



STRATHDEARN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS

Extraordinary General Meeting

18th May 2023

7:30pm

THE STRATHDEARN, TOMATIN, IV13 7YN

Minutes of the meeting

DIRECTORS PRESENT:	Steve Knott, Chairman of SCD (SK)
	Duncan Bryden, Vice Chairman (DB)
	James Duncan, Director (JD)

IN ATTENDANCE:	SCD company members
	Members of the public
	Maureen McDonald Cooke, Projects Manager (MMC)
	Elaine Macleod, Company Secretary (EM)
	Ed Cameron Mackintosh, Financial Controller (ECM)
	Tracy Campbell, Minute Secretary & Administrator (TC)
	Michael Crichton, Business Development Manager, SWARCO (MC)

APOLOGIES:	Barbara Macaskill, Director (BM)
	Frank Roden, Chairman of Charitable Trust (FR)

ATTACHMENTS CIRCULATED:

EGM Agenda EGM Potential Topics for update Hazelbank Woods Report (Steve Cormack) Special Resolutions SWARCO investment proposal Head of Terms (SWARCO)
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Quorum of Ordinary Members confirmed as present:

30 ordinary members

1. PRESENTATION FROM SWARCO

Michael Crichton from SWARCO gave a brief introduction about the business.

SWARCO is from the Swarovski jewellery company and traded into an electric car company. In Scotland, SWARCO has been an attractive operator for twelve years and dealt with every council everywhere from Shetland all the way down to the Borders. The investment business was set up a year ago and there has been progress.

Michael does a lot of work based in the Highlands and his target at SWARCO is establishing electric car charging sites across Scotland. The proposal is for SWARCO to lease the existing car charging site at The Strathdearn from SCD over 20 years in return for either an annual rent of £2,500 per charger (£5,000 p.a.) or a profit share, whichever is the higher. SWARCO would maintain/upgrade the unit at their own cost and in the 20 years the charger that is put in initially can potentially be future proofed but if not, another new unit will be installed. The existing chargers are 22 kwh and 50 kwh and SWARCO are proposing installing up to 200 kwh chargers which would make the site one of the fastest public chargers in the Highlands. The units would cost SWARCO £50,000.

The reason why no competitors are seen in the Highlands is because they are all based in the central belt. There will be quarterly updates to SCD staff and Michael has offered to visit the area every quarter.

The chair stated from a SCD point of the view the existing chargers will be replaced with faster chargers at no cost to the community. There will also be a fixed minimum income through the SWARCO proposal, and the profit share should commence in the higher revenue for the latter years.

The charging points installed at the hall will also accept debit cards for payment.

The legal agreement is 20 years, and this includes monitoring the usage and maintenance. In terms of any malfunction, there are 14 engineers based in Scotland including 2 in the Highlands. There is a 24-hour call centre and 95% work all the time and can remotely fix it via Dundee.

George Macleod, former director of SCD questioned if the lease is for the existing four charging bays. No drawings had yet been received by SCD, but it is expected not to be more than the existing provision. In response to a question why the members had not been presented with three quotes, the chair clarified that no contract has yet been signed with SWARCO, but the board were happy with the governance procedure regarding the application of any procurement process. However, SWARCO were a frontrunner, and the purpose of the resolution would be to permit the board to lease the area to SWARCO assuming their offer could not be surpassed.

2. SWARCO RESOLUTION 2

Resolution 2:

"To grant a lease over an area of ground surrounding the existing electric car chargers at The Strathdearn, Tomatin, IV13 7YN (registered in the Land Register of Scotland under Title Number INV45114) to Swarco UK Ltd for a maximum of 20 years".

"The resolution was approved by reaching a minimum of 75% of eligible members voting in favour of it".

Confirmed votes - 30

3. ELECTRICITY SUBSTATION RESOLUTION 3

Resolution 3:

"To grant a lease with associated rights over the area of land shaded in pink (see map below) forming part of the ground at The Strathdearn, Tomatin, IV13 7YN (registered in the Land Register of Scotland under Title Number INV45114) to Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution PLC (SHEPD) for a period of 99 years including any continuation or extension to it".

