

MINUTES – DIRECTOR’S MEETING 18th DECEMBER 2012

1. Attendance.

Apologies Richard Maclellan and Fiona Maclellan

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

2. Approval of Minutes 12th November 2012

Minutes unanimously approved with amendment to record Fiona Maclellan’s presence.

3. Review of Action Points

- Sale of 7 Horgabost - complete
- 40mph speed limit - Neil contacted the Comhairle but has not yet had any response.
- Arrange meeting with Scottish water re Lusknetyre plots - complete

4. Updates

Financial

Surplus of £28,966 for eleven months. £16,655 in bank. Total funds accumulated since purchase of estate £27,136.

£30,000 received from the lottery.

First life membership received.

Calvert deposit received.

Final cost of Seilebost wind turbine - £35,069 (VAT to be repaid).

Commercial Development Managers Report

The managers’ report was noted, see appendix 1.

Hydro - Awaiting grid offer.

Scarista Wind Turbine -

Roddy Macdonald declared an interest as a member of the Isle of Harris Golf Club and therefore did not take part in this discussion.

23 objections have been lodged to date, leading to the deadline being extended. Planning will now have to go to committee which will hold up the CARES loan application. A legal agreement has been reached with the common grazings committee.

Hydro and turbine - It will be difficult to finance both at the same time. Hydro difficult to finance due to project cost being below one million. The co-op will make no comment until a grid connection is in place. A meeting will be held with Co-op early in the New Year.

Directors decided to go ahead with Turbine as top priority due to fast completion.

Rubha Romagaidh - Feedback from the public consultation has been positive. See appendix 2 for results.

HIE – Lewis Mackenzie has been in discussion with Archie MacDonald. £1 million project, £350,000 offered from HIE. David Knight has suggested that there could be two projects, one to provide the services and another to build the building. HIE have said that they would only want one project due to the worry that the project would not be finished.

Big lottery – Would consider offering funding towards the project. However, the first capital must be spent or returned before a new application can be lodged.

Alan Dickson – **The Directors decided to aim for completion of designs by the 1st of February 2013** so that planning can go to the March committee. A community consultation will be held on the 24th January 2013.

Alan Dickson has suggested that there is no formal presentation at the next meeting as there is not much more formal detail to give. Instead he has suggested that there is a workshop design layout on tables to gauge people's views.

24th January 2013; 4pm – prospective tenants, Directors' meeting, community meeting.

Housing – To date Stuart Wilson has looked positively at the Rubha Romagaidh development. Plans to go to planning committee in March. TIG and HHP are looking at the possibility of delivering on site. The Directors discussed the issue of the best combination i.e. Purely a HHP project or should the Trust build a few of the houses themselves. It was decided that it would be best to aim to build 6 houses at once due to cost.

Lottery Funding - £135,000 remaining. £45,000 allocated for the grid connection. The remainder must be spent or returned before the next application for funding is made.

Suggested uses for the remaining capital were; the non-installation cost of the hydro i.e. to dig out and dispose of the old pipe at the hydro location (£55,000 quote), pontoons/building at Horgabost, machinery ring or repair the road to the main turbine house.

The Big Lottery are agreeable as long as the project will generate income. Interpretation was listed as an original outcome of the Trust. However, it will not generate much income.

Meeting with Richard Macleannan - Cait and Duncan met with Richard regarding the Horgabost Campsite. Richard suggested that not a huge amount of investment was wanted due to its management. Suggested ideas were; facilities for watersports, shower facilities, pontoons, electric hook-up for campervans – run by the Trust. The Trust will have to consult with the Grazings Committee. Richard suggested that he was not keen on the idea of having pods at the campsite. Another site is to be identified for the pods – toilet facilities would be required.

Pontoon – Gordon Cumming, from Borve Lodge has indicated that they would be interested in using facilities. Suggested payment for the use could be either an annual fee or a contribution towards capital.

J T- Has indicated that he would be interested in the use of boat storage and a workshop and would be happy to pay for facilities.

It is estimated that a large shed would cost in the region of £20,000. To detract from its appearance it has been suggested that it would be timber clad rather than block work.

