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

**JANUARY PUBLIC MEETING**

**17 January 2024 7pm**

**By Zoom and streamed onto Facebook**

1. **Present:** Phyl Meyer (chair), Dr John Holliday, Aran Khetrat, Jacqui Bennett and Frances Khetrat. With the December meeting postponed, a number of items had been carried forward. There were four members of the public present on Zoom with another 36 watching on Facebook. By the next morning there had been 96 views.
2. **Apologies:** Tim Arkless, Angus John MacKechnie, Cllr Willie Hume and Cllr Andrew Kain.
3. **Declarations of interest:** none declared
4. **Minutes of November meeting:** there were no changes. They were proposed by AK and seconded by PM.
5. **Matters arising:**
* Steps at the Soroby graveyard: JH had written to Jim Smith at Argyll and Bute Council (ABC). There had been no answer. Cllr Amanda Hampsey (AH) had agreed to take this up on our behalf, but there had been no report as yet
* Community Emergency Plan: JH has started work on this and sent it to Rona Campbell. **We should have something to report for the February meeting**
* Water: we had written to Scottish Water to ask for a report on the new tank at the treatment works in Balephuil. Despite three attempts to contact them, JH had not succeeded in this. **He will keep trying**
* Reinstatement of bin at the pier: AH was going to take this forward, but we had not heard if this had been successful yet
* The lack of a BT Open Reach engineer on the island: PM had written. The reply was that they would still be able to offer a good service. We will keep an eye on this
* Community garden project: John Patience will prepare the papers for the planning application to erect the Keder house
1. **Correspondence:**
* Police report for October: there had been eight calls with one theft reported, the padlock at the all-weather pitch at Cornaig School
* Forum of Argyll and Bute Community Councils: reply from Robin Currie saying that the officers were preparing a report, and that there should be a consultation about this ‘in the New Year’
* Oban Harbour Revision Order consultation ended on 11 January. Oban Community Council were representing us
* We had received a letter suggesting that employers place more emphasis on hiring local people, so that there was less pressure on housing
* CalMac have a new island podcast 'Scottish Island Adventures'*.* Tiree had not featured yet
* Coll Community Council, supported by TCC, had asked CalMac for changes to the summer 2024 timetable: (1) for our Barra link to be returned to Thursdays; (2) for the normal summer timetable to be maintained as much as possible during the Tiree Music Festival; and (3) for all Tiree livestock sailings to include a return into Coll on that day to allow our crofters and farmers to attend without extra costs. CalMac had not agreed to these requests
* A constituent had encountered a rat in her toilet and wondered if anyone else had noticed an increasing problem. **JH would ask the Council staff about this**
* Road gritting**:** there had been some correspondence today about the state of the roads. JH had contacted ABC staff on the island. They are hampered by an overtime ban, their other commitments such as rubbish collection and having to spread the grit by hand. Consequently, only the most dangerous corners were being treated. JH had contacted Coll CC. They used to have a small mechanical gritter, towed behind a van, but this is now broken. **JH would write to the roads department of ABC**
* Transport Scotland is visiting Tiree on 14 February to consult on the new CalMac contract. Further details to follow
* 356 Resident fare cards have been issued to Tiree. This is a remarkably high number, and reflects, to some extent, the hard work done by the Trust to help applicants
* The Trust has asked TCC to write to CalMac to re-instate the window on the CalMac booking system alerting campervan drivers that they need a booked croft camping scheme pitch before buying a ticket. PM has done this. It seems that this is currently technically impossible with the new system. They will try to rectify this some time. It is mentioned in the timetable
1. **Meeting reports:**
* Ring n Ride: PM and JH had met with ABC. While they might be open to a new bidder, this seems very unlikely. Otherwise, the budget has gone. All they were offering was assistance in helping community groups to get the necessary paperwork to run a voluntary bus service. We will keep the pressure up on this. Young people on the mainland get free bus travel. On Tiree all they get are two free return trips on the ferry
* Community Empowerment Act and Participation Requests: this has been on the statute book for 7 years but is little used. ABC have considered 12 requests in that time. A good example is a recent Participation Request by Luing CC to look at ways to improve the Luing ferry. We should consider using it more often
1. **ABC Councillors’ Reports:** there were none
2. **Democracy Matters consultation:** Democracy Matters phase 2 consultation from the Minister for Community Wealth and Public Finance. The Scottish Government has been consulting since 2018 on the best way to strengthen local government and create new, smaller decision-making bodies with increased powers (one successful example cited is the Mull and Iona Community Trust). This stage of the consultation is looking for ideas from communities as to how this might work. Contributions have to be submitted by 28 February 2024. This could be by individuals or by bodies like Tiree Community Council or the Tiree Trust. Some suggested areas to explore:
* Do we on Tiree indeed want more powers over budgets and services? It would not be compulsory. Or would we prefer to leave it to the Edinburgh government and Argyll and Bute Council?
* Is Tiree the best unit, or should we combine with other islands like Coll or Mull for economies of scale?
* Are Tiree Community Council councillors and the Tiree Trust Directors representative of the island? Would giving more power to local communities encourage more people to come forward? How do we get a wider range of people to stand?
* What is the best way to engage with the community: online or in Open Days with childcare?
* Would we need mentoring and a budget to take this step?
* How should these new decision-making bodies be funded?

