**MINUTES OF JANUARY MEETING OF TIREE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (TCC)**

**25 January 2023 7pm**

**via Zoom**

1. **Present**: Phyl Meyer (chair), Dr John Holliday, Jacqui Bennett and Tim Arkless; Cllr Amanda Hampsey and Cllr Jim Lynch. There were 14 members of the public on the call.
2. **Apologies**: Willie Hume, because A&BC do not permit Zoom use on their equipment, and Andrew Kain.
3. **Introduction**: Phyl welcomed everyone. The new members of the community council and the ward councillors introduced themselves.
4. **Declarations of conflict of interest**: PM said that he was on the Parent Council; JB said that her husband was, also.
5. **Minutes of the last (December) meeting**: these had been posted on the TCC website. It had mainly been an administrative meeting and had been run by an Argyll and Bute (A&B) Council officer. Proposed by JH and seconded by JB.
6. **Matters arising**: none
7. **Correspondence**:
* Police report: there is now a new operating model, with an attempt to be more consistent across community councils across Argyll and Bute. Matthew Shaw, a sergeant in Lochgilphead, will prepare a report for the whole area. This showed that there had been 25 incidents on Tiree and Coll since last August. The Tiree policeman reported that there had been two calls during December (an RTA and an agricultural fire). There were no particular issues
* New HIAL Strategic Plan: due to budgetary pressure, there was a renewed emphasis on ‘best value’, ‘increasing commercial revenue’ and ‘realigning our infrastructure investment to meet available resources’. Difficulties in recruiting locally due to lack of suitable housing were also mentioned in the Highlands generally
* Douglas Hendry had replied to our request to review the Council’s decision not to do an Island Communities Impact Assessment during the appointment of the Executive Head Teacher last year. This review has to be completed by 3 February. He also put us in touch with an officer who could explain where ICIAs were published by the Council. Finally, he wrote that ‘the National Standards for Community Engagement were not legally binding but, notwithstanding that, I can confirm that the Council would seek to have regard to the Standards as a matter of good practice’
* Andrew Kain had written asking for a re-scheduled meeting with TCC and Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services at A&BC. This was to be about pods beside the school and other matters
* We had written to Cllr Liz McCabe, A&BC Policy Lead for Islands, about the A&BC Islands Sounding Board. We asked for the Sounding Board’s minutes to be published and for the Policy Lead to contact island CCs before meetings. She did not reply, but passed our letter to Mr Hendry who told us that the minutes would be published from now on but that the role of the Sounding Board would remain unchanged. JH argued that TCC probably needed to look elsewhere in the Council to exert influence
* Hugh Nicol, from Argyll Estates, had written just before the meeting about sand and gravel extraction from beaches by some crofters. He regarded some of this as excessive and damaging to the environment. This is an important subject. We decided to return to it as an agenda item at our next meeting
1. **Councillors’ duties**:
* Website: JH
* Facebook and meeting streaming: PM and JB
* Banking signatories: JB and PM to be added to JH. **JB will organise**
* Correspondence: this will be fully circulated from whoever is the initial contact
* Tiree Transport Forum: TA and JB. PM will attend on behalf of the Trust
1. **Councillors’ reports**:
* Cllr Jim Lynch (the leader of the Opposition): he has sent us his report. He is happy for this to this to be published. He is also happy to be contacted at any time. He is the new chair of the Argyll, Lochaber Skye and the Small Isles Ferry Stakeholder Group. Please contact him about ferries. A&BC budget cuts are looming, but no final decisions have been made. He has had discussions with the Chief Executive about this. There are a lot of benefit enquiries at the moment. He is involved in Financial Inclusion as a ‘one stop shop’, particularly for the islands. The ‘Tiree Food Project’ should get a grant of £5000 soon. Families in need will soon get relief on their Council tax and grants for extra food in schools. It was pointed out that the Tiree Customer Service Point would make a good ‘one stop shop’
* Amanda Hampsey (in the Administration): she has been appointed to the Harbour Board. She will soon be the chair of the Independent Joint Board. She will be visiting the Tiree Care Home and the island’s surgery in her position as Policy Lead for Social Care. At her last Tiree surgery, she had been approached by families needing more childcare. As a result of her efforts, the Council was now offering unused places in the Early Learning Centre for younger children. This was offered on a rolling month-to-month basis. She is also happy to be contacted at any time
