

# Seil and Easdale Community Council

## Notes of Public Meeting

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2010 – Easdale Island Hall

### 1. Present:

- **Community Councillors:** Seumas Anderson (Chair), Heather Chaplin, Alan MacFadyen, Martin Waddell, Anne-Marie Robin, Robert Rae.
- **Council members:** Cllr. Elaine Robertson,
- **Members of the public:** 15 including Police Constable Jeremy Moore, Jane Nichols (Sec)

2. Apologies for absence: Charles Struthers, Mike Shaw, Tina Jordan, Chris Dugdale, Inspector Julie McLeish, Cllr. Neil MacKay, Cllr Donald MacDonald.

3. Minutes of last meeting: Proposed: Anne-Marie Robin  
Seconded: Robert Rae

### 4. Matters arising:

#### a) **Scottish Ferries Review**

- i. Heather attended the Scottish Ferries Review presentation in Oban on 26<sup>th</sup> September. This presentation was for the islands of Lismore, Kerrera, Easdale and Luing, and was open to the public.
- ii. The consultation questionnaire which had been produced following earlier brief surveys was deemed by the Scottish Government representatives to be significantly inappropriate for the circumstances of these smaller islands and their very specific needs. We were advised to form our own response using the original questionnaire as a basis.
- iii. Members of the Community Council subsequently surveyed 6 people from North Cuan, 9 from Seil and 25 residents of Easdale.
- iv. Of the 40 surveyed, the majority said they thought the ferry was adequate, and only 3 said that it doesn't meet current needs.
- v. Asked if disabled access should be provided, most of the Seil/Cuan respondents said yes. Only half of Easdale respondents agreed, the reason given that there are in any case no disabled facilities on Easdale Island (for example the toilets in the hall can only be reached by steps). Also if additional equipment was installed on board to allow such access, it would inhibit the general use of the ferry.

- vi. Regarding funding, all but 4 agreed that a fares-only system would be unrealistic, so the service must be subsidised. Most said they thought funding should come from the local authority. A few ticked other options such as private company, Scottish Government or Regional Transport Partnership or combinations of the above, but needed more information about each option.
- vii. Asked if higher costs would be acceptable, Easdale was unanimous in saying no, but one third of the Seil/Cuan respondents said yes.
- viii. The majority said that Carbon Monoxide emission levels should be considered in new provision, although a number of Easdale residents thought it irrelevant on such a short run. Most also said that a slower service would be a fair price to pay for a greener service, although a few mentioned the prolonged exposure in bad weather.
- ix. Easdale respondents asked that no decision be made without consultations with the ferrymen. Further comments were made about the recent charge on the ferry for concessions, at it is felt it should be considered as an extension of the bus service, being the only way to access essential services such as doctor and post office.
- x. A report on the survey will be submitted to the Scottish Government for their consideration.

**b) Community Engagement Meeting**

- i. This meeting took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> September in Corran Halls. Only 9 Community Councillors from across the area attend, 4 of which were from Seil and Easdale.
- ii. LACPG is the Local Area Community Planning Group and is concerned with the organisation and delivery of council services, not with building planning consent.
- iii. Oban Development Road was not discussed as Chris Scholes could not attend the meeting.
- iv. Oban town road reconstruction programme is significant for all residents, as it will cause 26 weeks of upheaval through the entire length of the town centre.
- v. Broadband – communities can apply for Leader funding to improve broadband access, where the current provision can be shown to be preventing residents from carrying out specific functions. Members of the community council carried out speed tests and found that the upload and download speeds are well within what can be expected using the BT lines, and probably acceptable for most uses. The ranges that can be expected were advised by Maarten de Vries, who is providing a consultation service for those considering applying for the Leader funding. It is however possible that for uses such as online gaming etc which use a lot of bandwidth, the currently available speeds may be less than ideal.
- vi. Oban Hospital – a review of services has been carried out, including reducing the number of beds and increasing use of day surgery (aiming for 83% nationally). Ward A is closed at weekends and is used for day

surgery cases. Also reviewed were endoscopy and theatres, the impact of 'Do Not Attend' patients and hospital-acquired infections. The medical professionals assembled at the CC meeting agreed that it had been a very positive review.

