Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust

Open meeting minutes

9th September 2020

Present: Doug Nisbet (Chair), Guy MacPherson Grant, Colin Styles, Amy Woolvin

In attendance: Oliver Giles, Liz Henderson, Fiona Robb, Will Boyd Wallis

Doug opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Doug outlined the agenda which consisted of an update from the Development Manager and an opportunity to ask questions / raise concerns.

Oliver Giles gave an update on the following subjects

1. Affordable Housing

   The project has been successfully tendered and we are in detailed discussions with a preferred bidder. Oli shared the preferred bidders layout which mirrors our draft layout presented back in November 2019. 3d graphics of the development were also shared.

   The purchase of the site is progressing well and subject to the satisfactory resolution of an access issue with a neighbouring property will be completed by the end of October 2020. Habitat surveys have been commissioned to ensure our planned timescales are aligned with and existing wildlife breeding seasons.

   The trust have made significant progress on the funding package for the development. Scottish Land Funding for the site acquisition was confirmed in March and we are in advanced discussions with HIE on the funding for the demolition works and some non housing elements of the project. We were invited to apply to CARES for the energy system we've been designing with Locogen and an application for £180k was submitted at the end of August. The Rural and Island Housing Fund application which will fund the majority of the build costs is being worked on but finalising the project costs with the preferred bidder is the priority before that application can be submitted.

   Our allocations policy was to be the subject of an open meeting scheduled for March this year. Obviously COVID happened and the project has been delayed but we are still keen to hear your views about how the houses should be allocated. We've designed a questionnaire to begin collecting information about this and a link will be circulated after the meeting. The survey closes on 28th September and a summary of responses will be available shortly after. See below for a summary of responses.

2. COVID Response

   Oli moved on to update members on the trusts response to COVID 19 in our community which is divided into 4 strands

   Initial response – in this phase we established a Community Larder and Helpline. The helpline worked in partnership with the village shop in delivering food to individuals who were shielding or unable to leave the house for another reason. We had a fantastic group of 6 volunteers who responded to helpline request.
   Our community larder was set up in the boiler room of our Discovery Centre in Tomintoul and stocked with a range of supplies from the village shop, donations from other businesses and stock from Moray Food Plus. Take up has been steady and we have been replenishing as necessary. Our funding from Scottish government allowed us to include electricity and mobile phone top up and these proved very popular.

   Reopening our Discovery Centre and Hostel was kept under constant review and we participated in various sector discussions led by Cairngorms Business Partnership. Our staff were kept on a retainer

as they didn't qualify for furlough and the Discovery Centre reopened with reduced hours and revised layout on July 16th in line with guidance.

As expected numbers at the centre are well down on previous years but the staff and board of TGDT remain committed to maximising the benefit of this valuable community resource.

In June we announced the **Supporting our Community Grants** which awarded up to £500 to groups to adapt to COVID 19. Groups did not need to be officially constituted but did have to demonstrate community benefit and open access. In all we awarded nearly £2,500 in small grants to a range of community groups all coming to terms with the impact of COVID on fundraising and operation.

Through our long involvement with broadband provision in our community we are acutely aware of the **digital divide**. This was heightened by COVID as so many services and activities went online. Our Highland and Island Enterprise grant enabled us to meet the IT equipment needs of households that were identified by their school as needing additional equipment to support online access to services. To date we have provided 16 laptops and tablets and this is supporting many families online engagement.

3. Funding

Oli gave an update on the various funding applications the trust has been working on and these are summarised below

Dorenell Community Benefit Fund – funding for two staff posts to continue the TGLP Community Cultural Heritage Project and a Development Officer for Glenlivet and Inveravon to deliver a range of events and projects in Glenlivet. TGDT are finalising an application to CNPA Green Recovery Fund to match fund these posts.
Community Renewable Energy Scotland – Capital grant to support the installation of a low carbon energy system in the affordable housing development.
Highlands and Islands Enterprise – Application for funds to complete the demolition of the school and fund some of the non housing elements of the project
Rural and Island Housing Fund – Application to fund the build of 12 affordable houses on the site of the secondary school in Tomintoul (in development)

4. Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership

Will Boyd Wallis CNPA Head of Land Management was invited to provide an update on TGLP programme. Will confirmed that the programme has been extended until 31st December 2020 due to the impact of Covid on the conclusion of the project. The current focus for the team is finalising the deliverables and getting 5 year management and maintenance agreements in place for each project. Will thanked staff and project volunteers for the amazing work they've been doing in difficult circumstances.

The TGLP board have been reviewing the plans for legacy and Will provided a brief recap of the need for a legacy group to embed the impact of NHLF investment. Proposals for the Legacy Group are being finalised and more information will be available shortly.

5. Questions

Amy Woolvin asked that the plaque on the school be retained and if possible reused in the housing development. OG said he would discuss this with the main contractor but saving the plaque shouldn't be a problem.

Guy McPherson Grant asked what the status is of the Dark Skies Project specifically the Observatory? Will confirmed that the observatory is a Crown Estate project and that as far as he's aware CES are in discussion with SNH about the project going forward.

Doug summarised the work of the trust as being as important and relevant as ever, our plans for the sustainable development of our area through project delivery and social enterprise operation chime well with national policies on green recovery.

Dates for your diary

18th November 2020 TGDT AGM

14 – 28th September – Allocations Policy Survey