**We decided to publicise this consultation on Tiree Facebay to encourage a response so that we could produce a draft response for the February meeting.**

1. **Recycling**: to bag or not to bag? ABC originally asked us to bag our ‘co-mingled recyclate’ and provided the requisite bags. At this time island ABC staff sorted the recyclate in the Gott facility. Now it is sent off unsorted to a Materials Recycling Facility in Linwood operated by Enva, now owned by I Squared Capital. JH had talked to staff there and had been told that bagged recyclate is sent to landfill. **JH would write to ABC and Enva to confirm if this is indeed the case.** The 2020 recycling and recovery rate in ABC was 44%; the target is now 70%, so there is room for improvement.
2. **Estate shooting parties**: we had received a letter from a constituent who had heard shooters near her house. Thinking that they had gone, she allowed her children to go down the road on an errand only to hear more shots. Coming out, she had been alarmed by a number of men with guns nearby. She was not against shooting in itself, but wondered what procedures were in place around dwellings. We had invited Peter Isaacson to the December meeting. He had replied by letter, saying that he does warn householders about shooters if they have indicated to him that they would like to get a warning. We recognised the reasonable concern some people have about shooting around their house, although others may be perfectly happy about it. We also recognised the right of the estate and the shooters to carry on shooting. **JH will write to Peter again to reiterate these concerns, and ask the constituent if she wanted to be contacted by the estate in future.**
3. **Airport Consultative meeting with Hebridean Air Services and ABC**: this is a yearly review of the Oban air service with Colonsay and Coll CCs. The main issue concerning TCC was the absence of scholar flights to Tiree, bringing back young people from Oban for the weekend. **JH will ask on Facebay if there is a demand for this.**
4. **Tiree phone boxes**: there are still four unadopted boxes despite numerous appeals. We decided that they should be removed and sold. **JH will contact John Patience and will start this process. We will advertise them on the island for sale**. The money raised could pay for maintaining the others.
5. **Scarinish retail centre fence**: we had had little success in encouraging the bank and the Coop to take this project on. This is quite understandable. **JH will write to the Tiree Trust to ask if they would consider doing this.**
6. **Planning applications for the last two months**
* 23/02443/PP house behind Scarinish schoolhouse
* 23/02410/PP house north of Clachan, Cornaigmore
* 23/02276/PP opposite Croish, Caolas

None of these applications raised any issues under our planning policy.

1. **AOCB:** bus shelter at Pier View. **JH will write to WHHA.**
2. **Date of next meeting:** in-person hybrid meeting on Wednesday 21 February at 7pm

Dr John Holliday 18 January 2024