COMHAIRLE CHOIMHEARSNACHD SHLEITE

SLEAT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of Sleat Community Council held at Tarskavaig Hall

Tuesday 5th March 2019

Present:

Rob Ware

Tim Shone

Flora Maclean

Veana Cleland

Roddy Murray

John Duncan MacInnes

Apologies: Kirsty McGonagall

In Attendance:

Donnie McKinnon, Gary Mahon, Paddy Mackay, Kate Duffus, Willie Ewing

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting 5th February 2019**

Roddy Murray welcomed members of the pubic to the meeting

The minutes of the meeting of were moved by Flora Maclean and JD MacInnes

**Matters Arising:**

None

**Agenda**

**Sleat Surgery Update**

Rob Ware updated on the recent dialogue with NHS Highland re the Sleat surgery. This included an email from the Practice Manager and the newly revised South Skyes Practice leaflet. It was discussed about the availability of GPs at the Sleat practice but we had been reassured that appointments on the day will always be available which may be at Broadford. Coverage of the Small Isles will now be one day a week on Wednesday and there will be an Advanced Nurse Practitioner generally at Sleat most times of the week except Wednesdays. Recruitment for GPs is now underway. Roddy Murray said that we had always had a good service from Sleat. It was also reminded that the community taxi service is available for appointments for doctors and hospital visit. New plans for community transport are being assessed at present for Sleat with possibly an electric vehicle or seven-seat transport.

**Highland Council Budget**

Roddy advised the HC budget had now been set and that Council tax will rise by 3% from 1/4/2019. There is still a significant budget deficit and this was outlined in the recently published Budget Booklet. A discussion on Tourism Tax (TVL) has taken place and it is expected that consultations will take place throughout 2019. Rob said that the difficulty all faced was, if the tax was approved, would taxes collected in Skye actually be returned to the island for the improvement of tourist facilities. There will be a discussion too apart parking charges at locations such as Armadale Pier. Cuts in services are inevitable. There was further discussion about the ‘unfairness’ of the Inverness City-Region Deal and the Inverness Common Good Fund with the free Portree WiFi project the only example of the fund in Skye.

**Planning Application for Motor Home Service Point**

Rob outlined that the Planning Application for the MHSP at SMO. This has come about as a project of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund which is designed to assist projects that help alleviate pressure on infrastructure issues. The application for funding was submitted by SCT/SMO to Visit Scotland via Highland Council on 31st January and is on-going. A decision is expected by April. The planning application may take three months to determine. The fund will provide 70% of costs with the land being given in kind by SMO. There will be no separate Electric Vehicle charging points there but a Highland Council project will provide two units to the right of the Stables Building at Armadale Castle and Gardens. The plans are on the Council website.

**Roads/Planning/Tourism**

The tar plant at Sconser has reopened following staff holidays for three weeks. Fortunately, the winter has generally been kind. Many of the potholes have been addressed but the condition of the roads across Skye is dire and resources continue to be restricted. More white lining ‘ Keep Left’ will be done by HC this summer following a recent accident and a public petition from the driver who was hit by a tourist driving on the wrong side of the road.

Few applications for Planning are being made currently in Sleat. Supporting letters for the pod projects at Ardvasar Hotel and EI have been submitted by FEI to HC. Roddy update about the mast at Tarskavaig.

Rob updated on his understanding of the process to consult in the Highland Region the issue of tourism tax. Rob attended a meeting in Portree which included the recommendation of approval for £170k for further studies of the resumption of air services to Glasgow. John MacInnes asked members of the public what their views of the resumption of air services. There were differing views from the public but it was said that the key issues are connectivity, business growth, recruitment, medical travel and tourism that will be debated at the public enquiry stage. Generally, most present saw it as good proposal and the project would improve travel options. At this point it was felt that there is not enough further information for the SCC to make a policy comment on.

**CalMac**

Rob said that the summer season commences on 29th March with the first three days of the service requiring Loch Fyne to replaced by Loch Bhrusda due to MCA winter Licence regulations. Rob will check with CFL. It will be the same vessel deployments as last year with MV LOTI and Loch Fyne. We are awaiting results of the submission for enhanced winter services. Scoping works for the enhancements to the pier area led by the Highland Council are underway and just today Rob had learned that a Traffic Order would be issue an order to reduce the speed limit to 30mph from a point down to the CFL office.

A reminder that the CMAL drop in session to update on the Mallaig-Armadale STAG project takes place at AN Crubh on 26th March from 1600-1900. Residents and businesses are strongly urged to attend.

**Deer Management**

Tim reported on a recent meeting that there will now be a Deer Control Group and not the wider group. John Muir Trust and Scottish Woodlands will now join. FEI continue to manage their own deer plan. It is known that CDLT have shot more deer but generally reports are good. Deer seen eating seaweed at Gillean shore.

Commission for Highland Democracy

A new document consulting on Highland community councils and Sleat has already rejected the concept of merging with local CCs. It is proposed there will be a minimum flat rate but special assessments for remote and rural areas with be considered. The grant is £8 per week. CCs will now have to pay their insurance premiums directly out of the grant. Flora will arrange the payment of £80.00. Rob reported on the 16th January meeting that was held specifically to brief members on the CC Review. It was also suggested why HC do not consolidate all its CC insurance cover in one policy with Zurich with a view to bulk discounts.

**AOCB**

Tim raised some issues regarding the mobile bank service by both banks. Armadale Post Office can take cash in and Rob/Veana agreed that they would get the up to date schedule is. Rob will then put this on the website and Facebook page. It is thought that the service is haphazard and all transactions are manual.

John MacInnes reminded of the charges that the Council are now demanding fees for planning applicants that are hoping to build a house that requires access over a council owned grass verge. One charge to a Sleat landowner is £60,000 and a second house nearby may also be subject to a charge. The SCC will continue to monitor this as it sets a precedent for future house developments across the HC region.

**Public Discussion**

Gary Mahon advised that under CalMac’s sponsorship there would be a Rail/Sail tickets for the Beo Festival but reminded of the environmental impact. Rob reminded of the new CalMac Community Fund that opens for applications from 1st May in our area. This will be promoted through the social media channels.

The meeting closed at 2100 with the next meeting on 2nd April 2019 at An Crubh 1930.