

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26th JULY 2016 Easdale Island Hall

PRESENT: Cllr Elaine Robertson, John Gordon, Seumas Anderson, Charles Struthers, Alan MacFadyen, Anne Marie Robin, Julie Ferris, and 19 members of the public

APOLOGIES: Chris Dugdale, Graeme Bruce, Cllr Kieron Green

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Seumas Anderson as a landowner potentially affected by the Scottish Water waste water proposal; John Gordon re Planning Application 16/01998/PP

John Gordon welcomed everyone to this, his first meeting in the role of Convener, and thanked Easdale Island for hosting the meeting.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2016 were agreed as an accurate record; proposed by Duncan Smallman, seconded by Henry Tarbatt.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 24th MAY 2016

Boundary Commission Proposals

The Community Council continues to oppose the proposals and had written to the Scottish Government restating its objections in the strongest possible terms. The letter of 26 June was tabled.

Argyll Sea Kayak Trail

The Interpretation Panel is now in place, and there are indication signs in the car park to the toilets.

Scottish Water: New Waste Water Proposals for Seil

The Chair read a summary report of the activities and correspondence of the Stakeholder Group. This will be appended to the SECC minutes of the July meeting. Copies of the full Scottish Water reports of the first stakeholders meeting, the meeting with the independent expert, and the open day together with other correspondence were tabled and will be made available to read in Balvicar Stores. Everyone should have received their invitation to the further open session to be held on 16th August.

A question was asked about the impact of Brexit on the proposals; it was agreed that any implications should be borne in mind.

Roads

Charles Struthers reported on the latest issues and discussed the need for a co-ordinated effort between A&B Council and landowners in the battled against invasive non-native species. Charles would liaise with Stevie Jarron, who has done much to highlight the problem, to arrange a meeting to take matters forward.

Contact has been made with Lyndis Davidson of A&B Council, who is in overall charge of carparks, to progress improvements to Ellenabeich carpark so that further space can be created to accept a number of day visits by mobile homes and cars with boat trailers.

There was discussion of the need for a disabled parking space near the Ferry at Ellenabeich, and possible provision of some dedicated spaces for Easdale Island residents. It was agreed that the former should be investigated, but it was felt that the introduction of dedicated spaces would be hard to administer and police and could lead to further unintended and unwanted regulation of parking near the Ferry.

Health - home care

Cllr Robertson reported that the Appin and Lismore pilot project was going ahead and that she would report back on progress.

Police Report

PC Moore was not able to attend the meeting, but Seumas Anderson reported that the police had been present on the island again recently, but no speeders had been reported. It was noted that locals are much more likely to speed than tourists.

Planning

New applications since last meeting

Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of sewage treatment plant (amendment to access arrangements) Land North of The Old Manse Seaview Terrace Ellenabeich

Ref No 16/01998/PP Status: Pending consideration

Erection of dwellinghouse and detached domestic garage/workshop – amended design to that approved under 15/03444/PP Land West of Dunearn House Ellenabeich

Ref No 16/01947/PP Status: Pending consideration

Non material amendment for reduction in size of shed approved under 14/00914/PP (change of use of land for the siting of timber shed, installation of petrol storage tank and erection of associated fencing) Land adjacent to Public Car Park Ellenabeich

Ref No 16/01932/NMA Status: Application permitted

Installation of replacement garage door and removal of stone wall to rear of dwellinghouse 31 Ellenabeich

Ref No 16/01514/LIB Status: Application permitted

Installation of replacement garage door, relocation of oil tank, erection of garden shed and two decking areas to the rear garden, formation of vehicular access and associated works 31 Ellenabeich

Ref No 16/01512/PP Status: Application permitted

Erection of garden shed Achabeag, Acha Balvicar

Ref No 16/01392/PP Status: Pending consideration

Still pending/decided since last meeting

Erection of garage/store Land North West of Dunearn Ellenabeich
Ref No 16/01393/PP Status: Application withdrawn

Installation of 2 rooflights and satellite dish, erection of greenhouse, garden shed and craft shop

55 Easdale Island

Ref No 16/00771/PP Status: pending consideration

Installation of telecommunications cabinet. Land Opposite Public Toilets, Ellenabeich
Ref No 16/00733/TELNOT

Status: application refused

The Planning Department had confirmed that as this is within the Ellenabeich Conservation Area it cannot constitute “permitted development” and an application for express planning permission is required.

