

## **Minutes from the Jura Community Council Meeting**

**16<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**Present:** Willie MacDonald (Convenor), Donald Ewen Darroch (Vice Convenor), Alex Dunnachie (Treasurer), Fiona Walton, Joan Richardson, Andrew Fletcher, Alison Fleming, Hugh Carswell, Cllr Robin Currie, Andrew MacDonald (Item 2.1 only).

### **1) Administration**

#### **1.1) New Councillors**

The Convenor welcomed the new councillors.

#### **1.2) Approval of the minutes of the meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

Approved by Alex Dunnachie and seconded by Donald Ewen Darroch.

### **2) Renewable Energy**

#### **2.1) Tidal Project**

Andrew MacDonald of the Islay Energy Trust (IET) made a brief presentation to the meeting outlining the IET's partnership with ScottishPower Renewables and the progress they have made together on the development of tidal power in the Sound of Islay.

Andrew MacDonald confirmed that the IET were having continued discussions about how any benefit from the development might be distributed amongst the community and confirmed that it was not a case of a fixed percentage of revenue returning to the community. He further clarified that this was a relatively small scale pilot operation for ScottishPower Renewables and that large profits were not expected, but accepted that ScottishPower Renewables benefit greatly from the local input the partnership with the IET brings and the associated community support. He indicated that the IET are trying to ensure that as the development creates jobs in the area and utilises the skills we already have here. Mr MacDonald went on to indicate that there may be an opportunity for some local investment in the project. In addition, Mr MacDonald noted that the IET constitution cover Islay, Jura and Colonsay and that the tidal project is a three community initiative.

The meeting further noted an email from John Potts of the Jura Development Trust stating the IET's past decision to invite representatives from Jura and Colonsay to join the IET board. Mr MacDonald confirmed that John Potts remained on the board by invitation and agreed to clarify whether Dhiurachs can be IET members and be elected to the board. Mr MacDonald confirmed that Georgina Hobhouse is the Colonsay representative on the board.

The councillors requested copies of IET meetings to be forwarded to the Jura Community Council.

### **Actions**

- Andrew MacDonald to forward a copy of the presentation for JCC records and to confirm position on Dhiurachs.
- Request written updates from John on meetings.
- Request minutes of IET meetings.
- Andrew MacDonald to clarify points as stated.

## **2.2) Grid Connections**

The meeting noted an email from Sam Anderson, Policy Manager: Grid and Transition for the Scottish Government, sent in response to the JCC's queries to Jim Mather MSP concerning problems with private energy producers gaining access to the National Grid. The email stated that Ofgem who have advised that the delays are nothing to do with them and that Sam Anderson was awaiting a response from Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Lines to establish if there is a problem with the network which has prohibited those advancing connections.

### **Actions**

- Follow up with Sam Anderson.

## **3) Ferry Services**

### **3.1) Timetabling**

The meeting noted correspondence between councillors and with Argyll and Bute Council highlighting the following errors in the Eilean Dhiura winter timetable published at the start of the winter sailings:

- The agreed 08.30 on-request Sunday sailing not listed.
- The 21.30 on-request service only listed as being available on a Saturday night, whereas it runs every day except Sunday.
- The 16.35 crossing was changed to 16.45 earlier this year, but this has reverted to 16.35 in this timetable.
- The 13.00 was changed to 13.10 so that it connects with the bus from Bowmore, but this has reverted to 13.00 in the timetable.
- The timetable seems to suggest that the 23.00 service is only bookable from the Islay side whereas it was previously available to be booked from either side.

The meeting noted that these issues had been taken up with Argyll and Bute Council and further requests had been made for the JCC to have sight of the timetable before it is finally approved. In response, and emails were noted from Martin Gorringe:

- indicating that the timetables were approved by the ferry operators before publishing,
- confirming the 18.30 Sunday sailing was bookable by all ferry users,
- acknowledging the bookable 08.30 on-request Sunday sailing.

Cllr Currie stated that it had been previously agreed that the Jura Community Council would be consulted before timetables are published.

### **Actions**

- Check published timetable and chase outstanding errors.
- Again request sight of timetables before they are sent for publishing.

### **3.2) Bookable Sailings**

The meeting noted an email from Paul Livingstone of ASP Ship Management indicating that:

- they would prefer not to take on-request bookings via email at present due to operational issues.
- the current issues affecting on-request evening weekend sailings have been discussed with the crew and a plan is currently being put in place to allow these sailings to take place as scheduled.
- Mr Livingstone's request that all correspondence regarding the Eilean Dhiura should be directed to him.

With regard to the final point, the secretary has requested clarification on whether he is replacing Peter Mann as the JCC's main contact or whether they are both to be copied in to correspondence.

The meeting noted that there had been a dramatic improvement in communication as a result of the recent changes.

