**DRAFT MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING OF TIREE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (TCC)**

**8 March 2023 7pm**

**Trust Offices, Crossapol and by Zoom**

1. **Present**: Phyl Meyer (chair), Dr John Holliday and Tim Arkless. 3 members of the public were in attendance, with ten devices online. Cllrs Amanda Hampsey, Andrew Kain and Jim Lynch attended remotely, as did John Angus MacKechnie, TCC’s new crofting and farming member under Skills and Knowledge.
2. **Welcome**: PM welcomed everyone
3. **Apologies:** Cllr Willie Hume
4. **Declarations of interest**: none declared
5. **Minutes of last meeting**: TCC had made a public statement at the last meeting. It included the sentence: ‘Serious allegations have been made about excessive sand and gravel extraction from beaches that go beyond reasonable crofting purposes.’ Hugh Nicol the Factor of Argyll Estates had written to correct this impression: ‘I have insufficient information to pinpoint those who are taking too much, or indeed, taking without permission, and I have not referred to crofters as the cause of this problem.  Individual crofters have been alleged to be part of the issue, as have others, but I was very clear in stating that I understand the problem of improperly removed aggregates to be rooted in unauthorised commercial, not legitimate agricultural, use … I hope that those with an interest in this subject may view the papers to see the Argyll Estates communications that absolutely do not point the finger at farmers and crofters.’ We were happy to accept this clarification, which is to be published in *An Tirisdeach.* The minutes were proposed by JH and seconded by PM. There had been 388 views of the meeting on the TCC Facebook page.
6. **Matters arising**:
* PM had sent the TCC statement on sand and gravel extraction to the estate
* PM had written a press release about the ferry docking failures
* PM had written to MSPs about the inadequate level of funding for local government. He had had replies from three. These generally agreed, one pointing out that a commission was looking into the matter
* The Community Garden group is developing, and its Facebook group is now active again
* The last meeting generated four items in the *Oban Times*. This was thought to have been a good thing
1. **Correspondence:**
* Rona Campbell had written to thank TCC for our support
* Hugh Nicol (see above)
* The Crofters Commission is seeking to recruit Crofting Commission Area Representatives
* There is a SEPA consultation (deadline 17 March). No one volunteered to take this on
* There had been some chat on the TCC Facebook page in favour of in-person meetings
* Argyll and Bute Council’s [Supporting Communities Fund is now open for applications](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/third-sector-grants)
* Police Report LB32: ‘Has had 4 calls for service over the month of January, 1) Theft (1 Call), 2) Assist Member of Public (1 Call), 3) Road Traffic Collision (1 Call) and 4) Communications Offence (1 Call). Of the calls that we received, this translated to 2 crime being recorded. All crimes and calls related to Tiree.The press releases for this area were: Drink Driving & No Insurance: At 1.30am on Friday 17th February, at Heanish, Isle of Tiree, Police received a report of a male that had allegedly crashed his car whilst being under the influence of alcohol. Officers attended, established the identity of the driver, breathalysing him. The driver allegedly failed the test having excess alcohol on his breath, over the permitted legal limit. The man, 23, was arrested. Subsequently, evidential samples have been obtained and a report has been the submitted to the Procurator Fiscal’
* We get regular updates from CalMac about ferry changes. We share this on TCC Facebook, but many people had already heard about it
1. **New members of TCC:** we agreed that Angus John MacKechnie should join TCC as our crofting expert. Frances Khetrat has offered to join TCC as a co-opted member and we agreed to put her name forward to the next meeting, and to start including her in our correspondence.
2. **Lessons learned from the Argyll and Bute Council Budget setting meeting**: you can apply to Douglas Hendry to present a case in person at the meeting itself. However, by then it is probably too late. The three councillors advised us to campaign as early as possible, but writing to councillors was the right way to do it. Collecting concrete examples of what services provide is particularly useful. We thanked our ward councillors for listening to us and presenting our case successfully. Next year’s budget will also be challenging, and we may face this situation again.
3. **Developing the Tiree Customer Service Point**: it had been suggested that Argyll and Bute Council functions that could be done remotely could be diverted to Tiree. **JH will talk to Rona to develop this idea.**
4. **Ferries**:
* TA had talked to Cllr Kain about the new Argyll and Bute Marine Infrastructure Transport Liaison Group. This brings together CalMac, ABC, CMAL and local ferry users groups to work towards the National Transport Plan. We should work more closely with the Coll Transport Forum. The new Coll survey to gather the impact of ferry cancellations was discussed. We had not had prior sight of this. We agreed that a similar survey on Tiree would be useful: if not now, next winter. **We agreed to talk to Coll to find out the details of the survey and discuss this matter at the next meeting**. The possibility of Tiree children having access to the Scholars’ Flights at the weekend was mentioned. This will be dealt with at the upcoming Tiree Transport meeting
* PM had had another meeting with Transport Scotland and ferry user groups from Coll and Mull. There is a proposal for a local pilot to retain a small number of car spaces until 72 hours before travel. This would tend to favour local travellers. We welcomed this. There has been a network-wide decision to accept tourists with a holiday home booking onto the Advanced Standby list, along with shellfish deliveries and key workers. This list will be allocated manually 24 hours before the sailing. There is a lot of local unhappiness about this, but it was being imposed on us
* Angus Campbell, chair of the CalMac Community Board, will be visiting Tiree on March 16 or 17. The exact time of the meeting is still to be announced
1. **Fishing**: Neil MacPhail made a presentation. The Scottish Government’s Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMA) are set to make up 10% of the country’s seas, far higher than the proportion in England. An HPMA will not allow fishing of any sort. If one is proposed that involves a substantial part of the waters between Skerryvore and the Cairns of Coll, fishing on Tiree will cease to exist, and the recent investment in the harbour and facilities in Milton will be wasted. 16 island children under 10 are supported by fishing. An initial consultation is due by 20 March. **We agreed that our responsibility is to represent the views of the community. Fishing was an important part of the island’s economy. We would liaise with the Tiree** **Trust working group on this matter, and make a strong representation against any HPMA around Tiree and Coll.** **JH would lead on this.**
2. **Phone box project update**: John Patience had provided an update. The Caolas, Scarinish and Balephuil boxes are finished. The Caolas one has a new defibrillator. The Scarinish one is being used by Solar. The Balephuil one is waiting for an audio system and will be an information point. David Clark has almost finished the Mannal box, but its use is still up for grabs. **We decided that we should deal with the remaining boxes over the next three months.** They either need a sponsor and be renovated, or be removed, and stored or sold. **We will re-advertise them**. JP was happy to remain a consultant and JH would become the new TCC phone box councillor.
3. **Planning applications**
* Golf Ball: there is a pre-planning application for a new radar dome on Ben Hynish
* 23/00133/PP new house in Mannal: there are currently six objectors, mainly to the larger scale of the new house. We will keep an eye on this
* 23/00407/NMA modifications to the pump house
1. **Invitation of Jenni Minto MSP to the next meeting**: we agreed to do this.
2. **AOCB**: there was no other business
3. **Date and venue for next meeting**: this meeting had been technically successful. Argyll and Bute Council may have funds for improved IT equipment. We agreed our next public meeting would be on 12 April on Zoom.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Dr John Holliday TCC secretary