Concern was expressed that this would hold up the introduction of fast broadband to the local community – the Community Council would contact the planning department again.

Vodafone Rural Open Sure Signal (ROSS)

John Gordon reported that Vodafone is launching Vodafone Community Indoor Sure Signal (CISS). These could be installed in rural community centres. Suitable venues, assuming the broadband download speed is adequate, could be the Oyster Bar, Puffer Bar and Easdale Island Hall. Anyone wanting further information should contact John.

Bus Shelter

Charles reported great progress, and is hopeful that the long-awaited bus shelter to be sited against the garden wall of No. 1 Ellenabeich will be provided by the Council early next year. It was agreed to go for the simple contemporary style, but with the possibility of additional refinements in keeping with the conservation area at a later date.

Parking in Oban

Cllr Robertson reported that the status quo prevails at present, with A&B Council still considering options. There was discussion of the possibility of park & ride schemes from out of town, and again Cllr Robertson asked for all constructive suggestions to be passed on to the Council.

FORWARD PLANNING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Anne Marie Robin reported on a meeting she had attended on Lismore about the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act. Legislation for parts of this Act is expected to come into effect by autumn of this year. The consultation process is ongoing and views are welcome from all public bodies. There is plenty of information online and everyone was urged to have a look as the Act will have wide implications for communities such as ours.

There had been a second Forward Planning event, with an open meeting held on 19th July. Turnout had been fairly low, but there was a useful discussion and the speakers – Norrie Bissell from Luing, Duncan Smallman from Easdale Island, Laura MacDonald from Lorn Community Development Centre and Mike Shaw representing the Kilbrandon Trust, were thanked for sharing their experience and knowledge. The group is now considering the most appropriate next steps in order to really engage with the community.

It was pointed out that evening meetings are not convenient for all, and timings could be impossible for those relying on ferry transport. Anne would factor such considerations into future arrangements.

TIMING OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

It was agreed to continue the trial of 6.30 as the start time for SECC Public meetings.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Macmillan Cancer Information & Support Service

The Community Council had been asked to make people aware of this volunteer-run, one to one, non clinical drop-in service held in Oban Library on Wednesdays between 2.15-4.15pm.

Stone Skimming

Organisation is well underway for this year's World Stone Skimming Championships on Easdale Island on Sunday 25th September with the pre skim dance the evening before. Emergency services have been advised of the dates and a rota of volunteers is in place for assisting with parking in Ellenabeich.

Telephone Directory

John Gordon has finalised a new 2016 version of the local telephone directory. The directory has small print runs and is continually updated. If anyone wants to be added they should contact John.

Oban FM monthly reports from CC meetings

The Chair reported on a proposal for a programme featuring one minute audio reports from Community Council meetings.

TABLED PAPERS (all available on request from ferrisjef@aol.com)

Scottish Water updates as listed above

Boundary Commission Proposals – CC response dated 26 June 2016

Festive Lighting Brochure

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 27th September 2016, 6.30pm, Seil Island Hall

APPENDIX TO SEIL & EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 2th JULY 2016

The terms of reference of the Isle of Seil Community Stakeholders Group state that the membership shall comprise amongst others “4 Community representatives – Nominated by Seil and Easdale Community Council”. These members and alternates were agreed by the Community Council. However, they are acting independently and their opinions are not necessarily those of the Community Council. All members of the Stakeholders Group contributed to and agreed the letters sent to our MSP and Scottish Water.