### Planning matters

The following 3 applications were noted:

10/01433/PPP	Land South West of Achnacroish Croft Balvicar Isle of Seil, Oban, Argyll and Bute PA34 4TE	Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse
10/01422/PP	Land South East of Easdale Museum Easdale Island, Argyll and Bute	Erection of 6kw wind turbine (hub height 15 metres)
10/01396/PPP	Balvicar Farm Balvicar, Isle of Seil, Oban, Argyll and Bute PA34 4TE	Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse and associated works

The third of these is a re-application, as the original planning permission had lapsed.

- i. Application for wind turbine on Easdale – there was much discussion about this issue. Copies of objections and associated correspondence had been received by the Community Council from 3 members of the Easdale community.

Objections are mainly based on the turbine being too close to residential properties (the closest is building is 53 metres away), on the visual detriment, and on the location being within a conservation area. It is thought that the planned site has been chosen due to the greater ease of building there and shorter cabling run.

The power generated by the turbine will be solely used to power a heat exchanger for the community hall. A further objection is that the hall is not insulated, so the heating of it is extremely inefficient use of resources. Henry Tarbatt reported that he had asked at a consultation meeting if part of the grant money could be used to insulate the hall, and was told that it could, but was later told it could only be used for erection of the turbine.

It was further noted that submissions on the planning website are only objections; there are no notices of support. Some people object to the turbine altogether, and others object only to the chosen site. A show of hands indicated that the large majority were against the turbine. Anne-Marie Robin advised caution in measuring the public view based on those present, which only represented a proportion of the community,

- ii. Raera Windfarm update – submissions are still open as the application will go to the October planning committee at the earliest. All planning documents from official consultees are now in, and council officials are

putting together their recommendations. The application is likely to go to a hearing due to the objections already received.

- iii. Clachan Windfarm update – Robert Rae and Alan MacFadyen went to a consultation meeting in Kilmelford on 25th September which was set up to discuss community involvement in ownership of a turbine. Robert gave a brief report on the meeting. The plan is hoped to go public at the end of October. Approval will be sought 3 weeks later, with 4 weeks after that for objections to be raised.

The position of the turbines was not discussed but was indicated after the meeting. The turbines will be within 2 kilometres of most of Clachan Seil. The nearest house will be approximately 500m away.

Robert proposed setting up a charitable trust to take advantage of any compensation, should the plan go ahead. Seumas noted that there is a Kilbrandon Trust which could be resurrected if suitable. At the same time the Community Council will continue to monitor the community's views and put forward corresponding views, objections or otherwise, to the planners at the appropriate times.

George Hannah asked if the Community Council would take more consideration of the views of Clachan residents, as they would be more affected by the windfarm. The convener replied that the council must represent the views of all residents within its area.

#### c) **Easdale Island Emergency Evacuation**

- i. A report on a meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> Sept with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) had been received from Keith Oversby, secretary of the Easdale Island Residents and Property Owner's Association (EIRPOA), and was read out by the convener.
- ii. The helicopter landing area is likely to be the main grassy square. SAS would purchase the landing lights, but support from islanders would be needed to store, maintain and deploy them. The lights are rechargeable and space would be needed to store and charge them. Also a main contact person plus backup in case of absence would be needed to take the initial request from SAS and confirm that the lights have been deployed.
- iii. SAS advised that additional pilot surveys should be completed within the next 2 months, and raising necessary finance may take up to 3 months. Within this time, all arrangements for contact people and storage of lights can go ahead. Residents to contact Keith on 300075 if they are interested in becoming involved.
- iv. Cllr Robertson noted that the proposed wind turbine may have an effect on the helicopter landing route.

**d) Police Report**

- i. P.C. Jeremy Moore was reported that the stone skimming championships had been very well organised and no problems encountered.
- ii. He went on to report that there have been a number of acts of petty vandalism which seem to be connected to the Easdale wind turbine planning application. Offences include defacing of posters and leaflets, or leaflets being burnt. He commented that this behaviour and in particular the offensive language used in the defacement of posters, is the type of thing more expected in an inner-city estate, and not in a well-educated area such as ours. Some residents have been quite upset by the activity, including elderly people being frightened. P.C Moore stated that the police are taking these problems very seriously and that he will take any necessary action to put an end to them.

