

## **NORTH TOLSTA COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Note of meeting of the North Tolsta Community Council held at the Community Hall, North Tolsta, on Tuesday 20 February 2018, at 7.00pm.**

**PRESENT:** Anna Mackenzie (AMK); Angus Murray (AM); Cllr John A MacIver (JAM); John A MacIver (JM); Fiona Black (FB); Cllr Calum Maclean; Stuart Thomson (ST); Fiona MacLeod (FM).

**APOLOGIES:** Erica MacLeod; Norma Macritchie; Cllr Donald Crichton.

**CHAIR:** S. Thomson

### **1. Note of the Last Meeting**

Note of the last meeting was approved.

#### **Matters arising**

- The installation of the phone in the hall would need to go through BT. AMK would contact other groups who may have phones installed at community premises.
- The Machair Kitchen invoice had been received and paid.
- The Remembrance Service on 11 November 2017 went well.
- Disposal units for camper vans – AM had yet to follow up re costings.
- Challenge Fund works at the Tràigh Mhòr, Garry and the Cladach had been completed and the invoice paid to the contractor.
- AM attended the Comhairle's Budget consultation meeting in Back on 13 November 2017 with the Comhairle's Director of Finance (also attended by the three local Cllrs, Back CC and the Tong group).

### **2. Accounts/Bank Balance**

The balance was £9,053.66 as at 11 January 2018.

### **3. Druim Leathann Windfarm**

There was an extensive discussion on this matter and the documentation in respect of the latest proposed alteration to planning forwarded by Forsa had been circulated to members. The latest alteration sought an increase in turbine size, from the ground to blade tip, from 126m to 140metres (in comparison with the existing community turbine - 81m). The MW would be 49.9 to remain under the threshold of 50MW which would avoid a decision referral to Scottish Government.

There were pros and cons, support and opposition to the the development. Key issues included the relatively low level of community benefit in relation to the large scale of the development. The payments would take the form of a 50/50 proportion of rental (of the land) to the Stornoway Trust and the Tolsta Grazing Committees, in addition to a further Community Benefit payment.

These Community Benefit payments would be as follows:

Years 1-12: £7,000/MW  
Years 13-25 £10,000/MW.

On the basis of these figures, the community benefit (from 14 turbines) was likely to be c.£350k per annum initially which was similar to the sum generated currently from the one existing community turbine.

There was discussion as to whether this represented a good deal and as to how payments to grazing committees/shareholders might be allocated – directly or via the grazings committees.

There would be further ongoing discussions between Forsa and the community as to how Community Benefit might be allocated – whether through TCDL or indeed the Community Council or an arm's length community body such as a Trust, representative of all of the community's interests.

Forsa would be presenting another round of public exhibitions for the Druim Leathann windfarm project in Tolsta on 27 March 2018 and Community Council members were invited.

It was noted that there had been consultation and frequent meetings throughout but these were driven largely by the developer so there was a case for a more independent view.

It was agreed that the Community Council would circulate an information bulletin to keep the community informed about proposed developments at Glen Tolsta as the majority of people in the village were not shareholders and not, therefore, fully informed necessarily of past, current or proposed developments.

#### **4. Scottish Water**

A letter had been received from MSP Alasdair Allan detailing Scottish Water response to representations he had made on behalf of the Community Council. The MSP would continue to press Scottish Water for a timescale of the proposed developments.

AM would take part in a survey commissioned by Scottish Water and would flag up any issues then. The number of call outs had been frequent in past months and the burst asbestos pipes remained a concern. Plastic 'blue piping' as installed in Tong was a viable option in Tolsta. Works has already been under taken in New Tolsta although not fully completed (part of New Tolsta).

#### **5. Community Hall**

There was a further problem with the heaters - sparking and blistering of casing – the latter of which was due, according to the electricians, to extremes of cold and heat in the hall. The blistering was caused by condensation when the heaters were switched on after a period of being off. This did not seem entirely plausible so it was agreed that the Community Council would continue to press for replacements, via the Comhairle, contractor, the wholesaler and the manufacturer (Dimplex).

It was agreed to put temperature loggers (JM) into the hall for a week or so to assess temperatures over the period.

It was agreed to undertake some minor works in the meeting room to allow easier access to the switch for the heaters

## **6. Football Pitch/ PACT**

David at Total Design had forwarded an update by e-mail on the football pitch and drawings would be available fairly soon.

PACT accounts had been sent to OSCAR – a balance of £5,000 on the account. JM and AM would liaise re PACT paperwork, in advance of an AGM.

## **7. Tràigh Mhòr Footpath**

This item had been raised by NM. There were erosion and safety issues. It was agreed to approach Mackay's for a quote to improve the amenity of the path and make it safe.

## **8. War Memorial**

JM was still in correspondence with the War Memorial Trust in light of the withdrawal of the previous contractor. The cost of the works by the replacement contractor was going to be £6.5k plus VAT while the grant was £2930.

The shortfall could be sought from the Wards Initiative funding and TCDL.

## **9. AOCB**

### **Comunn Eachdraidh Tholastaidh**

The Comunn Eachdraidh was looking for letters of support from the community. They were currently negotiating a lease for the year for the school house with a view to purchase. They would hold an Open Day on 22 March 2018.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 20 March 2018.