**COMHAIRLE CHOIMHEARSNACHD SHLEITE**

**SLEAT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Minutes of a Meeting of Sleat Community Council held at Tarskavaig Hall 8th November 2022

Present:

Rob Ware

Tim Shone

Veana Cleland

Absent: Ludwig Appeltans

Apologies: Flora Maclean, Duncan MacInnes, Donnie

MacKinnon

**In Attendance:**

Janet MacDonald, Morag MacDonald, Angus MacDonald, Chris Alsop, Wendy and Andrew McGahan, Willie Ewing, Kate Duffus, Gordon Matheson, and Councillor Ruraidh Stewart.

**Welcome/Apologies/Declaration of Interests/Recording of the Meeting**

Chair Tim Shone welcomed members of the public and introduced the councillors. Apologies and absence shown above. Tim welcomed Gordon Matheson from the Sleat and Strath Free Church and Sleat Community Trust. Councillor Stewart arrived later. With just three members present this meeting will not be quorate and this is formally noted in these minutes. There were no declarations of interest and Tim reminded that this meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minute taking which will be destroyed in due course. Those present were asked to confirm that they were not recording this meeting.

**Matters arising from the meeting of 4th October.**

The secretary Rob Ware had distributed copies of the minutes of that meeting to all present and proposed to run through some of the key points, the most notable being the formal adoption of the new Sleat Community Council Behaviours and Actions Policy which was approved unanimously by the four members present at that meeting. Councillor Appeltans has made no comment in respect of this adoption now passed and which is shown on the governance page on the SCC website. Rob outlined the visit last month of Sgt Graham Cameron and Police Scotland’s approach to re-engaging with communities through Community Council meetings and updated on the Short Term Lets licensing for Highland and potentially Planning Control Areas. Andy Williamson had updated about the issues at Fas Mor. Rob suggested that those attending read the minutes at home. Veana raised the growing issues with the spread of Japanese Knotweed on public and private land.

Tim Shone approved the minutes and these were seconded by Veana Cleland.

**Item 4 Gordon Matheson, Pastor Sleat and Strath Free Church and Asst Business Development Manager SCT.**

SCC had invited Gordon to speak informally at tonight’s meeting about his work since the tragic events of 10th August, his liaison with the families and engagement with the emergency services and public agencies. Gordon also spoke about his submission of evidence to the Scottish Affairs Committee at the UK Parliament who are holding an Inquiry into Firearms Licensing in Scotland following the events in August.

We do not propose to minute this section of the meeting, these were personal views of Gordon Matheson and were for the benefit of those attending tonight.

Tim Shone thanked Gordon for his valuable and honest insights.

**Item 5 Councillor Ruraidh Stewart**

Ruraidh Stewart introduced himself as a new Elected Member for Ward 10 and agreement has been reached that he will be the new aligned member for Sleat. This makes the liaison between Members and communities across the Ward much easier. Ruraidh is happy to answer any questions. Rob asked what his impressions were of the first months as a Councillor. Ruraidh said that he first stood for the by-election in 2020 when Councillor Macdonald resigned. He is very keen to support local communities but the first six months or so have been different to what he thought it would be. At local level all four councillors are working well together all with common interests. Tim raised concerns of the unfair distribution of funds in favour of Inverness. Ruraidh used the example of parking charges, and that income is not coming back to local areas although he accepted that the administration of such revenue is undertaken in Inverness. Ruraidh added that he was aware of a shortage of resources in the Council’s planning department and that decisions taken in Inverness do impact local communities such as Sleat. He stressed that party politics amongst the members is not an issue as all members work for a common goal in serving the community.

Gordon Matheson asked about the poor state of the road from Drumfearn up past Kinloch Farm. Rob was able to respond to that as the resurfacing has been required for months. The Sconser quarry has been closed since 10th October with mechanical failures with priority given to BEAR Scotland the road materials required for the A87 Trunk Road resurfacing at sites between Broadford and Portree. ‘Availability of hot tar will be restricted’. Rob will update for the next meeting after speaking with the CWO. We are still waiting for works at the Ardvasar junction which will see the pavement extended from Armadale Stores towards Armadale Pier.

Rob outlined for Ruraidh the forthcoming dates for meetings this year and in 2023, these are on our website. Tim added that due to numbers we would not be quorate at tonight’s meeting and because of current issues with a colleague he hopes to see significant changes to the Scheme of Establishment considered by the Council and Scottish Government. It has been evident that SCC is not the only community council in Highland that has been subject to internal disruption.