SUMMARY OF MEETINGS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Seil Island Wastewater Scheme Community Engagement Group 6th June 2016 10.30am – 12pm Seil Island Community Hall

Attendees

Michael Russell MSP (Chair): Councillors: Elaine Robertson and Julie MacKenzie: Community: Anne-Marie Robin, David Ainsley, John Gordon, George Mackenzie: SEPA Jim Frame: Scottish Water: Douglas Millican (Chief Executive), Alan Thomson (Head of Corporate Relations), Robert Stewart (General Manager Wastewater Service Strategy), Mark Williams (Head of Environmental Science and Regulation).

Welcome – Michael Russell (Chair)

In welcoming the participants to the inaugural meeting he noted the difficult circumstances and that the stakeholder engagement was a powerful approach.

Scottish Water Commitment to the process – Douglas Millican

Douglas Millican noted the history attached to the current wastewater scheme and in particular to the extremely unsatisfactory way in which the works was delivered, and the current performance. DM extended apologies on behalf of Scottish Water (SW) to the community for their experiences to date.

DM reaffirmed commitments made in the Scottish Parliament that there would be very strong governance attached to decision making on this project and that the Scottish Water Board would sign off the proposed investment. He recognised potentially divergent views in the community and stated that the process will be transparent and evidence based.

Review of the Terms of Reference – Alan Thomson

Alan Thomson presented the Terms of Reference. The difficulty of disseminating information especially at short notice, within the community was recognised. While continuity of community representatives was desirable it was suggested that a core of six would allow backups. The role of the SEPA representative was to provide advice and guidance

Appointment of Independent Expert – Robert Stewart

The professional expertise of the independent expert appointed by SW was recognised, however, concerns were raised about his qualifications relative to treatment of the sewage and the relevant European environmental legislation. It was noted that he is retired from Black and Veatch, the contractors who are working for SW on this project. The Chair suggested that the expert should meet 1-2-1 with the community and to explore his expertise and independence directly.

High Level overview of options being examined – Robert Stewart

A high level overview of the options currently being investigated was given.

These comprise 3 options:

- 1) Invest in replacement treatment at Balvicar through conventional secondary treatment and UV systems, with separate septic tank at Seaview for local flows
- 2) Invest in replacement treatment at Balvicar through primary treatment, reedbeds and tertiary UV systems, with separate septic tank at Seaview for local flows
- 3) Convert Balvicar to a pumping station and transfer flows for appropriate treatment via a septic tank with discharge into Easdale Bay (outfall arrangements to be confirmed through modelling)

During an open discussion other alternatives were considered e.g alternative sites for reed beds, local treatment at properties currently connected. Surface water separation was discussed and SW noted that flow survey work was underway to improve the accuracy of the network flow model, and it was suggested that this needed to continue to cover wetter seasons. It was agreed at this stage not to lock down the option decision making criteria as it was important to retain an open perspective to enable all options to be put on the table.

Plans for Wider Community Engagement – Alan Thomson

A community engagement event was planned in the community hall on 21 June 3pm-7pm. All households would be notified.

Next Steps and Timeline – Mark Williams

Mark Williams noted the key challenge to ensure there is a robust new network model to improve the accuracy of the flows in the network (whatever solution is proposed) and the continuing site and environmental investigation work. The outcome of this will be available to the group. The next meeting of the Stakeholder Group will be in the evening and take place in August.

Group Feedback, AOB - Michael Russell

The Chair thanked all for their attendance and confirmed that he would like to meet the independent expert to discuss the project.

**Seil Island Wastewater Scheme
Community Stakeholder meeting with Ian Clifforde
21st June 2016 10.00am - 12.00am
Seil Island Community Hall**

Attendees: Independent expert: Ian Clifforde; Scottish Water Community Manager, Ruaridh Macgregor
Community Stakeholders: Anne-Marie Robin, David Ainsley, Jean Ainsley, John Gordon & George Hannah

The minute comprises twelve bullet points

Ian Clifforde explained his previous experience within the industry He has particular experience in networks and designations which was noted by the group. There were concerns raised about treatment element and how this will be assessed. Questions were raised relating to his previous involvement with Black and Veatch and Scottish Water. There followed a wide ranging discussion on the existing system and concerns on its performance and the consequences of adopting Option 3 in terms of costs and environment It was noted that the visible site investigations at Clachan Seil had been primarily on the option to pump flows and treat at Seaview.

