

Minutes of Development Coll (DC) meeting held at the Island Café
On 2nd May 2012 at 7.30 pm..

1. Present: Directors Seonaid M-B (Chair), Peter Wilson, Di McDonnell, John W-J, John Fraser, Vicky, Lavinia and Romayne: apologies were received from Colin Scott, Paula Jamieson and Fra Macintyre. Also present was Emma Grant as An Cridhe Project Manager and George McConnachie (GM) as Business Development Officer (BDO). Frances Macintyre (LDO, An Cridhe Book Keeper) made her apologies.
2. There were 20 members of the public also there.
3. No Directors registered an interest in the proceedings and the meeting began. The Minutes of March and April were agreed and signed off.
4. The Chair then explained about the set up of the meeting. That Development Coll held monthly meetings to discuss company business which the public were invited to attend, and ask questions from the floor. If the meeting did not cover the concern of a member of the public, they were invited to write in and have it put on the next agenda.
5. An Cridhe: John Fraser said that completion date for the bunkhouse was around the 20th May, as it was almost complete. Bookings would be taken probably for mid June to make sure it was fully equipped. As for the community centre, there have been very few building issues and the work was going well. The flooring was presently going down and outside landscaping almost complete. All was on budget. A Centre Manager has been appointed and will be in post on the 7th May – all booking enquiries should go through her. The job of cleaner/caretaker was about to be advertised.
6. An Cridhe turbine: the Chair read out a statement in which she said she felt it was very important that the whole community was consulted about putting one up, and proposed to send round a questionnaire to judge the response from the whole island. She pointed out that DC had underestimated the ground swell against this turbine (partly because an application for a 50kW turbine had recently gone through with very few objections) and it would not be going ahead unless majority of the community agreed and planners gave permission.
7. New Business Development Officer: George introduced himself as the new BDO working particularly on the feasibility of the turbine. He reiterated that the turbine would not be going ahead if the community did not want it, the cost was too high and planning was not forthcoming. If any one of these points failed the whole idea failed.
8. Community Consultation Questionnaire about the turbine: There was much discussion about this, what the questions should be and who should be allowed to vote on it and the timing of it. The government strategy on the amount of FITS available is going to change in October and if the turbine were to go ahead it would have to happen very quickly. George pointed out that this was highly unlikely to happen.

9. Members of the public then posed questions from the floor, relating to the proposed An Cridhe wind turbine process and to wind turbines in general:
- It was agreed that a draft questionnaire would be put up on the notice board for comments from the public before it was sent out to everyone. It would then be mailed out.
 - It was agreed that a simple yes/no answer would be sought for the An Cridhe turbine.
 - A member of the public had prepared a petition against the An Cridhe turbine, stating it had been signed by 70 people - adults, house owners and islanders, with no one signing under 18. She was thanked for preparing this useful document but – following further discussion - it was agreed that a more formal survey should be undertaken, based on the electoral roll, with the criteria clearly explained. George McConnachie to speak to Teri Shervington for advice on conducting a ballot using the electoral roll. (This has happened.)
 - A member of the public questioned DC's 'mandate' to proceed with investigating a wind turbine project, stating that the Growth Plan showed only 5% of the community had was behind the project. The figures from the Growth Plan were discussed and it was decided that since there was going to be a questionnaire going out this would cover this point. (n.b. following the meeting it was confirmed that the figures show that of the 79 responses received, 38 gave a positive response (47%) whilst 29 responded negatively (37%) – 12 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (15%). There was therefore a majority of 10% in favour – not 5% as suggested.) John Fraser said that the tolerances used were that of the HIE and would put this in writing. (n.b. Following the meeting, Fra Macintyre (LDO) has agreed to provide a recap of the Growth Plan in due course, including a reminder of the processes, the surveys and the scoring systems – as well as a summary of where we are now.)
 - There were then more general points made about the turbine, including whether turbines were actually viable in the first instance, and whether they caused health problems.
 - A question was asked about revenue from the turbine should it go up. George explained that the revenue would go towards the charitable aims of DC which would include supplying the bunkhouse and community centre with electricity.
 - Various members of the public felt the issue of the turbine was splitting the island, and that a healing process was needed.
 - A request was made for the BDO to visit more households. The BDO felt he did not have enough time or a mandate to do this, but was going round the various businesses which might be affected and individuals who might be involved in his ongoing projects.
 - Paula Smalley invited directors to visit her home at 8.30pm on Friday evening to see the impact of a wind turbine on her view at sunset. (Following the meeting it can be confirmed that this invitation was accepted and three directors attended, with two others sending their apologies.)

