

MINUTES – DIRECTOR’S MEETING 24th June 2013

1. Attendance.

Present: Finlay Maclellan, Murdo Mackay (Chair), Neil Campbell (Secretary), Rhoda Macdonald, Norman Mackay, Roddy Macdonald, Neil Macdonald, Duncan MacPherson (Commercial Development Manager) and Linda Green (Administrator)

Apologies: Richard Maclellan, Fiona Mackenzie and Cait Wooll (Business Development Officer).

2. Approval of Minutes 21st May 2013

The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Review of Action Points

4 Scaristavore – Disposition signed.

Design of Luskentyre Water Supply – Scottish Water have approved the design proposed by Maciver Consultancy but will not formally consider adoption until building works commence.

Duncan to meet with John Cop on Friday to discuss moving power lines. He has suggested that the Trust should submit the application for the works and reclaim the cost from plot sales.

4. Updates

Financial

The report was noted, see appendix 1

06001563 (Treasurers)

£29,212.24 in the Treasurers account at 31/05/13

£19,953 income

£15,734.78 expenditure

06001594 (Lottery)

£30,656.55 in the Lottery account at 31/05/13

06601770 (West Harris Trust Renewables)

£1,917.54 in the Renewables account at 31/5/13

£0 income

£559.36 expenditure, including first Energy Savings Trust Loan repayment

Commercial Development Managers Report

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

Gleann Dubhlinn Hydro Scheme

Since the time of writing the report Duncan has received a revised quote from Ross-Shire Engineering. The price of a Gilkes turbine has increased to £680,000, up by around £100,000 in 4 years. Ross-Shire Engineering can provide their own Turbine at a cost of around £30 - £40k less.

The Co-op bank are not able to consider any new applications for funding in 2013 but are able to pass on the Trusts' application for funding to other lenders for consideration.

Social Investment Scotland has suggested that they may be willing to lend the Trust £250,000 as a second lender. Funding will need to be secured by February/March 2014 to enable the October 2014 link up.

Scarista Turbine

The Trusts application for £210,000 from Social Investment Scotland will be heard by a panel in a fortnights' time. If the loan is approved it still leaves a shortfall of £47,000. The Directors have agreed to put in £30,000 of reserved funds. Harbon have suggested that they would be willing to delay a £20,000 payment for 1 year after the Turbine is erected.

The lease of the ground will have to be approved by the Land Court before any funding can be released.

Rubha Romagaidh

Coastal Communities have requested a stage 2 application for funding. The Big Lottery will let Duncan know by the end of the week as to whether they would like to take the application to stage 2. A further application has been submitted to the Tudor Trust, they have indicated a 4-6 week period before responding.

It was suggested that a consultant could be hired to help Duncan with stage 2 applications. The existing grant from the Big Lottery could be used to fund this as it needs to be spent before any more funding can be granted by the Big Lottery.

Plot Sales

The potential purchasers of the Scarista plot have paid their full deposit and are planning on submitting a planning application in the near future.

JMT Volunteers

JMT are planning a visit to Harris in September. It was decided that the Trust would not have any work for them to do at that time. It was suggested that if they were to return in March 2014 they could be involved in planting marram grass and also re-planting 8,000 trees in the trust area.

Seilebost School

Rhoda Macdonald declared an interest as Head Teacher of Seilebost School and therefore did not take part in this discussion.

The Comhairle have agreed to the lease of the school building by the Trust subject to HHP confirming that they have no interest in the site.

Robin Reid from RSPB has confirmed that should the Trust lease the building he would be interested in leasing office space.

It was agreed that the Trust should make a note of what they wish to remain in the school and forward it to technical services at the Comhairle.

Business Development Officers Report

The report was noted, see appendix 3

Horgabost Marine Project

All of the permissions needed to progress with the project are due shortly.

Subject to receiving all necessary permissions the contract for the pontoon has been awarded to Airfloat MPS. Airfloat have already been on site and are happy with the location. They will start production of the pontoon as soon as the Trust has decided what colour they want. Ideally the pontoon will be black as this lasts the longest.

As per LEADER conditions, 5% of the total cost must be contributed by the Trust. Cait is currently in negotiations with Borve Lodge to see if they would be willing to pay 5 years lease upfront to cover this.

The Trust must apply to the Crown Estate to let the sea bed around the pontoon to enable a moorings association to be set up. This will allow the Trust to charge mooring fees which will be used to maintain the pontoon.

Beach Festival

The report was noted, see appendix 4.

The following comments came from directors;

- Raffle tickets to be sold on Friday night
- More volunteers needed
- Archaeology walk disappointing as cut short. Also, archaeologist had never visited site before.
- Sheep dog demonstration rather than sheep race.
- Point show group have purchased a large marquee. See if they would be willing to lease it to Trust.
- Funding may be available from the Comhairle for the Friday night event.

The Directors decided that they would like to hold the event again. It was suggested that a sub-group should be formed. As soon as a date has been decided it will be announced on Facebook and in the De tha Dol.

5. AOCB

VAT Report

The report was noted, see appendix 5.

Lease Park at Horgabost

Richard Maclennan asked if the Trust would be willing to let the park that is now fenced off at the Rubha Romagaidh development site. The Directors decided that an advert should be placed in the De tha Dol asking for sealed envelope bids. The let would have to be for less than a year to prevent it from being classed as an agricultural let. The advert should state that the let could not be added to the successful bidders IACS claim.

Camping Spots

To date £95 has been earned through the camping spot signs.

It was brought to the Directors attention that there has been a caravan parked at the Seilebost causeway for some time. The caravan looks as though it is there to stay due to the rope holding it down. The Caravan seems to be putting other campers off. The Directors decided that Murdo would speak to the owner and notify them that they would require the landowners permission to park and that this would not be forthcoming, unless of course they paid £5 a night as stated on the sign.

Next Generation Broadband

One of the directors raised the question of next generation broadband; primarily which areas would benefit and asked Duncan to investigate further.

Highland Small Communities

Funding is to be made available to bring empty houses back in to use. The Directors were asked if they knew of any houses in the area that would benefit from having £30-£40k spent on them. It was decided that the empty houses in the area would need complete refurbishment which would not fall into this price bracket.

Diary Dates for future meetings:

- Aug 20th
- Sept 17th
- Oct 15th
- Nov 19th
- Dec 17th