**Drop in Session at Seil Island Hall on 21st June 3 to 7 pm
Feedback postcards**

This document comprises 44 comments left by the public after visiting the session. There has been no attempt to categorise or summarise these comments by SW. The independent expert was present. There was a good turnout of the public (approx. 66 visitors registered) and some complained that staff were at times overwhelmed. There were a wide range of views but a common thread was that the Balvicar/Clachan Seil sewage should be treated on that side of the island. There was little support in favour of Option 3 (transferring the flows to Seaview).

Joint letter from the Community Representatives to Michael Russell MSP and copied to all participants. (2 July 2016).

- (1) The letter expressed concern that the SW appointed expert was an expert in networks and gaining consents and not an expert in actual treatment types. It requested a truly independent expert with appropriate expertise to advise on the options.
- (2) Despite assurances that all options would be considered there was an emphasis on promoting Option 3 commensurate with site investigation undertaken to date.
- (3) The main problem is the volume of freshwater in the system. Flow meters being installed must be in use in the winter. Cannot understand why there is no desire to cure the problem of freshwater incursion.
- (4) There should be more than primary treatment for the protected waters on both sides of the island. Because of the amount of rainwater in the system the septic tanks of Option 3 will not even work at the low efficiency of a properly working septic tank

Reply from Michael Russell (4 July 2016)

MR had contacted CEO SW to agree appointment of another independent advisor. He suggests Community and SW look at possible individuals and is willing to engage with the process.

Reply from Alan Thomson (SW head of Corporate Relations (7 July 2016)

“It was our objective during the event to keep an open mind and listen to customers, we did not have any intention of promoting one option over another. Our aim is to achieve the best long-term sustainable solution for Seil Island”

Will not continue with Ian Clifforde should the group feel he does not have the necessary expertise. Asks for alternative suggestions and SW will also search. Under the impression that the expert brief was shared with stakeholder group [not with community reps.]

Community Representative’s reply to Alan Thomson 13 July 2016

Request a copy of the brief for the appointment of independent expert.
Also requested

Options 1 & 2: Reports of surveys completed

·Option 3: Report on the underlying geology, Report of the terrestrial survey, Report of the marine survey

Costs to date of undertaking the drilling and other excavations associated with Options 1, 2 & 3.

Reminded him that the three options presently on the table are not necessarily the only options.

Reply from Ruaridh Macgregor (15 July 2016)

Confirms that the next stakeholders meeting and community information event will be on 16 August.

Confirms that SW have decided not to continue with the services of Ian Clifforde. Attached a copy of the brief.

Requested documents are in varying states of completion. They will be prepared as a suite of documents for the stakeholder group.

The current work at the pumping stations involves creating new concrete chambers to allow the flow meters to be installed and maintained, ducting and wiring of the flow meter to the pump control panel power supply, installation of the flow meter loggers into the panels and wiring of the flow meters to the telemetry out-stations.

The brief for the appointment of the independent expert.

This document outlines the requirements for a report by the expert. It will (1) Be used for community engagement. (2) Stand up to scrutiny and challenge (3) Provide assurance to all stakeholders that the most appropriate waste water collection and treatment service is provided to the Island of Seil Community.

The background apologises for previous workmanship and visual impacts (no mention of performance).

The project needs to address the Seaview outfall and replacement of current membrane works.

The remainder of the document is biased towards the preferred option to transfer the flows to Seaview. Almost all of the supporting documents to be available to the expert are reports for the Seaview option prepared by aBV (Amey- Black and Veatch)

Electronic copies of all the documents and correspondence are available from the secretary (ferrisjef@aol.com). Hard copies will be available to view in Balvicar Stores.