- A member of the public asked DC to minute the fact that DC did not apply for 1MW of grid space and had no plans to develop a wind turbine of this size.
- It was explained that DC directors had previously discussed the Gallanach Green Energy proposal for a community-owned commercial-scale wind turbine but had agreed not to pursue the offer at that time and had written to Gallanach Green Energy to that effect. A member of the public requested that the conclusions of that discussion should be minuted.

10. Further discussions ensued:

- A member of the public complained that minutes on the website were not up to date. (For the purposes of these minutes it should be noted that the problem has now been rectified.)
- A member of the public requested clarification on what constitutes a 'mandate' for DC to proceed with a project. The chair promised to clarify DC's approach to the Growth Plan. (See note above relating to Growth Plan recap.)
- A member of the public thanked DC Directors for their hard work and vision which had gone into the process so far and wished it well for the future. He pointed out that HRH Princess Anne was coming to the opening of the centre and it was important that the whole enterprise was going to work and not be controversial.
- He also noted that premature reference had been made to the forthcoming visit by Princess Anne.
- He also alleged that Development Coll was in breach of Clause 33.4 of the Companies Act and that directors were not legally appointed, but declined to elaborate further. The Chair said she would look into these. (For the purposes of these minutes it should be noted that the Company Secretary has subsequently confirmed with DTAS lawyers that there is no clause 33.4 of the Companies Act 2006. re directors standing down by rotation, compulsory AGMs have been done away with since 2008. DTAS have looked at our As & Ms and they are satisfied that as they stand we are doing things just fine. It should be noted that the Chair and office bearers and LDOs investigated this issue about a year ago.)

11. Members of the public requested some clarification on the Coastal Communities Fund.

- George explained that DC had been made aware at very short notice that funding of around £75K was available for improving small coastal communities' shore facilities for business and tourists. The first stage had been to write short answers to four questions, to find out if our application was acceptable. Ideas put forward had included more storage space for fishing equipment, and a slipway.
- A few members of the public asked why this project had been initiated and whether this could be considered to be part of the Growth Plan. George McConnachie explained that aspects of the coastal communities fund were part of the Growth Plan – e.g. improved transport links; storage facilities. Additionally the proposal to build a slipway had been pursued by DC in

the past. (Note following the meeting: it should be noted that the Coastal Communities Fund fits squarely within the aims and objectives of Development Coll.)

- Additional questions focused on practical issues: e.g. purchase of land; where to site storage facilities; why DC had not specifically asked John McCann for detailed slipway plans. GM explained that this was still an extremely early stage of the process and these details were not necessary at this point. If Coll's initial application gets accepted the second stage would be due in October which allows plenty of time for more detailed discussions and community input. GM suggested that the formation of a Harbour Users Association would be a useful first step.

12. A member of the community complained that, some years ago, he had put his name forward to be a director of Development Coll, but had not been asked to join the board. The Chair apologised in retrospect and confirmed that current DC practices meant any such application made now would be handled formally (for clarity, this means it would be put to a directors' vote at a DC directors meeting). She and other directors stressed the value of new directors coming forward to represent the diversity of Coll's community.
13. Finance: A statement of the current financial statement was handed round to the Directors but without the Book Keeper to explain the situation more fully it was felt best to hold this one over for the time being until she was available.
14. Merchandising: a local businessman was anxious that his sales were not going to be affected by items sold at An Cridhe. He had already brought this point up with the BDO. He was assured that the An Cridhe management committee had discussed the issue, and had agreed that branded items would be available for sale at An Cridhe for the opening, but not as a general rule.
15. The size of the bunkhouse: Dervaig had said that their bunkhouse needed 20 beds, and a member of the public asked if there could be provision to extend ours if necessary. John Fraser said that we had to make considerable cuts in size to start with because of the financial situation, and in future extending would be perfectly possible.
17. Any further business was postponed until the next meeting, and the evening closed at 9.45 pm.