



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

1. Attendance and Apologies

Board members: Andrew Abrahams (AA), Caitlin McNeill (CM), Liam McNeill (LM), William Joll (WJ), Dannie Onn (DO).

Project co-ordinators: Lizzie Keenaghan (LK)

Apologies: Grace Johnstone (GJ), Sue Dance (SD), Callum Hay (CH), Carrie Seymour (CS) Clare Hay (Minutes taken by DO)

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Accepted. LM will post on website.

WJ to meet with hotel manager next week re composter use. Newsletter in second week of August to include a prominent reminder/ plea to contribute food waste. AA to check whether accounts for 2019/20 had been passed to David Guest.

3. Declarations of interest

LK item 8, LK and CM item 10c.

4. Projects

4a Scalasaig developments

CS and GJ reports received. DO added that the building project will now commence on 16 August. The contractor, TSL, will take the former Baptist Manse for 3 workers from August through to the end of October and from March 2022 through to completion in November. They will also be using Kirsty and Donald at Uragaig and may station a caravan at Scalasaig.

AA looked at the cost plan and asked about 'plan B' if MOWI do not come forth with funding after the contract is signed. DO defers to CH on finance but said that MOWI had previously agreed their contributions and an interest free loan facility if required; CH is engaged in discussion with MOWI and we do not foresee any problems; and a loan facility is agreed with Triodos bank. CH to be asked to update by the end of next week.

GJ submitted an application form for tenancy of the business units. This is to accompany her allocations policy previously prepared for the board. The board were generally happy with the application form. DO would like to clarify a couple of points and will meet with GJ in the next week to discuss.

GJ has been recommended the Scottish Association of Landlords as a source of help. The board approved joining at the cost of £95.

CH submitted a cost model update (version 3.0) for Scalasaig and a brief report. The board noted the report and that an update will be circulated once the contract details come from TSL. The board approved the use of the model to open negotiations with MOWI over cash flow support.

4b Former Baptist Manse

LK and GJ reports received. LK asked for comments on the potential future uses which might be put to the community. AA asked whether the property could be put aside to provide accommodation for those who were thinking of moving to Colonsay but wanted to trial living here. LK noted the challenges of finding work here, which that might help. A walk over survey to identify site constraints and opportunities will be organised. DO and WJ to attend, others would be welcome too.

The property is to be let to TSL for worker accommodation. A condition survey should be recorded before 16 August.

4c Moorings

LK report received. No additional information, no questions were asked and no decisions are required.

4d Campsite

LK report received. LK added that Environmental Health highlighted the importance of a water connection. Daily filling of ICBs would need time and money. DO will be seeing the planning officer, David Love at the weekend and has arranged for him to see the sites and advise on application requirements. LK advised that the potential funding for tourism infrastructure would need to be spent next year. No decisions were required but directors are asked to consider the Gigha model for leasing a campsite and the logistics of setting up a site next year. LK to discuss with Helen Mann initially.

5. Report on Cabinet Secretary visit

Dannie gave a verbal report on the visit of Mairi Gougeon (MG), the cabinet secretary for rural affairs and the islands, as part of her summer tour. Ms Gougeon came to see the MOWI fish farm and the proposed Scalasaig developments, but also took the opportunity to visit the new smokery being fitted out in the converted Scalasaig steadings. A lunch time meeting was held in our village hall, attended by three members of the board (Dannie, Caitlin and Callum), three community councillors, representatives of the Scottish Government, the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation and MOWI. AA was able to join us for lunch and informal discussions.

The meeting gave us the opportunity to explain the dire need for community-led housing and the fantastic help we have had from MOWI and our various supporters and funders. MG seemed particularly interested in Caitlin's story and impressed by what we have achieved. DO set out some of the aspirations for CCDC going forward and how SG might be able to help. Connectivity is something both CCC and CCDC are concerned about. MG will be able to pass on our concerns to Transport Scotland. Making the island community sustainable would be helped by a better understanding of where we are now, a point raised in the Gass report. MG will speak to the SG Islands Team to help us with modelling the economic and social aspects of the community.

At the site visit, MG cut the first turf and announced the £1.2 million award from RIHF.

There is more. A letter is being prepared to summarise our points to MG and this will be shared with the board.

6. Finances and accounting

CH tabled a paper on financial management for the Scalasaig projects. This proposes strengthening the company's financial management capacity by employing Tanya for an additional 8 hours pcm for the duration of the project, to be paid for out of the Scalasaig project funding. Tanya has agreed. The board approved the recommendation.

7. Business Strategy review

This item will be taken at the next meeting.

8. Crofts

CM provided a factual update. Purchase of crofts by LK and Colm McNicholl are moving forward. Caitlin to pursue so that LK can apply for a mortgage during August.

Decrofting of the proposed Port Mor housing site has been sub-contracted to Gregor Cameron.

Rectification of the boundary between CCDC croft 4 and Rhona Robinson's (RR) croft has been submitted and should not take long to approval. There is a minor anomaly or difference at the very end of the boundary next the coast. This is a small area of rock. If this turns out to be different to RR's croft plan, the board agrees to settle at her version and make a rectification as necessary. CM to provide the current application map to RR.

The land swapped with RR has a difficult access at the high point of the common grazing, which would be improved by a gate or hurdle. CM to supply a map of the common grazing so that any alteration would not infringe RR croft land.

9. Newsletter and public consultation

It would be a good time to issue a summer newsletter. DO submitted a draft for text and proposed issue 9 August or soon after. That would include alerting members of the public to the imminent construction works, closure of the footpaths and other guidance on health and safety from TSL. DO will circulate amongst staff and directors who may be able to help convert this to a stylish publication. Any comments on content should be circulated.

DO proposes a public meeting and consultation on the future of the Manse in the hall, either in September or October. The board welcomed the idea. DO to provide further detail next month.

10. Staffing

(LK left the meeting)

- a. A claim for back-dated holiday pay has been made by Hannah Johnston as agent for Kirsty MacAllister. This would cover the period from around 2011 to 2018. CH had advised that we must pay this in accordance with the law. WJ asked where the money would come from. DO advised that a saving on the A&BC grant could be made by not replacing Jen and training other staff to provide cover in the front office. More detail will be provided in a restructuring plan that DO and CH are working on. AA suggested we take proper legal advice. In the first instance we will seek help from A&BC and consider whether to engage a specialist lawyer as necessary.
- b. DO confirmed the resignation of Roz Jewell, who had been on maternity leave. The board wished to record its thanks to Roz for the hard work she has put in over the last 4 years. She was part of the team that re-ignited the business strategy, leading to the excellent progress on all projects. The board agreed to upgrade Lizzie from maternity cover to permanent post.
- c. DO referred to the proposed restructuring of the company's staffing. An additional opportunity has arisen to employ a graduate for one year under a funding scheme which will pay 75% of the salary. DO will make an application and consider the impact on the restructuring and staff funding. A detailed proposal will be circulated in the next week for consideration by directors. The process should be approved at the August meeting for implementation in early September.

11. AOCB

a. Service point now to open 2 August. DO sent in a risk assessment to A&BC. Kirsty has been in touch with them regarding health and safety procedures. Kirsty will work through August, pending restructure and train other staff in service point ways before her holiday in September.

c. HIE have intimated an ev charging point funding opportunity. AA said we should focus on getting the existing facility at Calmac available to the public in conjunction with opening up the ferry lanes to public use outwith ferry times. LM said that Calmac consider this to be a marshalling area and it will not be made available. AA to investigate.

d. GJ and CM have this week presented our work on community housing to an EGM of the Community Housing Trust, which was attended by representatives of the Scottish Land Commission, Community Land Scotland and others. They presented the background to our housing projects, the funding solutions and the tenure arrangements. The presentation was well-received, and they were told that we are a shining example to other communities. Well done!

DONM

Thursday 29th August 7pm in the village hall