**MINUTES**

**TIREE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**9 February 2022 7pm**

**By Zoom**

1. **Present**: Dr John Holliday (chair), Phyl Meyer, Iona Campbell and John Patience. There were 29 people on the call.
2. **Translation**: the meeting was simultaneously translated into Gaelic by Iain mac ‘Ille Chiair under a pilot scheme run by CHARTS.
3. **Apologies**: none
4. **Resignation**: JH announced that Gerard McGoogan had stepped down from the Community Council. JH thanked him for his commitment to TCC for four years and said that he would be greatly missed.
5. **Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**: these were agreed as a true record. Proposed PM and seconded JP. JH had written to Melissa Stewart about a new constitution and she was sending out a revised copy. JH had written to John Lyon, the Clinical Dental Director for Highland. Tiree was now being served by the community team in Oban, which he was trying to add to. The next dentist’s visit will be 16 February. The Dental Therapist (Sara Scott) based on Mull will be commencing regular visits on 7 March. JH had met with Donald Watt, a manager in the Health and Social Care Partnership about the number of agency staff at the Home. There are currently five vacancies. They have been using the Scottish Nursing Guild. This contract will end at the end of February. The costs were currently being met by additional Covid funding. Recruitment was a sector-wide problem, and JH offered to help with local publicity. Currently routine respite care is suspended because of a lack of staffing.
6. **Correspondence**: the Census will be on 20 March, mainly online although paper questionnaires will also be available. They are recruiting enumerators. The Baugh phone box is still awaiting repair. Our last letter about this was last month. There has been no action on heating at Pier View, despite a letter from Mary-Jean Devon. **We decided that JH will write to our MSP about this**. The new bike stands are ready and the TCC logo has been sent to create the signage. There have been three incidents attended to by the police. The window at An Turas at the pier has been broken again. The policeman asks for information from the public about this incident.
7. **Broadband**: Rhoda Meek told us that Tiree Broadband (CIT) was now registered as an R100 supplier. CIT could therefore take R100 vouchers, but there is currently a stipulation that the fibre then has to be installed within 28 days. This is unachievable on Tiree due to weather and staff issues. CIT is in a ‘holding pattern’. **We agreed (PM and JH) to set up a meeting with Robert Thorburn, CIT and TCC and to lobby the Scottish Government to extend the 28-day window**.
8. **Ferries**: Don McKillop, Area Manager for CalMac, attended the meeting. Recently, the service has been challenged by the weather, Covid and technical problems. There has not been a successful berthing on Tiree for five days. The most recent attempt saw the Master instructing the cutting of the ropes to avoid the vessel mounting the linkspan. Swell conditions are the issue at the moment. There will be an increased service in the next few days to take advantage of a window in swell conditions, and CalMac will cancel the Colonsay service to do this. Currently the Isle of Mull needs work on the bow visor, and the Arran boat is having some work done on the hull. The Hebrides has lost an engine and is currently being repaired in Lochboisdale, and so cannot be deployed on the Tiree route. The Clansman needs 55 square metres of steel replaced in dry dock. ‘Everyone on CalMac is on this’. A question was raised about the enormous increase in charges for campervans over 6.3 m. Transport Scotland sets the fares. **DMK will tell us who to contact in TS**. Another question was the drydocking schedule. The drydocking schedule starts in September. The Clansman usually needs three weeks away, and it might be better to avoid February next year. The most important thing is to have a capable boat to replace it. **DMK will get back to us about this**. Lastly, the question of cancellation fees came up. There will be a consultation about Terms and Conditions next month before the e-booking system is launched. **Alan Hood, the Head of Ticketing, will attend a future TCC meeting to explain this**. In the summer, boats are showing full and people cannot book, and yet CalMac is getting up to 20% stand-bys on board, showing how many last-minute cancellations there were. Passenger rights mean that expenses will be reimbursed for ‘controllable’ events (technical) that prevent a sailing**.** Calmac will always try to help if there are genuine welfare issues. Passengers should enquire at the desk. Bringing in extra vessels to the fleet has been discussed at TS level, but boats of a suitable tonnage and robustness are few and far between. We asked for volunteers to re-boot the Tiree Transport Forum. Coll is doing the same thing, and the two islands could work together. A Tiree Ferry Users Group might be a better way to tackle these issues. It was suggested that TCC set up a petition to put pressure on the Scottish Government to speed up the delivery of new ferries and construct a breakwater in Gott Bay, using change.org. Another suggestion was to use the Scottish Government online petitions route. This means we would have to contact one of our eight MSPs first. A wider scope for this, involving other islands, might be better. We will discuss this offline for a couple of days before deciding which route(s) to choose. **We will write to our MSP.**
9. **Schools**: JH summarised the Education Change Programme (Collective Leadership Model) having been to several meetings about the matter. TCC has been asked to consult about this. Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) want to form collectives of 4-6 schools under an Executive Head Teacher. There are several drivers for this. Possibly one is a critical OECD report on Scottish Education last year. The population is going down in Argyll and Bute, particularly the number of school children. A smaller roll means less funding for a school. ABC also says that it is increasingly difficult to recruit properly qualified Head Teachers. Additionally, Head Teachers, especially in small schools, have to spend time teaching at the expense of management. Schools would be led by Heads of Schools. Smaller schools would be able to take advantage of the facilities and structures of neighbouring larger schools. ABC have said that they will not close any schools, and that teachers will not have to move around between schools. ABC say the proposal is likely to be cost neutral. One of the teaching unions, the EIS, say that many head teacher posts will be lost locally, and the proposal has been controversial elsewhere in Argyll and Bute. TCC has prepared a questionnaire which will go out shortly. This will be available on the TCC website, Facebook page, Facebay and An Tirisdeach. The answers will be anonymous and confidential. TCC will then prepare a balanced and constructive report. People can respond to the ABC consultation themselves too. The TCC survey will run for three weeks, and the closing date for the ABC consultation is 31 March.
10. **Planning**: JP listed the five planning applications listed since the last public meeting. New legislation allows communities to develop Local Place Plans. These can be registered with the local Council, and are an expression of a community’s wishes about how a place develops. A registered Place Plan has to be taken into account by the planning authorities, so it could become quite important. **We agreed to take this forward with a preliminary meeting of TCC, the Tiree Trust and TRD.** One suggestion was a Tiree Rural Housing Body as a way of protecting housing for local people.
11. **Office holders**: Phyl Meyer will be the new Treasurer. Iona Campbell is the Secretary.
12. **AOCB:** JP suggested that CalMac could charter planes from Oban if ferries could not berth. **JH would write to Don McKillop.**

The meeting closed at 8. 50 pm.