The chair explained that there is an electricity substation belonging to Scottish Hydro Electric that sits in the corner of the car park on land owned by SCD. The resolution should have originally been proposed to the members back when it became clear a substation was required during the construction of the hall but, despite the substation existing for the sole purpose of electricity distribution to *The Strathdearn* premises, this was overlooked at the time and a lease for 99 years has already been signed. This vote is mainly to tidy up the governance and to make sure the actions previously taken are supported by votes of the members.

"The resolution was approved by reaching a minimum of 75% of eligible members voting in favour of it".

Confirmed votes - 30

4. HOUSING UPDATE

The chair reported the project remains challenging and the site is difficult, and the costs are increasing. The board have been made aware of additional difficulties of the site recently move through "National Framework Policy 4" where the site is deemed to be high risk of flooding than hearing previously expected. This is relatively new information,

Moving forward, the capital cost involves greater than previously expected and the board are seeking to understand what it means, get up to date costings to let the board in essence if they have resources to take the project forward in the community.

When asked, ECM stated the approx. cost to date on affordable housing is £120,000. This has primarily been spent on preparatory and planning costs of the site over the last four years, much of which was within the budget for that plot of ground.

A member of public enquired at what point does the board decide to draw a line this is not a viable option. The chair stated that the board expectations will be taken into consideration in the next 2-3 months. The board are pulling together a couple of budgets that will see SCD through three years and once the project plan has been approved it will be presented to all the members. The board will be getting sighted of the budgets at the next board meeting.

In terms of the affordable housing project, there will be x6 houses available for the community from The Highland Council and x2 self-build plots. The board are keen to get the affordable housing for the community but need to be realistic on the site and community money.

The chair commented "he has lived in the community for two years at this point it often strikes SCD are trying to do everything quickly and things haven't always bedded when taken place and not a bad thing if the board reduces the scope to ensure everything is delivered well".

5. HOUSING BORROWING RESOLUTION 1

Resolution 1:

“The creation of a standard security being placed over The Strathdearn, Tomatin, IV13 7YN (registered in the Land Register of Scotland under Title Number INV45114) in return for a loan, as part of a reconstitution of the security over assets and to enter in to a new Ranking Agreement with Social Growth Fund LLP, Social Growth Fund 2 LLP and The Highland Council (“Ranking Agreement”). The actioning of this security and borrowing is conditional on the affordable housing being approved for commencement”.

The chair explained the current plan for the housing would be funded by a mixture of £850,000 of grants, a loan of £200,00 and the balance of cash either through the windfarm money or coming out of the reserves. The challenge the board have is to move the grant application forward for proof for the wider funding package which is both cash and debt based to evidence that the board can take out the loan. The board need a vote by members to approve the board are allowed to take out on the loan.

The chair reassured everyone present the board are not going to draw down £200,00 of the debt but to access and move forward on £850,000 of grant money the board need to show members the approval to the loan of £200,000.

The grant funding is 60% of the total and MMC explained that if the site changes the proportion of funding might reduce.

“The resolution was not approved as a minimum of 75% of eligible members did not vote in favour of it”.

Confirmed votes 22 – this motion has not passed at this stage.

6. HAZELBANK WOODS REPORT

The chair explained he received a letter from Steve Cormack regarding the community right to buy project at Hazelbank woods. There was lots of support from the community and Steve’s letter was echoing the support.

Steve’s letter points out whoever buys the land would be in a great position to have a significant impact on the community. The Community land grants are available for up to 80% of the buying price and it would provide an asset to the community for a long time following any wind farm monies drying up.

The chair stated the board have been discussing the Hazelbank trust around purchasing the land. The discussions are at an early stage and no valuation has been received yet. In terms of grant funding there needs to be a business plan and evidence how it will benefit the community.

7. Q & A

A member of the public has suggested a small project at the old church where a memorial garden can be done and potentially an area next to the balvraid bridge for a football pitch.

A member of the public has asked for an update regarding the paths. The chair explained that CJ and SK have emailed The Highland Council about completing the project.

A member of the public enquired about the lighting “safer routes for school”. The chair advised there are currently no plans for lighting to be installed.

Meeting ended 21:23

DATE OF NEXT EGM MEETING

Date	August/September 2023
Time	TBC
Venue	TBC

8. APPENDICES

ACTION POINT LIST

No.	Date Raised	Action	Responsible individual	Target Date	Completion Date/ Outcome
	18/05/23	No actions noted			