



**Colonsay Community Development Company
Board Meeting
Thursday 29th April 2021**

1. Attendance and Apologies

Board members: Danny Onn (DO), Sue Dance (SD), Callum Hay (CH), Caitlin McNeill (CM)(part), Liam McNeill (LM), William Joll (WJ).

Project co-ordinators: Carrie Seymour (CS), Lizzie Keenaghan (LK) (part)

In attendance: Richard Butttrick (RB) (part)

Also present: Clare Hay(minutes)

Apologies: Andrew Abrahams (AA), Grace Johnstone (GJ)

2. Minutes of last meeting.

Accepted. LM will post on website.

3. Declarations of interest LK (items 4 and 7), CS (item 4), SD (item 4)

4. Business Improvement Grants

SD, LK, and CS withdrew from the meeting, having declared interests. RB had discussed the grants with those making an application. Five awards were available, four applications had been received. DO thanked RB on behalf of the board for the initiative. A note with details of the awards would be produced by RB and circulated with the minutes (see Appendix to minutes).

The board voted unanimously to approve these grants. It was noted that three grants had a crofting connection. There was a discussion about how to improve and broaden take-up of the awards. It was agreed there would be a presentation about the awards at the AGM.

There will be £2,400 available for the next round of awards. It was hoped that further promotion of the awards would bring in more applications.

(RB left the meeting) (LK, CS, SD rejoined the meeting)

5. Projects

5a Scalasaig housing development

CS had circulated her project report and provided an update regarding a survey of ground nesting birds at the site which had been booked for the May 4th in response to a request from the ABC Planning department. It will cost £1000.

CS said that HIE were proposing treating the building units and houses at Scalasaig as two projects and splitting the contract with TSL. As part of due diligence DO requested that the board delegate this decision to the project team once any cost impact had been assessed. The board agreed unanimously.

CS reported that HIE were suggesting delaying the project start to permit bidding for extra funds to reduce the loan requirement. It was noted that there were various possible ways to reduce the loan requirement. CH said that if the funders' bidding timescale permitted, it would be best to bid for extra funding, but that the project start should not be delayed. DO/CS explained that the bidding process would take too long, given the funders' time scales and that it was not possible to bid for the funding proposed once the project had started. DO reported that the project had received planning permission and that this was a major step forward. It was agreed that this should be publicised. John Forbes was issuing a press release.

Action: GJ to do local announcements.

5b Baptist Manse

LK had circulated her project report. LK requested permission to spend £30 on fire blankets and a fire extinguisher for the Manse. This was agreed. CCDDC had registered as landlords. LK would be meeting GJ in the next week to finalise handover of the project to her. Colm, Tanya and family had begun their tenancy on 20th April.

(CM joined the meeting)

5c Moorings

LK had circulated her project report. There were no new updates. SD noted that the insurance costs quoted were higher than those planned for and asked if they would affect profitability. LK acknowledged that as an expense they would, but that good insurance was essential. It was noted that the offer from MOWI would have a very positive effect on profitability. LK thanked DO and CH for their help on the project.

Action LK provide note re impact of insurance/MOWI offer on the cost model to the board.

6. Camping on Colonsay

Two possible sites had been offered for the pop-up campsite project. LK would be working on criteria for assessment of these sites. SD noted a further possible site which would be useful for the music festival. In his paper, CH had asked the board for permission to bid, noting the very tight timescales. DO asked the board to confirm permission and it was unanimously agreed.

Action CH/DO/LK take bid forward.

7. Housing at Port Mhor

(LK having declared an interest left the meeting)

The issues raised by the community council (CC) at its last meeting, and the letter to the community council by a constituent were discussed. DO had prepared a response to the CC and circulated it for comment. It was agreed by the board that the response could be shared with those who were mentioned in it. After some discussion, it was agreed to share the response with the wider community at the AGM.

8. Gass Report review.

CH had provided and circulated an update of progress to date, in the form of a self-assessment. The board had no comment to make and were happy with the report. It was agreed that it would be very helpful for the public and funders to be made aware of the update. It was agreed that there could be a simplified presentation on the update at the AGM. It was also agreed that DO would approach HIE to see if they would fund a "healthcheck" by David Gass in the autumn to provide an independent assessment, one year on. DO thanked CH for his work on this.

Action DO approach HIE re funding for report update exercise

9. AGM

DO advised that two weeks' notice of the AGM date was required. It was hoped that by then it would be possible to have the public at the AGM in the village hall. If not, it would have to be Zoom and a Zoom facility should be provided for those who could not make it. It was noted that the CCDC had over 70 members, and that while this was a good number, an appeal should be made to the public for more. As due to the pandemic, there was no AGM last year, OSCR had agreed that two AGMs could be held on the same day. The dual AGM would be held on the 12th June in the afternoon. A review of membership requirements was agreed to be beneficial. The AGM would be a good time to check the register of members, and recruit more. The dual AGM would need a significant amount of organisation, given the proposed presentations, and to fit in all the constitutional requirements.

Action DO/CM devise format and organise AGM

10. Croft Matters

CM said that the process for fixing mapping inconsistencies had identified a small piece of land which belonged to Rhona Robinson not the CCDC. CM will correct this.

A meeting with DO, LK and Darragh Keenaghan took place to discuss and agree conditions relating to the sale of land for The Wee Croft House. DO will check with LK and CM, then share the information with the board and pass it to the solicitors acting for CCDC.

(CM left the meeting)

11. Finances

CH presented two reports to the board. The first discussed the advantages and disadvantages of registering the CCDC for VAT. Doing so would resolve the problem of the significant VAT costs in building the business units and potentially release a windfall from VAT paid elsewhere. The disadvantages would include that the change is essentially irreversible, in that the savings made would all be clawed back, if the CCDC was deregistered. VAT may have to be charged on rental for the units, so some adjustment would have to be made. Crofters can be protected from the effects, although they may be VAT registered themselves in which case there may not be a problem. The cost of the accountants' time to deal with the VAT registration and surrounding issues would be £1500. After some discussion, the board agreed in principle to proceed with VAT registration and the decision to do so was delegated to the project team which was also instructed to ensure that crofters on CCDC owned crofts would be protected from any extra costs.

The second report was on banking arrangements. CH said that although banking arrangements had been satisfactory until now, the CCDC was about to start handling much bigger sums and better control would be needed. The following measures were proposed

- A suitable business banking service had been identified but a modest monthly subscription would be due.

- There should be an overdraft facility in place to handle cash flow issues.
- Use of card payments needed to be reviewed for the trading company.

After some discussion, which included the need to protect those who wanted to pay by cash or cheque, the board unanimously approved the above.

12. Staffing

There are outstanding issues regarding holiday pay for a member of staff. WJ volunteered to contact ABC to investigate relevant regulations and obtain advice. GJ had provided a report with details of the asset manager's program until April next year. CS said that GJ would be researching what was required for the rental and allocation policies. Comments were requested for the charity manager job description. The possibility of adding the roles of company secretary and board administrator to that post was discussed.

Action WJ to contact A&B Council

13.AOB

LK requested stationery, and was advised of procedure. CH asked about management of minutes. CS will send electronic copies of old minutes to her.

There was a discussion of access issues linked to the Port Mhor housing. DO highlighted that the necessary actions were with WHHA. It was agreed to wait until these had been carried out and to brief (and consult if necessary) the public at the AGM.

Action CS send CH electronic copies of previous minutes

14. DONM

The next meeting will be on 27th May at 7.00pm by Zoom.