Suggested location would be the opposite end of Horgabost to the campsite. A meeting is to be arranged with the Grazings Committee to discuss their interest.

Machinery Ring - Murdo Mackey stated that the Luskentyre Grazings Committee had previously noted their interest in a machinery ring. There may be funding available through CAGS for the purchase of new machinery. SRDP will fund second hand equipment. It was agreed to explore the machinery ring further and meet with a representative from each grazings committee.

Plot Sales - Duncan Mackay and Sons have quoted £15,000 to £21,000 for the water supply to the Luskentyre plots. The pipe must go under the beach rather than run along the road. It was decided to ask Malcolm Maciver to submit a plan to Malcolm Macphail of Scottish Water. £1,100 quoted for a topographical survey. Richard has suggested that a few hundred pounds could be saved by him doing some of the work himself. Once the survey is submitted to Malcolm Macphail it will be available for grant funding. Scottish water have suggested that they could pay a third of the cost. The possibility of adding the cost of water to the cost of the house plots was discussed.

It is expected that Colin Chisolm will withdraw from the purchase of the Luskentyre house plot due to the cost of development.

Wave Energy - Neil, Duncan, Murdo, Roddy and David Cameron met with AlbaTERN a company looking at small scale wave energy. The northern end of Taransay has been suggested as it is reasonably close to the shore, with the prospect of going out further.

Business Development Officers Report

The Managers report was noted, see appendix 3.

Campsites

Site profiles have been created for the future website, including GPS co-ordinates and identifying photos. Landscaping may be required at some sites.

Leaflet

Visit Scotland has agreed to display the leaflet at all Island Gateway office for free.

Website

Cait and Norman have not yet had the opportunity to meet to discuss the website. However, webspace has been secured which is marginally cheaper than employing Richard's services. The director's decided to keep the status quo for the next three months (£30 per quarter) by which point Norman will have completed the new website and the old one can be deleted. The skeleton of the website will be added tomorrow (19th December) so that Cait can begin adding content.

Social Media

Facebook currently has 174 likes. With 3/5 likes per week. As yet there have been no unlikes, suggesting that the feed is not irritating.

Twitter currently has 37 followers .

Horticulture

A meeting is planned to take place on the 15th of January 2013 at 6.30pm. An advertisement has been placed in the De tha Dol. Letters will be sent to those who have previously expressed an interest in the New Year.

Beach Festival

Cait showed the Directors a comparison of cost of two different options for the beach festival. Option 1 – to hold the event over two consecutive days – was £500 cheaper than option 2. The Directors agreed to go ahead with option 1.

Graduate Training

Cait attended a one week crash course in business. She found it to be very useful due to not studying business at university. Duncan attended her presentation at the end of the week.

5. Interpretation Plan

Mick Blunt has produced an extensive draft report on the possible interpretation ideas in the West Harris area. See appendix 4. The directors were very happy with the initial ideas and a number were discussed in some detail.

6. CLS Land Reform Submission

Thoughts to be submitted by 11th January 2013. A number of items were discussed for Duncan to make final alterations for submission.

7. Rural Design Stage 1 Report

The footprint of the building has increased from 250sqm to 392sqm due to more space being available for let.

An estimate for the sewerage system is £25,000, considered to be an underestimate. Malcolm Maciver is looking at one septic tank, rather than a two septic tank solution.

8. Community Mapping

The crofters register is now open. All common grazings must be mapped within the first year. This will be paid for by the Government. If 10 or more crofters come together or less if the whole township the price is reduced from £90 to £70 per croft. The Directors discussed the possibility of paying for all of the crofts to be mapped as funding may be available from HIE. It was decided in principal to notify all tenants of the Trusts intention to pay for the croft mapping when notifying them of the increase in rent.

9. Housing Burdens

Burdens received from Anderson and Macarthur. Make a few alterations and issue to the Calverts. Intend to pay the remainder of the deposit once planning is obtained.

10. AOCB

None

Diary Dates for future meetings:

- Jan 24th
- Feb 26th