

MINUTES – DIRECTOR’S MEETING 17th MARCH 2015

1. **Attendance.**

Present: Neil MacDonald, Murdo Mackay (Chair), Neil Campbell (Secretary), Roddy Macdonald, Rhoda Macdonald, Finlay Maclellan, Duncan Macpherson (Commercial Development Manager), Lisa MacDonald (Development Officer) and Linda Armstrong (Administrator).

Apologies: Richard Maclellan, Norman Iain Mackay and Fiona Mackenzie.

2. **Approval of Minutes 24th February 2015**

The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. **Review of Action Points**

- **Croft House Grant Scheme Consultation**

Duncan has made amendments to the Trust’s response to the Croft House Grant Scheme consultation as discussed last month. The amount of grant offered on a new build was discussed and the directors agreed that in their opinion £28,000 was too low. It was decided to make a suggestion that the contribution be £50,000 to £60,000 and also point out that the average cost of building varies greatly even within the Western Isles.

4. **Updates**

Financial

A report for the West Harris Trust was shown, see appendix 1.

Commercial Development Managers Report

The Report was noted, see appendix 2. The following updates were given at the meeting:

Hydro

The following has been deleted and will not be made public until the consultation period is over.

Horgabost Wind Turbine

Finlay Maclellan expressed an interest as a crofter in Seilebost and therefore did not take part in this discussion.

The following has been deleted and will not be made public until the consultation period is over.

Community Enterprise Centre

The Quantity surveyor has followed up with the lowest tenderers but has only managed to identify savings of £12,000. HIE has been asked for a further £90,000, making the funding gap required to be filled by the Big Lottery £460,000. It is hoped that a decision on extra funding will be made by the end of this week.

Horgabost Marine Access Project

A marine surveyor from the company insuring the pontoon has agreed that there is a claim to be made on the damage sustained at the end of last year. He did say though that he thought Airfloat ought to make a

contribution towards the repair as the pontoon did not stand up to the weather as advertised. It is hoped that the pontoon will be back in the water by May.

Circus

The directors were supportive of a circus, agreement will now have to be sought from the grazings committee. The Circus organisers had suggested that the Trust might like to provide catering for the event. Directors suggested that George Lavery who provided catering for the Beach Festival be contacted. It was suggested that Active Schools, Community Learning and Harris Voluntary Service (playscheme) be contacted.

Development Officer Report

The report was noted, see appendix 4. The following updates were given at the meeting:

Community Share Issue

The directors agreed that the community share offer be paused as it will not be required if a lease agreement is secured with Orenda.

Murdo brought to the attention of the directors a possible site for a wind turbine on the eastern boundary of the estate, where road improvements are currently being carried out. Duncan has mentioned the location of the proposed site to Robin Reid at the RSPB to gauge their reaction. He indicated that if the turbine was 50kw or less there would be no problem.

Campervans

It is hoped that work on the electric hook-ups will start tomorrow, Wednesday 18th March.

Rabbit Control

Neil MacDonald and Murdo Mackay gave a report on the progress of the rabbit control scheme taking place in Luskentyre. They are very happy with the work of Landmark and are happy to provide a written recommendation which can be sent to other townships.

5. AOCB

Isle of Harris Marina

The trust has received a letter from the steering group of the Isle of Harris Marina. The letter asks if the Trust would be willing to write a letter of endorsement for the project. Directors agreed that they were happy to support the project as it will benefit the whole of Harris.

Army Cadet Force

Murdo has received a letter from the Army Cadet Force asking for permission to carry out training on the estate. The directors agreed that they were happy for this to take place.

Vodafone

It was agreed that Duncan would contact Angus MacNeil regarding the lack of Vodafone signal on the estate.

Local Outcome Plan

HIE organised a meeting today (17/02/15) to discuss the local outcome plan for Harris which is now coming to an end. Updates will be given over the next couple of months. Directors agreed that it was important to get the views of locals to feed into this plan.

The Community Planning Partnership is planning to use Harris as a trial area for the proposed 'bottom up funding'. A meeting will be held in the Bays Community Centre on Wednesday the 25th of March.

Road Improvements

Directors asked Duncan to contact local council members to ask what is the proposed timetable for the spinal route in Harris.

It was mentioned that Breedon's had created a large flat area where they are currently carrying out road improvements. It was suggested that Breedon's be contacted to ask what they plan to do with the area.

Harris Craft Market

Linda Armstrong expressed an interest as an employee of HDL and left the meeting.

HDL provided further information on the Harris Craft Market. The directors agreed that they were happy to donate £50 to the project.

Diary Dates for future meetings:

- April 14th
- May 19th
- June 16th
- August 18th
- September 15th
- October 13th
- November 17th
- December 15th