

**SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Ordinary Public Meeting held in the Seil Island Hall at 7pm on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup>  
January 2010**

Present:                      Seumas Anderson                      Chairman  
  
   Tina Jordan  
  
   Anne Marie Robin  
  
   Mike Shaw                                      Treasurer and Vice Chairman  
  
   Geraldine Murray

Also present: PC Jeremy Moore, Cllr Neil Mackay, Cllr Duncan MacIntyre, Karen Fox, Jenny Gascoigne, Alda Forbes and Gary Parker from RWE NPower Renewables plus 11 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence** Charles Struthers, Cllr Donald MacDonald and Cllr Elaine Robertson.
  
2. **The Minutes** of the meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November were distributed, read and proposed as correct by Ann Reid and seconded by Tina Jordan.
  
3. **Matters arising:-**
  - a. **Community Council: By-elections** The Chairman reported that so far there had been a modest response to calls for nominations but that he hoped there would be enough for an election and urged anyone interested to submit a completed nominations form by the 28<sup>th</sup> January deadline. He read out the timetable for the Elections.
  
  - b. **Proposed Raera Windfarm** The Chairman read out a list of facts surrounding the development before introducing Karen Fox from NPower Renewables. Ms Fox answered five questions which had been put to her office in advance of this evening's meeting over a range of topics including noise levels, the visual impact of proposed tree-felling and the potential Community Benefits Package which may arise if the application is approved. Current Argyll and Bute Council guidelines recommend a minimum payment of £2,000 per megawatt of installed capacity from the point at which the wind farm begins to export power to the national grid. The team from NPower Renewables then took questions from the floor over a range of subjects including how visible the turbines might be at night, what strategies were in place for removing the wind farm at the end of the contract, etc. Karen Fox said she hoped to be able to respond within 10 days to any questions that could not be answered tonight. It is hoped that these answers can be posted onto the Seil website.
  
  - c. **Local Roads** Mike Shaw read an update from Charles Struthers stating that Argyll and Bute Council has confirmed that it has spent £325,000 this financial year on the upgrade of the B844. District Engineer Graham Stone has asked to spend a further £220,000 on the B844 this year – but from the Atlantic Bridge toward Easdale on the Isle of Seil. This would upgrade the road to a similar standard as the mainland section between Kilninver and the Atlantic Bridge. In 2011 it is envisaged that the whole route would be surface dressed giving the surface a uniform appearance and resistance against further normal deterioration. In the immediate future the roads department are starting a programme of pothole repairs in Lorn. This will take at least two weeks and it is hoped that all existing potholes will be filled with a permanent fix hot material. The damage to the Lorn area roads is estimated at £100,000 from frost and the recent winter weather. Cllr

MacIntyre confirmed that while the Council's budget was not due to be set until the 11<sup>th</sup> of February it was his understanding that funds which had been earmarked for the upgrade of the B844 but held while Balfour Beatty completed operations would still be available. He added that the road department is due to receive two new jet patchers to ensure that pothole repairs carried out over the next few weeks are fixed more effectively and permanently.

