

## Colonsay Community Development Company Board Meeting

### Public Minutes

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Present: Dannie Onn (DO), William Joll (WJ), Will Young (WY), Callum Hay (CH), Andrew Abrahams (AA), Darragh Keenaghan (DK), Lesley McInnes (LM)

Apologies: Lizzie Keenaghan (LK), Helen Mann (HM), Carrie Seymour (CS) Linsay Chalmers (LC),

#### **1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

Minutes agreed and approved.

EGM Minutes approved to go to the next General Meeting. Accounts from this meeting will be attached to the documentation on the website.

#### **2. Declarations of interest**

DK – Port Mor road and crofts.

#### **3. Briefing Note**

Circulated, including recent community bulletin, prior to the meeting. The Community Bulletin had been circulated to the community since the last meeting. One or two persons did not receive a copy. DO to ask CS to update the mailing list to ensure that everyone receives a copy.

CH/ Sarah Hobhouse will add the bulletin under news item on the website.

Machir wind update – the engagement team will be coming to the island 8 May 2024 for further consultation and public engagement.

#### **4. Scalasaig report**

Circulated prior to the meeting. Electric meters have been requested by TSL but no installation date has been given. We are concerned that this might take time and delay handover.

The next allocation meeting with CHT should, hopefully give some indication of when applicants will be given information. AA would like someone to continually pester CHT. CS, DO and Helen MacKay of CHT will be meeting again on 20 March, AA is to be invited. DO confirmed that he has been to every meeting with CHT to date.

LM had spoken with CHT separately and reports that there is still nervousness about allocating without the new SG contract in place because Scottish Government conditions have not been confirmed. She does however feel that these details are just about ready. The board concluded that we should let the community know that these delays are due to Scottish Government and not CHT or CCDC.

#### **5. Moorings Path**

DO reported an email from Alex Howard concerning our November minutes. DO read out the minute and then read out the text of the email as follows:

'I appreciate that you would like to proceed with your plans to have a route marked to Queen's Bay, but I do not appreciate the way it has been minuted in your November meeting minutes. This does not accurately reflect the position and is deeply misleading to anyone reading the minutes who is not aware of the facts. As far as I am concerned, I have never said 'no' as stated in the minutes. You agreed with me that it was prudent to await the outcome of any future Planning Applications that we have extant in that area. This has not happened yet so I cannot say yes or no at this point. Please could you arrange to either alter the minutes or issue a further minute to record the fact that I do not agree with the way this has been reported.'

The board discussed the matter in detail. They are sorry that Alex Howard's position has been misrepresented and accept that he never said yes or no and accept that DO had agreed that waiting for the outcome of the planning process was prudent at the time.

However, it is clear to the board that the planning matter has lapsed with applications withdrawn; that permission was granted only in principle for two of the four applications, and that further applications will be required. These applications will take considerably longer than the short-term license for a waymarked path that had been discussed with Alex Howard.

Funding for the footpath signage has been returned to the funders, because Alex Howard has effectively said no prevented the path. It is disingenuous to say otherwise. AH has not been replying to emails, when CCDC has repeatedly asked for the license to enable the path.

The practical effect is the same as a refusal. This has been on-going for a few years and there is still no marked footpath. Directors ask that LK provide information of how AH has communicated over the last few years although much of the correspondence was between DO and Alex Howard.

As a practical way forward, CH suggested erecting waymark posts to show the line of a path which could be explained on the website and other advertising. That could even be seasonal, with posts removed for the winter. The board saw no reason why we should not ask Alex Howard for the option of a temporary solution.

The board agree that the minute should be drafted and agreed to enable a reply to AH before the minute is published after the next board.

## **6. Enterprise**

Richard Buttrick (RB) is working on a draft of 'A Vision for Colonsay's future Economy' for consideration by the Board. Any suggestions or other input from the board would be very welcome. He proposes a vision/ strategy/plan model. Here is a brief outline:

The vision is to sketch out how the economy here might look in the medium term, say five to ten years. The vision is then used to shape a strategy to work towards the vision. The strategy is then used to create shorter term plans. Individual plans won't deliver the strategy, but aligning plans with the strategy should take us towards the vision. Simple – when it works, which is sometimes. In practice the vision and strategy should be stable for 3 – 5 years. We will need to check the assumptions and monitor change. Of course, things rarely proceed as planned.

DO suggested the reason for doing this: The vision will outline the ambition to align the future economy of the island with CCDC's commitment to a sustainable community here, where the income generated can be shown to best serve those who make Colonsay their home.

The board briefly discussed the proposal. Directors welcome the initiative, which will be useful for underpinning projects, community planning, grant applications etc. It was suggested that a 10-year

timescale rather than 5 year would align with the potential impacts of the Machair Wind development. DO will progress this initially with RB and report back to the board. DK says he would be happy to help. The board thanks RB for this offer of help

## **7. Port Mor Road**

WHA have not come back as promised to give an update. LM suggested contacting Robin Curry (RC) to ask on our behalf. DO to do, as an addition to updating him on the Scalasaig project. LM reassured us that as the project is already on the system it should get done – LM to find out. The access road is hopefully a separate project on the system – it is the road that is important to other CCDC projects and was part of the initial agreement on the transfer of land, with grant monies allocated for the additional road costs. This project has taken longer than expected for a number of reasons. If there is to be further delay, DO will pursue WHHA for a contract to carry out at least the minimum repairs and improvements to meet the needs of our croft tenants and other users of the road. DO and LM to contact RC. In the meantime, DO to continue to try and get updates from WHHA to pass to the board.

## **8. Management Tasks**

Paper circulated prior to the meeting.

Directors to feed back to DO as and when. A brief discussion at this stage suggested that we focus on key outputs and pull some together into categories. It is unlikely that a post to cover all tasks will be affordable in the short term. Some prioritisations will be needed. DO explained that this was the first stage, to be translated into a job description (or more than one) over time. Whilst it is desirable (AA thought essential) that the management of the company is carried out by someone living here, the necessary skills will be hard to attract, particularly with a part-time post. Another possibility is to outsource specialist tasks or to employ someone off island.

CH said we should be realistic about the funding that is out there, try and create one post as a compromise to get started and then add another post as the projects grow.

The value of this document now is that it builds on our understanding of where we need to be in a year when we will be applying for multi-year funding for managing our community assets.

## **9. Croft Matters**

The boundary change between the Wee Croft and Helen's croft has been agreed by the Crofting Commission.

The road through Colm McNicholl's field accessing the other crofts and through to the common grazing needs to be done to ease access and ensure stock security. DO asked for the board's approval that CCDC lead on this. The board gave authority to organise prices for the work and to define contributions from the other crofters concerned.

## **10. AOCB**

**Fuel** – CH to check the quality of the fuel on Saturday, ensuring that no water has got into the tank. CH has made further progress on the conversion to pay-at-pump. Funding may be available next year through HIE. CH has been in contact with those who have converted on other islands. Further updates in May.

**CLS Conference** – 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in Perth. Please let DO know if any director would like to attend.

**Service Level Agreement – ABC** – Offered funding for a further year with an inflationary increase to £13,620.67 for 2024/25. DO will sign to accept.

**Galbraith Invoice** - on behalf of Colonsay Estate - has been sent to CCDC for the Community Garden. The Community Garden Treasurer has been sent the invoice for payment.

**DONM**

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

DRAFT