

## Approved Minutes of The Coigach Community Development Company

### Director's Meeting 24th February 2011, 7pm.

Present: Iain Muir (Chairman), Nick Clooney (Vice-Chair), Julia Campbell, Ben Walton, Ian MacLeod, Phil Shaughnessy, Linda MacLeod- (Local Development Officer), Ann Macleod(AAB), Steve Husband, Richard Williams .Apologies: Anne MacLeod, Peter Muir. In Attendance: Alison Hitchings for input for item 7.

1) The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) **Minutes** of Meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> January were approved subject to three minor amendments, proposed by SH, seconded by PS.

3) **Matters Arising: a)** IM stated that minutes should be published on the CCDC website as soon as practicable once they were approved. **ACTION** : LM, PM and AAB on PM's return.

b)SH stated regarding the funds mentioned in AOCB that Tommy was ready to transfer but needed bank account details from us. **ACTION** :NC to pass details on to SH.

c) We now have a Treasurer, Ben Walton who has volunteered for the post so there will be no need to advertise.

4) **Residents' Survey Results:** LM reported a 42% return rate. Though the majority reported positive feelings about living here some problems were highlighted as we would have expected. The survey results have been put up on the website and will be included in the forthcoming newsletter. IM has also sent copies to Robbie Bain and CLLRS Jean Urquhart and Richard Greene as a courtesy.

5) **Letter to Landowners :** LM had circulated to us a draft letter to be sent to all local landowners and common grazings committees re the need for land for housing. BW suggested that the letter to landowners referred to land for workshop units as well as housing. This was agreed as it reflected the findings of the 'Have Your Say Day' and currently there is strong value placed on the space within the Hydroponicum building,

which is being used by several local businesses. There is no timescale suggested in the letter but LDOs will contact the landowners again to arrange a discussion, if required.

6) **LDO Monthly Report:** PM, LM, RW and NC had met to review the ‘timeline’ they had set out last year. They looked at what HIE wanted and what needed to be done regarding the various projects identified. The Residents’ survey was a local audit required by HIE as a basis for the formulation of a development plan for the area. LDOs would bring the first draft of this to the next meeting. The public consultation had confirmed the findings of the Have Your Say Day. LM would continue to try and elicit as much comment/suggestions from people as possible, through strategically placed suggestions boxes. The “Vision” statement has been put up in the Hall and comments invited.

LM has asked Joseph Peach to be our junior representative and he agreed to this. It was suggested that up to three junior members could attend in rotation. **ACTION:** LM to invite Joseph to the next meeting.

LM will circulate the text of a Newsletter she is preparing for comments and suggestions. **ACTION:** LM

7) **Report from Community Energy Sub-group:** The planned meeting with the Achiltibuie Shareholders had gone ahead successfully and with no dissent among those present. PM had prepared an update which AAB passed on to the meeting in his absence. Planning permission for the met mast was prepared and posted. Official applicant is the CCC. The CCDC is the agent. This halves the fee to £159.50, paid from CCDC funds to speed things up. A funding application was made to the Lottery (Awards For All) for the bird survey. An application to the Ward Discretionary Fund was prepared to pay for the wind data analysis. A firm in Stirling has been contacted to analyse the wind data from the wind monitoring mast. The Met mast and the monitoring equipment are being provided by SH. The meeting was unanimous in wishing to record a vote of thanks to SH for his generosity in this. Alison commented that these steps represented huge progress in the Community Energy Project.

IM stated that Viv Halcrow, following a period of consultation, has been selected to conduct the bird survey required for the EIA; she has the appropriate qualifications and experience and is well known to SNH as a competent contractor. The survey includes

walkover visits, travel, collating data, report writing etc. Her appointment was approved by the directors subject to funding being available.

AAB tabled the figures brought to the Coigach Community Council by Simon Mackenzie. These concerned the possibility of Hydro-power at Achvraie and Badenscaillie burns. These had come from some analysis done by Green Highland Renewables and the figures cited looked promising. (In the light of the FITS regime) The intake they had mentioned at Achvraie was above the level of the public water supply intake however, which of course would be unacceptable to Scottish water; re-siting the penstock to below the water intake would considerably reduce the head height and available water, therefore greatly reducing the potential power generation at Achvraie, making the figures inaccurate. (Even supposing Scottish Water was willing to use the burn at all for Hydro Power.) GHR had not noted the water tank. Since the figures were very dependent on the FITS regime, IM warned that the FITS budget was being depleted by very successful applications from landowners in the South who were harnessing solar energy. This could make the future of FITS uncertain.

We did however feel that although we were a long way down the road with the WT project and we did not wish to distract from it, the figures were interesting and required further investigation. Alison was willing to fill in an application form for funding, probably "Investing in Ideas." Alison felt that all the burns in the area could be looked at and she would get some quotes for the work. We agreed that Grid issues might be a problem. LM said she would check with PM that he had not earmarked "Investing in Ideas" funding for another project. At this point, AH left the meeting, having been thanked for her attendance and input.

8) **Report From Land and Housing Sub-group:** this had mostly been dealt with under item 5. LDOs had met with Planning Officer Dorothy Stott informally at Island View, mainly looking at potential plots and access.

SH and JC stated that they are exploring options for affordable housing plots. SH had contacted Dorothy Stott regarding this. The matter will be raised at the local common grazings committee. (AAB left the meeting at this point leaving LM to continue with the minutes.)

9) **Piers & Harbours** : A letter has been sent to Tony Usher to enquire what would be the position of Highland Council should the community wish to take on the ownership of the piers at Badentarbet and Old Dornie. This letter will be considered at the next HC Harbour Trust meeting in May. A brief enquiry has been made to Liz Whiteford regarding possible LEADER funding which raised some issues regarding eligibility. **ACTION** IM to seek advice on LEADER funding, from a contact. LM offered to discuss possible funding options with Kevin Peach, Ullapool Harbour Master.

10) **AOCB**: LM to put up-to-date membership forms in the CCDC folder in the Post Office porch.

The directors acknowledged and wished to record their thanks for a significant donation made to CCDC by Summer Isles Engineering.

LM reported that Mark Foxwell hoped to have a tree planting day on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

LM suggested that the CCDC take on the writing of funding applications on behalf of the Polbain Paths Group. IM declared an interest in this project as a member of the Group. Previously this project had been progressed on a consultancy basis by LM. It was felt that this was a useful project for the CCDC to pursue, as it would benefit the whole community and incorporates a strong element of local training in path building. It had been previously endorsed at a community public meeting as beneficial to both locals and visitors **ACTION** LM to liaise with the Polbain Paths Group to see if they are happy for the CCDC to continue.

In recognition of the fact that the CCDC aims to ultimately become financially self sustaining, LM suggested a possible income stream for consideration. If the CCDC were to act as an agency for local rentals, both of holiday lets and long –term (i.e. all-year-round) lets, then there may be an option of approaching the owners of second and holiday homes who do not live here to see if they would like us to act on their behalf securing holiday bookings and/or long-term tenants, with the CCDC retaining a fee for this service. **ACTION** LM to investigate the business case further and BW will produce projection figures of possible income.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2011 at 7pm.