

MINUTES – DIRECTOR’S MEETING 27th OCTOBER 2015

1. **Attendance.**

Present: Murdo Mackay (Chairman), Neil Campbell (Secretary), Rhoda Macdonald, Dougie Ferguson, Finlay Maclellan, Duncan MacPherson (Commercial Development Manager), Lisa MacDonald (Development Officer) and Linda Armstrong (Administrator).

Apologies: Neil MacDonald, Norman Iain Mackay, Richard Maclellan, Roddy Macdonald and Fiona Mackenzie.

2. **Approval of Minutes 15th September 2015**

The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. **Review of Action Points**

- **Vodafone Mast – Contract Renewal**

Draft terms have been received offering £2750/year for the Luskentyre mast. Maggie has been asked to review the terms and has advised Duncan on conditions to be queried. She has also advised that the Trust aim for a rental of £3000/year.

- **Luskentyre House Plots**

Colin Chisolm to visit the site on 31/10/15 to discuss fencing. It was decided that work should not commence until the electricity connection is in place.

- **Crown Estate Live Leases**

A map was shown of live leases on Trust land, see appendix 1. Murdo has asked the Crown Estate to provide details, but is yet to receive a response.

- **Radar**

On informing Arne Vogler of the Trust’s decision that all licenses must be in place if he wished to site a radar on the estate, Arne decided not to go ahead.

4. **Updates**

Financial

A monthly report for the West Harris Trust was shown, see appendix 2.

No revenue payments have been received from the Big Lottery since the summer, despite assurances that we would have received a payment by now. Duncan to follow up.

Cash flow was discussed. The Marine Access Project can now be closed with a repayment having been made to LEADER for VAT reclaimed on the pontoon. The Trust will require to make a contribution of £11,018.62 to close the project. £1500 to be transferred from Camping Spots to Core Admin.

It was hoped that a payment from HHP would be imminent for the house plots at the Community Enterprise Centre with initial infrastructure installation nearing completion. However, on having reread the conditions, it would appear that HHP have specified that the carpark and tarmac must be complete before the funds will be released. Duncan to follow up.

A quarterly report for West Harris Renewables Limited was shown, see appendix 3. It was noted that the accounts were now out of date, with a payment having been received from SSE for FIT payments due on the Scarista Turbine amounting to £58,565.22.

Commercial Development Manager's Report

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

Pairc Niseabost Community Energy Project

Duncan has received a phone call from the LCITP panel asking questions regarding his latest application for funding.

Development Officer's Report

The Report was noted, see appendix 5. The following updates were given at the meeting:

Seilebost School

No update has been received from Munro Gauld.

Broadband

Lisa has been in touch with a number of communities facing similar issues to West Harris and has received advice on what alternative options are available should BT fail to connect properties in West Harris.

Roddy Munro from BBC Alba will be in Harris on Thursday 5th of November and has agreed to do a news story on the issue.

Solar Panels

Quotes have been received from three Stornoway firms, ranging from £6,000 to £11,000. **The directors agreed not to install solar panels for the time being due to the current financial position of the Trust.**

AOCB

Community Learning Exchange

Duncan informed the directors of a fund available to community groups to visit one another and to conduct peer to peer learning. Up to £750 is available towards travel, accommodation and sustenance and between £350 and £500 available for hosting other groups.

Directors were asked for suggestions of groups who they felt would be beneficial to visit. A number of suggestions were received;

Community Centre – centre manager to attend

Storas Uibhist

Cothram – training

A group who has delivered community owned rental housing

IT Systems for New Centre

HIE have provided an IT consultant to advise on IT systems for the new centre. Duncan and Lisa have provided an outline of requirements for the centre and have received an indicative quote of approximately £30,000, significantly more than expected.

Murdo to find out the cost of the IT system installed in the Old Primary, Tarbert.

SCVO Consultation

An email was shown requesting input from those in the third sector, see appendix 6.

1. What are your three key messages for the next Scottish Government?
2. What are the priority areas for your organisation over the next session of parliament?
3. In the long-term what changes would you like to see the Scottish Government working towards?

Director's answers to all questions were similar; housing, broadband, travel and feed in tariff.

Crofting Commission

Murdo asked whether directors would like to comment on the recent prices being asked for croft tenancies on the estate. The general feeling was that the high prices excluded young and local prospective tenants from crofting. It was decided to add the item to the agenda of the next directors meeting.

Events Committee

Rhoda informed directors that that the Events Committee are planning a community event to be held on Tuesday 29th December.

Diary Dates for future meetings:

- November 17th
- December 15th