* Andrew Kain reported after the meeting on the establishment of a new forum: ‘Marine Infrastructure and Transport Liaison Group (MITLG). This is meant to better coordinate across Mull and Iona (as well as hopefully in future Coll and Tiree). The forum brings together; Transport Scotland, CMAL, Calmac, HITRANS and Argyll and Bute Council along with stakeholders across the islands represented by Community Councils. The inaugural meeting was at the end December, it adopted Terms of Reference. The next ‘business’ meeting will be in February. I have also had initial contacts with Highland Council’
1. **Co-option of new community councillors**: we were still under strength (we should have eight members). We can co-opt two new members as well as unlimited numbers of people with particular skills. We decided to contact those who had thought about standing at the last election but had not submitted papers. We also decided to contact the Rural Centre, the fishermen and Discover Tiree for representatives. **JH will approach these people**
2. **Proposed closure of the Tiree Customer Service Point**: this had been put forward again by the Council. TCC had written a letter to the Policy and Resources Committee for its 19 January meeting protesting the possible closure. Rona was an invaluable resource, had organised the island’s Covid volunteer response, and helped those who were digitally excluded. It would lead to the loss of a local job and a loss of revenue for Tiree Community Business. Its closure was a ‘red line’ for TCC. What A&BC should be doing is bringing work and jobs to its most isolated and economically marginal islands. **JH would continue to gather evidence to make this case including testimonials and submit this to the full Council meeting in February. PM will contact MSPs to say that A&BC is under-funded.**
3. **Reports of meetings:**
* Argyll, Lochaber Skye and the Small Isles Ferry Stakeholder Group, 11.1.23: JH had attended. A new shelter for the Tiree pier has been agreed, placed where most people stand and wait behind the wall. It has been proposed that a bus was needed to ferry people up and down the pier in bad weather, but extra funding for this would be needed. Angus Campbell, chair of the CalMac Communities Board will be visiting Tiree between 13 and 17 February for a public meeting about the current split between CMAL and CalMac. The new terms and conditions mean that if you are late booking in at the pier, you will lose both your place and the fare. The islander preference scheme has not made any progress over the winter due to lack of staff at Transport Scotland
	+ Scottish Government’s Net Zero Energy and Transport Committee consultation on ‘A Modern and Sustainable Ferry Service for Scotland’, 17.1.23: JH had attended and made the case for an islander preference system
1. **Joint working with other island Community Councils**: since it was difficult to get our voice heard in the corridors of A&BC, we decided to approach community councils in Coll, Mull and Iona to see if they would be interested in a preliminary meeting to explore common interests. Oher Argyll and Bute islands were welcome to join. We agreed to do this and **JH would write to these CCs**. Our A&BC councillors said that they should continue to be used as the first contact if we wanted matters raised.
2. **Engagement with Parent Council: PM would write to the chair of the Parent Council to ask if they wanted to co-opt members from the new CC.**
3. **Amendment to Tiree Planning Policy 2021:** under ‘Scope’, delete ‘It generates eleven or more comments from island residents to the Community Council.’ Replace with ‘It generates eleven or more comments from island residents to the Community Council or the Argyll and Bute Planning Portal.’
4. **Getting the right balance between virtual, hybrid and in-person meetings**: we were reluctant to give up the reach of our digital meetings (by the next morning, 275 people had logged on to our Facebook stream of this meeting). But we did recognise that some, possibly many, islanders preferred to meet face-to-face. We decided to try out a hybrid meeting in March at the Tiree Trust offices, where the IT facilities are better. The popularity of the meeting would help us decide whether to continue.
5. **AOCB**: there was none.
6. **Date of next meeting**: this would be the second Wednesday next month, 8 February.

PM thanked Cllr Lynch and Cllr Hampsey for giving us their time. The meeting ended at 8.55 pm.

Dr John Holliday, secretary, 26 January 2023