

Back in 2014 Paul Hynes Audio Ltd was set up as a manufacturing facility on the UK mainland, to produce the SR power supplies under license (the name was also licensed). This ran smoothly until the Summer of 2016, when a change of circumstances for MD David Webb meant he was no longer able to run the company and, as Paul was not in a position to run the company remotely from South Uist at that time, it was decided to close the company down. This was conducted in an orderly manner and completed in the latter part of 2016 without outstanding orders as far as I am aware. Without an operational production facility Paul decided to retire and devote more time to looking after his two disabled family members whose condition was gradually deteriorating.

During a chance meeting in the Autumn of 2016, with a retired official of the local Business Gateway (a government service providing support for local business development) in the local food shop, Paul mentioned the closure of PHA Ltd. It was suggested that he bring production to South Uist, as the area is designated as an area in urgent need of development. He decided to approach Business Gateway and was pleased to see that the project for a new manufacturing facility in South Uist was warmly received and work began on the usual requirements for developing a business plan to secure funding by way of grant aid via European Union development funding and other local funding sources. The aim was to provide premises and staff for the manufacturing facility. He spent a considerable amount of time preparing and collating information and just when the project was ready to go to the next stage, the Brexit vote changed the game. The major source of project funding via "Leader", an EU funding channel, changed the grant provision criteria from 50% to 30% of costs for private business funding. This required a search for alternative funding sources to bridge the gap, which looked viable at the time, but a couple of months later Leader completely removed private business funding from their funding remit, completely collapsing the project funding package.

With the absence of a funding package Paul decided to introduce the first product for the manufacturing facility, the SR4, with the help of a part time assistant. This was to produce a revenue stream that would accumulate to a level sufficient to activate the manufacturing facility with premises and sufficient staff to meet a planned production quota.

During 2018 Paul had to devote much time to chasing care support, for his disabled family members, from the steadily disintegrating NHS (National Health Service). In the summer the requirement for disabled facilities within the family house became essential and his home workshop had to be sacrificed for this purpose. This meant that the requirement for premises needed attention for both the manufacturing facility and for continuation of Paul's custom build schedule.

Having identified suitable premises in Lochboisdale, and planning to start leasing at the beginning of September Paul had to await the preparation of the premises for rental by the landlord. This was not completed until the end of November due to lack of available local tradesmen and then he had much the same problem with tradesmen availability to fit the essential equipment to allow production. Then there many issues to overcome with

Health and Safety Regulation compliance, finding staff, staff training, setting up the manufacturing business as an autonomous entity, computer failures, setting up business systems, April's sewage contamination event and numerous small events that each required his attention. Not to mention on-going trips with health appointments for disabled family members.

Having retired after the closure of Paul Hynes Audio Ltd back in 2016, it was not his intention to re-start custom build, but music enthusiasts began requesting his services again and he let his heart over-ride his head as he enjoyed helping people attain better sound quality from their audio systems. He started accepting a few orders again, purely on a personal basis, which he deemed manageable at the time. This was purely as an individual on a self employed basis as there were, and indeed still are, no plans for the manufacturing facility to get involved with custom build products. On-going reports of first class performance from his power supplies accelerated interest and assuming that new premises to work in would be imminent, in hindsight he accepted more orders than he should have done at the time.

So, what about the current situation?

The manufacturing facility was planned as a Workers Cooperative where the workers share any business profits. It was not possible to set this up on moving into the new premises last December as there were no workers initially to form the cooperative. He was advised to set up a Limited company initially (Paul Hynes Design Ltd), to acquire a business trading account, and then convert it to a Workers Cooperative when there were enough workers for viability. There are now enough workers for this to proceed and we are working on the procedure at present. Once the workers cooperative is activated the limited company is no longer required and will likely be dissolved.

Paul's role with the manufacturing facility is to provide on-going technical advice only. He no longer gets involved with the day to day running of the facility. The manufacturing facility provides him with workspace to continue with completion of outstanding orders from his outstanding custom build orders in lieu of this technical advice.

The final part of the manufacturing facility jigsaw was completed at the end of August and this was the small machine workshop in unit 6 that was originally scheduled for installation during April but which was postponed due to the sewage contamination event at the beginning of April. The completion of this machine shop allows for in house machining of relevant materials for manufacturing facility products and crucially allows Paul to custom machine chassis for the custom build service in house too.