

## **Minutes from Board Meeting of Coigach Community Development Company**

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**Present:** Iain Muir (Chairman) (IM), Ann MacLeod (AM), Ian Macleod (IM Post), Ben Walton(BW), Phil Shaughnessy(PS), Nick Clooney (NC); Peter Muir(PM) & Julia Campbell (JC) (Local Development Officers), Alison Hitchings (AH), Member of Community Energy Subgroup.

**1. Apologies** from Joseph Peach (Junior Rep), Steve Husband, Linda Macleod, Richard Williams.

**2. The Minutes** of the previous meeting 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were approved - proposed by PS seconded by BW.

**3. Matters Arising:** Land and Housing: AH reported that Iain Campbell had called a meeting to gauge the views of shareholders regarding 'making land available for housing'. AM had spoken to Alasdair Macleod who did not think there could be any land available due to restrictions on planning and the small size of holdings. PM said it would be important to hear the range of shareholders views, and it was **agreed** a follow up letter should be sent at a suitable time. IM Post felt if the Hydroponicum projects were successful people would see how the various housing options worked out.

c) The Soup and Sandwich lunch had been very successful and had raised over £640. JC had expressed our thanks, via the Ullapool News, to all who came along and helped in any way and those who attended or who sent donations.

### **4. LDO Monthly Report**

a) Piers and Harbours: JC had applied to LEADER for funding towards a Piers & Harbours Feasibility study. Match funding had been confirmed by HIE, Coigach Community Council and Summer Isles Enterprises Ltd.

b) Polbain Paths: Phil Waite reported to JC that he had met with Mr and Mrs Rex but little progress had been made; he felt he had to justify why any work was needed in the

first place. The Rex's did not want CCDC to do the work. PS proposed that we should withdraw and let HC do the work using expensive outside contractors even though the work could have been carried out using local expertise. We **agreed** unanimously that this was a way out of the impasse. **ACTION:** JC to pass on our decision to Phil Waite

c) Besides the previously mentioned Soup and Sandwich Lunch there had been some cash donations. A vote of thanks to Chris and Lorna Bown was recorded. They had donated the sum of £5,000 plus a payment for some voluntary work done for Mr. Bown.

d) The LDOs along with SH had attended a Community Account Management (CAM) event in Inverness on 20th- 21st Sept .They had attended workshops with other LDOs dealing with similar projects, issues and problems as those of CCDC.

e) The recent Ward Forum which had been held in Ullapool had focused on Community Organisations and the officers attending had included Robert Muir and other officers from HIE who appeared keen to hear any concerns. Coigach and CCDC had a good presence there with JC, PS and SH in attendance and Members Alison Sinclair and Iain Campbell also present. A topic which loomed large was the problem of Grid Connection which threatened to hold up renewable projects. AM added that another topic was the continuity of funding. While it was agreed that projects were to be ultimately self-sustaining the original funding needed to be in place long enough for projects to get off the ground.

f) The wind monitoring mast provided by SH had been erected on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct. Pictures and thanks to all volunteers and to SH and Martin Urquhart on the CCDC website. SH was also dealing with the insurance for public liability.

g) PM reported that the Westray turbine was reported to be generating £200,000 p.a. for their Trust to spend on community projects. After the LDO event PM attended the AGM of the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust and went on to a meeting with Roger McMichael from Atmos to discuss the proposed contract for further pre-planning wind turbine work. PM & Roger **agreed** that a grid connection be applied for right away.

h) PM had asked CCDC directors by email to study the contract with Atmos and IM proposed that we accept the contract with Atmos (subject to any late comments) which was **agreed**.

i) PM reported that he had also met with the solicitors HarperMacleod in Glasgow to explain the nature of our projects and advise that the first outcome we required from them was a corporate structure fit to deal with these.

## **5. Community Renewables**

a) The name “Coigach Wind Ltd” was agreed for the wind project and the name “The Coigach Foundation” was unanimously agreed for the proposed charitable branch of our organisation.

b) PM advised that we would need to start thinking about directors for the wind turbine company. PS suggested AH, PM suggested SH, Kevin Peach and himself. Kate Hayes was also suggested. **Action:** AM to ask Kate if she would like to help with the project.

c) For the Joint Venture with SWT on the Hydro project the name “Ben Mor Hydro Energy Ltd” was agreed. This project requires up to four Directors. Two from SWT and two from CCDC. SH and Peter Drake were suggested.

d) SH and IM had met in Inverness the previous Wednesday to hear, along with SWT, three presentations from consultants who wished to take on the feasibility study for the hydro energy project. The candidates had all been very good. MNV was based in Callender, John Duncanson was based in Evanton and had been involved in many projects, some local (Rhiddoroch), and Dullas, a very experienced Welsh firm who normally took on larger projects. IM and SH had favoured John Duncanson as he was very experienced and near to hand. The decision would be made the following Tuesday.

## **6. Land and Housing**

a) PM reported that a loan offer from Highland Opportunity Limited towards the purchase price for the Hydroponicum had been received by e-mail – and we would need an e-mail ballot amongst ourselves to **agree** to the loan terms after reading the terms .

b) While Highland Opportunity Limited (HOL) had offered us a loan of £44,000 it would be necessary to call an EGM. Though we had been constituted in accordance with Scottish Governments Community Right to Buy legislation HOL felt that CCDC needed

the proven support of our members to take on a commercial loan. **ACTION:** PM to advertise EGM for 3/11/2011 at 7.30pm and JC to contact members by E-mail.

c) With the money 'promised' from HIE, the loan from HOL and our own funds we would have enough funds available. **ACTION:** PM to phone Colin Gray to say that we believe to have the funds in place.

d) It was **agreed** that we still need to have fundraising events: due to so many events in November **agreed** to leave the proposed visit from the band which had been promised FOC till next year, possibly Valentine's Day.

## **7. Piers and Harbours**

LEADER application had been posted and it was expected that we would hear in about 8 weeks. PS to approach Colin Findlay re the possibility of some funding from the fish farm. **ACTION:** PS.

## **8. Finance**

BW was now working on the bank papers. IM has passed the cheque book etc to him. He expected to have cash flow figures for the next meeting. IM and NC offered help if necessary.

**9. Correspondence** PM had posted a claim form to HIE for LDO expenses.

## **10.AOCB**

It was **agreed** that the renewal date for Membership should be the 1<sup>st</sup> May each year.

Postcode used by the Hall Trust's OSCR registration believed to be incorrect – we think it should be 2YG.

IM asked that a special vote of thanks from the Directors to Munro Gauld be recorded. His help with the business plan for the Hydroponicum had secured us the loan.

A vote of thanks also to all those who had helped with the erection of the monitoring mast with a special mention for Martin Urquhart who had kindly donated a digger and

driver and to Steve Husband who had not only given us the use of the mast but had provided expensive consumables necessary for the job.

IM has asked account Tim Wright from Elphin to do our company accounts.

**11. Date of Next Meeting:** Nov 21<sup>st</sup> 2011 at 7pm in the Hall.