### **3.3) Fares**

The meeting noted that no response had been received to their enquiry to Argyll and Bute Council regarding a possible fund available for reduced fares for Jura residents on the Eilean Dhiura.

#### **Actions**

- Check minutes of previous JCC meetings to look at agreement with ASP regarding reduced fares
- Robin to investigate whether money actually paid to ASP.
- Continue to look at possible fund available.

### **3.4) Port Askaig Redevelopment**

The meeting noted an email from Peter Ward stating that he had been unable to determine a date for the work required to the fixed ramp at Port Askaig, but that he expected that, once the works are underway he expects there to be a period of approximately 3 weeks when the Jura ferry will not be able to use the fixed ramp and will only be able to use the linkspan.

The meeting further noted that email correspondence between Donald Ewen Darroch representing the Islay & Jura Ferry Company regarding the redevelopment of Port Askaig and the audit of the works. Donald Ewen Darroch updated.

#### **Actions**

- Highlight that boat regularly stays in Port Askaig overnight and this affects evening sailings.

### **3.5) Variable Messaging Sign**

The meeting noted an email from Martin Gorrige apologising for the continued delay in erecting the sign and stating that he hoped to see it completed by the end of November. The meeting further noted reports that the sign is now in place at the top of Woodside, but does not yet appear to be fully operational.

The meeting further noted that a warning sign which was obstructing the new variable messaging sign has been taken down.

## **Actions**

- Request further update on when the sign will be fully operational.
- Request information on where the sign that has been removed is now sited.

### **3.6) Disrupted sailings**

The meeting noted emails sent using the email alert system indicating:

- disruption to sailings due to conditions on 7 occasions (29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Oct, 12<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November and the 8<sup>th</sup> December).
- expected disruption to sailings due to conditions covering 3 dates (20-22<sup>nd</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December).

In addition, the meeting noted disruption to sailings on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November when the ferry was restricted to daylight sailings due to lighting issues at Port Askaig.

### **3.7) Complaints**

The meeting noted a response from ASP Ship Management to the complaint raised by a member of the public at the last JCC meeting stating that a 21.30 sailing had run on the night in question and but that it was not possible to ascertain whether the complainant had made the crossing.

### **3.8) Jura Passenger Ferry**

The meeting noted receipt of the minutes from the recent Council meeting in Kilmory on the 17th November and the public meeting at Craighouse on the 9th December regarding the passenger ferry.

### **3.9) CalMac**

The meeting noted an email sent via John Davidson from Calmac informing us of additional sailings on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October due to heavy traffic.

Cllr Currie reported that Calmac have indicated that more sailings may be possible on days when a boat is berthed at Port Ellen for several hours, and that they were seeking information on when extra sailings may be useful.

The meeting further noted correspondence concerning the naming of the new Calmac vessel which is due to serve Islay which is to be named Finlaggan.

## **Actions**

- Request to be directly included on Calmac's mailing list.
- Indicate that extra sailings would be welcome, particularly on the Music Festival and Fell Race weekends.

### **4) Other Transport**

The meeting noted:

- receipt of the minutes of recent Islay Jura Transport Forum meetings and of the recent Islay Airport Consultative Meeting.

- receipt, via the Islay Jura Transport Forum, of a letter from HiTrans regarding the recent Review of Air Services in the Highlands and Islands, including the information that the full draft report can be accessed at:  
<http://www.hitrans.org.uk/Documents/documents/HITRANSAirServices-ConsulttionDraftReportv2.pdf>
- an email from Graham Everett, Head of Customer Services at Loganair, stating that Royal Mail are keen to see the Saturday flight remain in operation and are willing to assist financially with this, and therefore Saturday flights were likely to be re-instated for January and February.

Cllr Currie expanded on the final point indicating that a move had been made by the operator to remove some Saturday flights from the timetable without notice to the community. The meeting expressed dismay at this move and relief that this had not occurred.

Joan Richardson questioned whether there was a case for improving Jura flights as an outcome of the HiTrans review and the secretary agreed to forward the full draft report to councillors who can investigate.

The meeting further noted discussions at the recent Argyll and Bute area committee surrounding public transport, at which included BETI bus was discussed. Cllr Currie confirmed that a decision on the future of the BETI bus funding will be made post budget allocation.

Cllr Currie confirmed that funding has been available since 2004 for on-request early sailings between Islay and Jura on Tuesday and Saturday mornings and requested information on the uptake of these sailings. The meeting noted that the early Saturday morning on-request sailing was most beneficial to island based on usage figures.

### **Actions**

- Email link to all councillors.
- Email Douglas Blades to in support of the BETI bus.

## **5) Roads and Amenities**

### **5.1) Resurfacing**

The meeting noted emails between Community Councillors, Councillors and Argyll and Bute Council concerning the poor quality of the newly resurfaced section of road from Daimh-sgeir to the south side of Beinn na Doire Leithe.