**e) Health matters**

Tina Jordan sent the following report in her absence:

- i. Area Public Partnership Forum – 17<sup>th</sup> August, Lochgilphead:-
  - a. Better Together patient experience programme survey. Easdale Medical Practice achieved exemplary results and are to be congratulated.
  - b. Accommodation for hospital appointments/treatment in Glasgow. Hospital is responsible for booking accommodation. Any costs not provided by the hospital but agreed by the hospital as being necessary can be claimed on the patient expenses form, which can be collected from Easdale Surgery. Transport costs of more than 30 miles can be claimed on the same form. The hospital being attended, or the GP from Easdale Surgery, can sign off the form.
  - c. If you have queries or concerns about health services in our area please contact the Citizen's Advice Bureau on 01546 605556 or email [j.walker@abcab.org.uk](mailto:j.walker@abcab.org.uk).
- ii. Locality Area Public Partnership Forum – 6<sup>th</sup> September, Oban:-
  - a. Dental Service – assurance given that new NHS dental provision in Oban is a significant priority and will be in place by 2012.
  - b. Redesign of mental health services – consultants have been appointed to progress the new building to replace the old in-patient facility in Lochgilphead. Most 'place of safety' facilities are already in use, including one in Lorn and Islands Hospital. Community dementia teams are being set up and public information events have been organised.
  - c. The review of Lorn and Islands Hospital was reported, as per item 4bvi above.

f) **Local roads:**

- i. A report on Roads and Scottish Water was sent in his absence by Charles Struthers.
- ii. The convener noted that the improvements to the road surfaces have been very gratefully received.
- iii. A resident said that as a consequence of the new road surfaces being added, the verges are considerably below road level. The convener replied that the roads department probably have this in hand as the roads have only just been completed, but that it should be put forward by Charles at the next available opportunity.

g) **Scottish water:**

- i. The meeting with David Innes, team leader, is still awaited.
- ii. Sarah Henderson commented that the land on the pumping station adjacent to Tigh Cladaich was supposed to have been landscaped, but remains untouched. Charles will be asked to raise this at his next meeting with Scottish Water.

## **5. Other Business**

a) **Noticeboard for Ellenabeich**

The convener asked if the meeting thought a community notice board in Ellenabeich would be beneficial. A member of the public said that when the square was redeveloped, there was a plan to have a notice board against the wall of what is now seafari adventures, but it was never put in place. It was agreed that a notice board would be useful and that the community council should follow this up.

b) **Licencing application by Puffer Tearoom**

An application had been received by the Council to change the opening hours of the Puffer Tearoom, Bar and Restaurant. The change was to extend the winter opening and allow the continued employment of a full-time chef. No objections were raised.

c) **Eilean Eisdeal**

The community council noted correspondence received from Henry Tarbatt regarding a petition of no confidence in the Eilean Eisdeal, with 27 signatories. Copies have also been sent to Argyll & Bute Councillors, HIE, MEPs, Historic Scotland, Scottish Gas and the Big Lottery.

d) **Bus Stop at Surgery**

Cllr Robertson said that this is now on the Council's agenda.

e) **Fast Track Seminar**

Cllr Robertson also reminded the meeting about a funding and support seminar taking place in Corran Halls, 11am to 7.30pm on 7<sup>th</sup> October. The seminar is aimed at representatives from youth groups, community groups, social welfare groups, arts and culture groups, sporting groups, senior citizens groups, all voluntary organisations and all social enterprises. The purpose is to raise awareness about the range of funding opportunities that remain available to local groups and to the range of local and national organisations that they can turn to for support and help.

**6. Documents to be tabled:**

Redesign of Mental Health newsletter  
Redesign of Lorna and Islands Hospital newsletter  
Better Together leaflet  
GP Patient Experience – Argyll & Bute survey results

**7. Date of Next Meeting:**

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010, Seil Island Hall, 7 p.m.

Signed:

Chairman:

Date:

Signed:

Secretary:

Date: