COMHAIRLE CHOIMHEARSNACHD SHLEITE

SLEAT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of Sleat Community Council held at Seomar Cruinneachaidh on

Tuesday 6th December 2016

Present: Roddy Murray

Rob Ware

Tim Shone

Veana Cleland

Flora Maclean

Kirsty McGonagall

John Duncan MacInnes

Apologies: Kirsteen McGonagall

In Attendance: Una Macleod, Charles Barrington, Veronica Barrington, Geoff Stephens, Senga ? Donnie McKinnon, Angus Dunpark, Ishbel Macdonald, John Gordon

Roddy Murray welcomed members of the public for their attendance and thanked Councillor John Gordon for his attendance. Roddy said that this would be the last meeting of the year and thanked members of the public for their support this year.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting 24th October 2016**

The minutes of the meeting of were moved by John Duncan MacInnes and Veana Cleland.

**Matters Arising**

Nothing to report from the last meeting other than Rob highlighted that most of the meeting was taken up with the Armadale item from the West Highlands and Islands Local Development Plan. For Councillor Gordon’s benefit Rob updated on that item.

**Agenda**

**Councillor John Gordon**

Roddy asked John to set the scene for the HC budget in 2017. £20 million reduction is possible. John said that cuts are now unsustainable and this is most notable in roads. Essentially the key focus at present is the new budget and the re-design of Council services that has so far identified 120 areas to focus on. Many services could be offloaded and concentrating on basic services. Central government cuts are affecting all local councils. New quangos such as the Commission for Highland Democracy may reveal the impact. The government cuts are unsustainable and not workable for the HC. Rob Ware asked about the debt burden and if it could be written off by Government then this would be a big injection for the area. Rob said that he saw Sleat as no different as any other Skye area. John Gordon recognised that for Skye there does need to be investment in infrastructure, there is lobbying going on to get local funding. This was particularly in respect of the Inverness City Deal. White lining is a problem for example and very little has been done on HC managed roads. Roddy outlined his serious concerns about the vanity projects in Inverness. How can some of that money be clawed back to rural areas. Inverness has a very wealthy Common Good Fund. Money is available for tourism projects in Inverness. John said there is a new Roads Manager which we advised we had already met at a meeting.

**Skye and Raasay Committee**

Roddy raised the issue of this new committee and there is a report from the Ward Manager including the key projects such as Uig Harbour, Broadford airfield etc, publish transport etc. Roddy asked about what powers the Committee has. Does the Committee have a budget, John said no. At present all items will be covered by Community Services, such as roads, grass cutting, parks and cemeteries. John Duncan asked why was such a committee required, and John Gordon said the previous committee extended to Invergordon and was simply too big. It was hoped that S and L would be an area committee but Lochalash are remaining with Dingwall and points east. At present all the committee does is look at reports. Roddy raised the issue of the poor facility at Broadford Primary School yet at the same time huge monies are being spent on the new Portree Gaelic Primary.

**Commission for Highland Democracy**

Roddy questioned what this was all about. There is ample representation through the existing democratic process. People have been appointed to the Commission and there is no transparent process in this. John said that he thought that it was a SG initiative but HC were fully supportive of the body. <https://highlanddemocracy.wordpress.com/> it would seem that currently this is funded by the SG. We will raise this as an agenda item for the January SCC meeting. If there is a budget for the commission can have more of an impact. Roddy questioned as to how the commissioners came to be asked to join the group. Roddy suspects that there is a parallel group in the Scottish Rural Parliament so why does there need to be a commission? John Duncan MacInnes and Tim Shone offered concerns as to how many more of these groups will be formed. Some say at Scotland is one of the most centralised governments in Europe.

**Ward Forum 5th December**

Roddy and Rob attended the meeting yesterday and we asked that Armadale Pier to the capital programme. Rob outlined an update on Forum’s key items and this included Fire, Police, Ambulance Service. Rob said that the two hours allocated for the Forum could easily be achieved online without having to go 100 miles on a round trip. The presentations took up far too much time and only left about 10 minutes at the end for general discussions. This was conveyed to John Gordon to pass to the WF team. John Gordon agreed with our views, but that the Forum chair is happy to keep things the way they are. Almost two hours of presentations are for us, a total waste of time and could be emailed out to CCs. John agreed and we used the word ‘dire’.

NHS Highland Hospital-Broadford

Roddy expressed concerns at recent news coverage of the process of the consultation. He asked if John Gordon asked if HC has taken a decision in the process for the hospital redesign. Two items from JC that is the views of Ronald MacDonald and what is left in the north end when the new hospital s built. John said that people wanted to know (in the north) what is left in the north end of the island). Tim Shone expressed major concern that if this opportunity is missed then it could be lost forever. Rob challenged Prof MacDonald’s statements and highlighted that NHS Highland had carried out a fully approved process that resulted in the decision. SCC will need to bring all the south end CCs to issue a statement to equalise the balance between both ‘ends’. Veana Cleland echoed that many decisions are made in the north end. If we don’t get a hospital, then it could be lost and this is much better than having to go to Raigmore. SCC will speak with south Skye CCs as soon as possible. Tim Shone said that end of life care is becoming the stumbling block. John reminded that Portree Hospital will be retained for a range of services. The SCC will write to the Practice Manager of the south Skye practices asking for an update following some personnel changes in Sleat and how this could affect future provision of patient care.

**CalMac Update**

Rob gave an update on the latest news, or lack of it, from CalMac and Transport Scotland. There is still no word on the Summer timetables. Hamish Fraser had said at the Ward Forum that the Sleat Transport Forum should have involved the Elected Members earlier. Rob defended this to John Gordon saying that at all times we had copied members in on emails and press releases and so that was not a fair statement. Rob outlined that the Loch Fyne has been dispatched to Mallaig this weekend for berthing trials as a potential vessel for Mallaig-Armadale for S17. Rob repeated to John Gordon that this campaign has not just been about Sleat, but Lochaber, Mallaig, Skye and the Outer Isles. Roddy said that as part of the new contract a new Communities Director has been appointed and the STF will try and get a meeting with him early in the New Year. Roddy gave the route statistics to John for the Mallaig-Armadale service in 2016. Una Macleod asked about a Scandinavian ferry that is being assessed, we have no further update on this. Rob and Roddy are attending a meeting in Mallaig with local reps there.

**Armadale Pier MasterPlan**

Rob gave an update on the issues at the Armadale Marshalling area together with the Highland Council Car Park. This will be passed to HC

**Roads and Planning**

No issues of note report, other than the Planning Permission for the two houses at Kilbeg has been submitted.

**AOCB**

Tim Shone had been approached by members of the public about more deer on the main roads. He had met with Lady Noble and this will be reviewed including signage and trying to enlarge enclosures.

Flora reminded at the poor state of the passing place at Achnacloich near to the former hatchery.

Rob is meeting with HC early in the New Year to progress the move of the Sleat War Memorial.

**Public Discussion**

Donnie McKinnon echoed concerns about deer at the Black Lochs area.

Roddy asked John Gordon for an update on the various issues that had been highlighted in media and Council cover. Solutions include Fairy Pools Car Park, parking at Quiraing and the Storr but these are only a small part of the bigger picture. Ownership by local groups, businesses and residents and a strategic plan and involving HC and the MP and MSP. Sleat will input into this as well.

Roddy thanked John for his attendance and extended that to his colleagues on the Council.

The meeting closed at 2120 with the next meeting to be held on 10th January.