**AGENDA MEETING OF TIREE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**22 June 2020 1630**

**by Zoom**

Present: Dr John Holliday (chair), Phyl Meyer, Ian Gillies, Alison Clark, John Patience and Gerard McGoogan

1. There has been some forceful criticism expressed in postings on TCC website from a few members of the business community on Tiree of the letter that we wrote recently to Michael Matheson, the Cabinet Secretary responsible for ferries. We talked about how we felt about this.

2. It appears that some critics had fundamentally misunderstood our core message. It was clear that we had never asked that there should be a ban on tourist travel to Tiree this season. We had asked for a managed system, where islanders and their families on the mainland had a fair chance to travel during the busiest part of the tourist season. GM pointed out that the Tiree lockdown had, in fact, been effective from the New Year, with the linkspan replacement preceded by three named storms.

3. There had also been criticism of the fact that we had not proposed this letter at the June public meeting or polled those attending, had not backed it up with surveys of island opinion, had composed it during a private TCC meeting and had not asked for comments from the public before sending it. While these procedures are essential for developing policy in 'peacetime', we have been allowed some latitude in these respects by Argyll and Bute Council during the Covid-19 epidemic. Matters were moving so fast that our view was that we needed to bring our views to the attention of the Scottish Government within days. We also felt that our position would be uncontroversial: we asked for a managed system of what promised to be a scarce resource, balancing fairly the needs of Tiree and Coll, and islanders, their families, second home owners and visitors. We rejected the criticism that had been directed at us. To compose the letter we something that all politicians use every day: our knowledge of the community and our recent conversations with the public. If we find that we have mis-read popular opinion on the island, we will be happy to change our views.

4. IG and PM would write a reply to this criticism and we would all have an opportunity for an input. This would be published in An Tirisdeach, on our website, on Facebay and in the shops.

5. If the complainants remain unhappy, they can use the Council complaints procedure, and/or stand at the by-election later in the year.

6. IG had written in a personal capacity on the website, and this was clear.

7. We set the agenda for next week's public meeting. GM said he expected to be in Dublin, but we agreed that it was possible to take part and vote in a Zoom meeting from anywhere in the world.

8. We agreed who would attend a meeting with Michael Russell MSP tomorrow and what questions we would ask.

Dr John Holliday