Tim thanked Ruraidh for attending tonight’s meeting and looks forward to a productive relationship going forward. The next meeting will be Tuesday 6th December at Sleat Free Church.

**Item 6 Roads and Planning**

Rob reported that there has been little movement on outstanding roads issues, as exampled by Kinloch Farm above, but he regularly speaks with Donnie Macleod to ensure these are focused on. HC responded quickly to recent communications from a Ferrindonald resident is concerned about the state of the footpath along several stretches of the Sleat road. There have been no significant planning issues and both the FEI Clay Pigeon Shooting Range and new car park near the hotel are still under consideration.

Rob reminded of the drop-in session at An Crubh presented by Lomond Energy on behalf of Arise, a Swedish wind farm company. It is open between 2 and 7pm. This is a proposal for a 19-turbine farm at Upper Breakish.

**Item 7 Health and Social Care**

Rob said there is little to report on these topics but there are still major concerns in the north of the island over emergency healthcare and residential beds that was one of the key issues for the Sir Lewis Ritchie Report. Gordon Matheson asked if dental care was included in this topic, citing the recent retirement of a dentist in Kyle which has resulted in an existing dentist taking on 4,500 of his patients. That practice is looking to recruit a new practitioner as soon as possible.

**Item 8 Ferries**

The winter timetable commenced on 24th October and a submission for consultation on next year’s summer timetable for Mallaig-Armadale has now been sent to CalMac. The assumption will be that next year’s schedules will be similar to 2022 perhaps with a few tweaks. Development for a traffic management plan for Armadale has stepped up a gear with the deployment of 11 new buses for Stagecoach routes including Armadale. A meeting of a new Skye Transport Group has been set up by NHSH and Rob will attend that next week in Portree. This is to follow up from a transport study back before the pandemic and includes public and patient transport.

**Item 9 Tourism**

Rob updated on the ongoing process for applying for a licence for short-term let businesses. Trade bodies are still opposing but this is now legislation, and it seems that Scot Gov will not defer this under any circumstances. Owners and operators are recommended to apply as soon as possible.

**Item 10 Community Resilience**

It was raised in the AGM in the summer that Sleat might revisit the issue of community resilience. Andy Williamson suggested that whilst much in place at present it would be prudent to look at the key issues. He has kindly prepared a briefing paper and subsequently Sgt. Graham Cameron sent links for the Highland Council CR page with whom they work closely. The paper needs further consideration from all parties

**Item 11 Housing in Sleat**

Work is continuing to meet the deadline of completion of the Armadale housing site of the end of January. Work has now begun at Kilbeg, with the latest 14 now in ground works. Rob asked Ruraidh his view on Planning Control Areas as Badenoch and Strathspey has already been agreed for such a programme. He said that there is not a one size fits all and does need local communication and engagement for Skye. As of 8th November, only 78 applications have been submitted. Rob said there is a remarkable variation between local authorities’ fees across the country. Ruraidh added there are some exceptions if you are already licensed for the sale of alcohol. It was also raised about the self-assessment of fire inspections. Rob added that SFRS have resumed home visits for vulnerable people. Morag Macdonald asked if housing is being allocated to key workers, Rob will ask LSHA for a view. Rob spoke about the Council’s scheme for buying property on the open market and returning it to housing stock for key workers. Gordon Matheson spoke about a conference he attended hosted by HIE about housing and the timing of availability. Local demand in Sleat is a separate demand from Highland and Tim said that the latest developments should have an affordable/social housing.

**Item 12 General**

SCT AGM is being held on 16th November and the SMO Lecture is on 10th November, Professor James Hunter. Gordon Matheson is keen to look at community transport with SCT and will submit a paper for the new Skye Transport

**AOCB/Public Discussion**

Willy Ewing asked why poles have been erected in Tarskavaig and Stonefield for fibre optic, but it appears there was no notification to the community, but Gordon Matheson said that ground surveys would have been carried out and local conditions will determine siting of routes. The water-main had been severed during work but was quickly resolved. Wayleaves’ will be issued for facilities on private land.

Rob raised the issue as to why community councils haven’t been reformed and indeed the SCC has low numbers of members. This may be down to the increase in the numbers of paid positions with developments. SCC will be actively seeking new members as soon as possible.

Tim thanked everybody for attending and particularly Gordon and Ruraidh.

The next meeting will be held at the Sleat Free Church at 1930 on Tuesday 6th December.