- d. **Health Matters** Tina Jordan reported that she had been unable to attend the Locality Public Partnership Forum (PPF) meeting in December but took the following points from the notes of the meeting: **Dental services** It is hoped that the scheme for the Oban Dental Access Centre in the current Harbour Bowl will be complete by April 2011. This is subject to no change in the capital allocation for Argyll & Bute CHP. **Hospice** At our previous meeting mention was made of the article published in the Oban Times that week. Concern at the negativity of the article was expressed at the Locality PPF meeting and the notes state that the current situation is that a number of interim developments for palliative care at the hospital have been agreed. Both CHP and the hospital remain committed to the development of Nelson Ward in the long term. **Redesign of Mental Health Services** The first stage of planning is almost complete. The second change of implementation will begin soon. **Presentations were given by staff from the Carers' Centre on:** Working with grieving, Support for Parkinson's Disease and What We Do. The date of the next meeting is 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Other dates for meetings include: Community Health Partnership at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls on 28th April, the Area Public Partnership Forum in Lochgilphead on 16th February and the Scottish Recovery Network Roadshow at the Corran Halls on 24th February.
- e. **Scottish Water Project** Mike Shaw again read out a progress report from Charles Struthers on the situation with Scottish Water's works. It said that Scottish Water were not in a position to comment on individual issues but that some remedial work had been carried out in the last couple of weeks and that Scottish Water was in the process of updating its spreadsheet and would be in touch once this has been completed. The company has been hampered by bad weather particularly with landscaping work however the Contractor will be back on-site mid to end of February for around six weeks. It had also been "inundated" with customer issues relating to the 'Big Freeze' and had not been working on normal daily jobs since Christmas. The update concluded that Scottish Water would like to assure the community that it is committed to resolving any issues that remain outstanding and will endeavour to action these as soon as possible.
- f. **Planning Matters** The Chairman said there had been four planning applications for the area since the last meeting which he read out. The proposed erection of 3 dwelling houses on land west of Dunearn House on Easdale attracted some discussion among residents. Concerns were voiced that this application by Downing College (University of Cambridge) may herald the building of more holiday housing. It was also noted by those present that the proposed site is close to shingle and may be considered unsuitable for building on at all. The Chairman concluded that the Community Council will probably seek to make a submission to the Planning Department regarding this development before the deadline on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February.
- g. **Police report** PC Jeremy Moore said it had been a quiet period since the last meeting. He believed that the local authority had coped very well with the winter weather conditions on the roads. There had been two crime reports. One of those involved a stolen car on Seil and he urged residents not to leave car keys in the ignition. Police had also stopped nine vehicles as part of a recent exercise. Two drivers had been drinking but not enough to make them over the legal limit. However, police will be repeating the exercise over the next few months in the run-up to the Summer season. In response to a question from Tina Jordan about the issue with vandalism on Easdale, PC Moore said that investigations were ongoing. The Chairman read a letter from the Community Council to the Chief Inspector outlining concerns over the impact of the new shift patterns on proactive community policing. He also read the response from Inspector Julie Edward stating that the new shift patterns enable proactive policing and that the situation will be assessed in October. Glen Bland is due to replace Judy Wilson as Chief Inspector at Oban Police within the next month.

- h. **Telephone Boxes** Heather Chaplain reported that British Telecom has now reconnected the phone box on Easdale for emergency and incoming calls but a coin box has not been installed yet. The other three public telephone boxes are all operational.

**4. Other Business:-**

- a. **Green Streets** The Chairman read out an email from Keith Oversby regarding the second Green Streets community consultation meeting which was held recently. The email voiced concern about Eilean Eisdeal's handling of the consultation process and what the potential benefits to the community will be following feedback from Scottish Gas. According to Mr Oversby, it increasingly appears that to benefit from an assessment of their properties, islanders will have to be signed up to Scottish Gas and he believes early indications are that Eilean Eisdeal will be unlikely to be allowed to spend the award money on anything other than the scheme of two wind turbines and a ground source heat pump proposed in the application. He is awaiting confirmation from Scottish Gas of the terms. "It seems therefore that we are all going through an unnecessary process to satisfy the conditions of the Green Streets programme, and not properly engaging with the Community to get the best value for residents, our environment or global climate change," he concluded.
- b. **Local Development Plan** Argyll and Bute recently extended the deadline for this consultation to the 31st of March. Mike Shaw has produced a public questionnaire to gather opinion on how residents would like to see local infrastructure, housing and facilities develop over the 20 years. He urged everyone to participate in this consultation and said it was vital to galvanise residents' views so that the Community Council was in a stronger position to respond to planning department decisions in future. A copy of the questionnaire will be delivered along with the forthcoming Seileachan and there will be a public drop-in session towards the end of February for people to express their views in person. Cllr MacIntyre said that the original deadline of the 31<sup>st</sup> of January for this consultation had been too short for such an important public consultation and that even the revised deadline was very close. Given the serious undertaking the Community Council is about to embark on to respond to the LDP consultation, Cllr MacIntyre asked what response the planning department had given to the excellent Conservation Area appraisal which the Community Council worked so hard on and which was submitted last year. Mike Shaw said that apart from initial acknowledging receipt there had been no feedback at all from the planning department and he would follow this up.
- c. **Fairer Oban Lorn and Isles (FOLI)** Anne Marie Robin recently attended a meeting of this new steering group which wants to support organisations and communities across the region and has funding for this purpose. It is offering £500 to each Community Council to collect information and views on local issues and prepare a plan of action for the community. The deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of February and Anne Marie Robin undertook to gather responses from residents and complete the questionnaire on behalf of the Community Council.

**5. Documents to be Tabled** A number of documents were tabled for general interest.

- 6. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting** The next meeting of the Community Council will take place on Tuesday 23rd of March 2010 at 7pm in the Seil Island Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed:

Chairman:

Date:

Signed:

Secretary:

Date:

