different needs.



c. Childcare Working Group

The council have responded, and a meeting is to be held on the 14th August. PM commented that the timeline for implementing mandatory earlier years childcare by Scottish Government has now been pushed into the post-election period, making it less likely for the council to be keen to be directly involved in delivering this in the nearer term. 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.

d. Finance Subgroup

Has not met since the last meeting, and relevant updates have already been given re the Budget and financial situation. Nothing to add.

e. Vet Project update

An update was given on the recent developments regarding the project, which continues to explore multiple possible avenues to facilitate/support a viable solution to continued veterinary services in Tìree following the upcoming retirement of the existing vet.

PM has reached out to an interested party and expects shortly to have a conversation on what they would be looking for and what we can offer to help, date is still to be confirmed for the meeting with them.

RM updated the board on the new establishment of a crofting group she is part of which is focussing on contingency plans for not having a vet in place, and where they are currently are, including meeting with the Chief Veterinary Officer to discuss mandatory requirements and how subsidies could work in our context. The expected date of the closure of the existing vet practice is the 29th August.

7. Staff Activity Reports

HIE Visit

PM updated the board on an upcoming visit by the Chief Executive of HIE. The itinerary is still being finalised but is now focussing more exclusively on existing HIE funded projects, plus our housing site, but there will be opportunities to discuss potential future work (e.g. vet practice, childcare) along the way, and at lunch – which Board members are encouraged to attend.

Phyl to send an itinerary to the board once confirmed by HIE.

Action 205 – PM

Youth Activity Programme

The summer youth activities programme has started and so far, has been well attended. Donations have been received including one from the First Minister. Caitlin and Neil have started working with Willie, and that seems to be going really well.

Staffing

RB suggested that there should be more office cover across the summer period. PM has been working on getting approval from the Council work placement scheme to advertise the



proposed admin assistant placement which could help with this. A suggestion was made that we could look at bringing a likely candidate for this placement on more quickly on a temporary cover basis while we carry out a proper recruitment for the ongoing placement.

The board discussed staff pay rates for the work placement. The funding was for Real Living Wage (£12.60/hr), but it was pointed out that we a number of jobs had been going for £15/hr locally recently, and we had offered that rate for the summer youth work assistants. The Board deciding to pay the placement £15 per hour, with the Trust “topping up” the funding, which would cost a maximum of an additional £1,872 over the 26-week placement if it runs at maximum weekly hours.

The board approved rate of pay as £15 per hour for the proposed office admin position with £12.60 being covered by the funding, so the balance will be covered by the Trust.

No further updates or comments from the Board on the activity report.

8. AOB

a. FOR APPROVAL – Updated Expenses Policy

The draft policy was discussed, and it was agreed that it should be clarified that travel expenses, etc are generally only when the staff member is not in Tíree, other than for mileage and any special exceptions. Also clarify that Economy travel should be used whenever possible on any air travel. There was discussion about if signoffs could be simplified to just be by the Chief Officer, however PM indicated that he would expect the relevant line manager to approve expenses – at present this splits the load between himself and Rhoda. However, it was agreed that a reference should be added that exceptions to the usual limits could be made at the discretion of the Chief Officer, where justified (e.g. where a staff member may have limited choice for cheaper options).

The board approved the expenses policy with changes as discussed.

b. Proposal for the AGM

It was proposed to the board for the AGM to be on the 30th September.

The board reviewed the date and member availability, and suggested the 29th September, which was agreed.

c. Visitors centre

PM proposed that we trail keeping for the visitors’ centre and public/accessible toilet open during usual hours, even when staff are not in the office. This could include weekends. This is to be trialled across the summer. Security cameras will be used to provide additional security.

The board approved the proposal.



d. Scarinish Harbour Regeneration Project

NMP requested a member of the board to assist with the scoring on the tender process for the 2nd phase of the project, MF offered to assist NMP for this project.

NMP also noted that staff were taking on additional responsibilities just now due to recent staff departures and expressed that staff should be making sure they keep track of their hours, and if exceeding their usual paid hours this should be reflected in their pay. PM and RM agreed to “keep an eye on each other” in this respect!

9. DONM

12th August 2025 – 7pm.

10. Action Summary

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	New