The meeting further noted a response from Argyll and Bute Council stating that they recognised the concerns raised and that these were the subject of discussions with the appointed contractor to 'resolve everyone's disappointment with the running surface'.

Noted this was raised at area committee concerning the dissatisfaction with the surface and that the contractor had not been paid for the work. It was noted that contractors were over on 9<sup>th</sup> December repairing potholes on the resurfaced road. Cllr Currie reported that the contractor is due to revisit and repair the section of road in early 2010.

The council further noted that resurfacing work on Lagg brae has been postponed until the new financial year with a view to significantly increasing the length of the proposed work and

that the length of resurfacing carried out around Beinn na Doire Leithe had been increased to balance out the overall programme for the year.

### **Actions**

- Follow up on issues surrounding the new road surface and clarify what action will be taken and when.

### **5.2) Other works**

The meeting noted a letter from Argyll and Bute Council detailing Operational Services' current winter maintenance arrangements.

The meeting further noted that it was copied into an email from Donald Ewen Darroch, representing the Knockrome & Ardfarnal Common Grazings Committee, regarding works planned and required in this vicinity.

The meeting further noted that the road is eroding away due to a faulty culvert at Ardlussa Bay.

### **Actions**

- Report work required at Ardlussa Bay.

### **5.3) Street lights**

The meeting noted that the streetlight adjacent to the hotel car park and the one by the Pier House are flashing on and off intermittently and that the one adjacent to the cooorage is out completely.

### **Actions**

- Report faults to the Amenities dept.

### **5.4) Road naming**

The meeting noted an email from Louise Muir stating that, due to the amount of development at Ballard, the council have asked residents to consider a road name for the houses. Mrs Muir's email suggests Millburn Brae and Buie Brae as possible choices.

### **6) Petitions**

The meeting noted that the public petitions committee was to consider petition PE1192 concerning the Scottish Government allowing private to run ferries on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009 but that this has been delayed due to the ferries review.

### **7) Association of Argyll and Bute Community Councils (AABCC)**

The meeting noted correspondence from the AABCC regarding the 2009 AGM, including the AGM bulletin and the minutes of that meeting. The meeting further noted that Geoffrey Page has stood down as Secretary for the AABCC and has been replaced by Iain MacDonald of Ardchattan Community Council.

### **8) Planning**

#### **8.1) Development plan**

The meeting noted receipt of a DVD providing an electronic copy of the Jura Landscape study for information, which is to be held at the Service Point once all interested councillors have viewed it. The disk was passed to Andrew Fletcher for review.

The meeting further noted an email from Fergus Murray, Development Policy Manager for Argyll and Bute Council, informing the JCC that work is starting on the new Local Development Plan, and requesting that potential developers complete a questionnaire available at:

<http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/content/planning/developmentpolicy/3270329/3292083/>

## **8.2) Planning applications**

The meeting noted planning applications for the erection of:

- a 15m wind turbine at Tarbert Lodge
- a single storey extension at Corran House.

### **Actions**

- *Forward link to the questionnaire to all councillors.*
- *Contact Fergus Murray to find out where / how we can impact on the consultation.*

## **9) Correspondence**

The meeting noted:

- A letter from SNH regarding proposals for additional special protection areas for Golden Eagles in Scotland.
- Information from Argyll and Bute Council regarding the recent elections.
- An email announcing changes to funding for rural communities through SRDP.
- Notice of the Islay Jura CVS AGM which was held on 26<sup>th</sup> November.
- An email from Debs Bryce concerning the possibility of purchasing Christmas lights for the community.
- Information on Mind Your Own Business courses being run on Islay in early 2010.
- Emails between volunteer ambulance drivers and the doctor (cc'd to the JCC) concerning the new ambulance.
- Receipt of a copy of the Argyll Community Housing Association annual report.
- Information from the Information Commissioners Office regarding the JCC's registration.
- Minutes from the August meeting of the Argyll and Bute Public Partnership Forum meeting run by NHS Highland, and notice of forthcoming meetings.
- Minutes of the August meeting of the Islay and Jura Locality Public Partnership Forum meeting run by NHS Highland, and notice of forthcoming meetings.

### **Actions**

- *Inform Debs Bryce of the small fund available for repair / purchase of Christmas lights and ask that the JJC be keep informed of any progress.*

## **10) AOCB**

### **10.1) Jura Jottings website**

The meeting noted that the Jura Jottings website was currently being developed and confirmed their previous agreement to post fully-approved versions of JCC minutes on the site.

### **10.2) Electric Vehicle**

The meeting noted that the Jura Development Trust were investigating funding opportunities for an electric vehicle for Jura for use by the community. The meeting agreed to offer a letter of support for this application

### **Actions**

- Donald Ewen Darroch to write a letter of support if required.

**Date of next meeting – Wednesday 13th January 2010**