

Minutes of Morvern Community Development Company AGM

Wednesday 22nd January @ 7.30pm

Lochaline Village Hall

Present

Directors: Lesley Jones (LJ), Jane Stuart-Smith (JSS), Clare Holohan (CH), Angus Robertson (AR)

Members: David Brewis (DB), Jennifer Brewis (JB), Creina Jackson (CJ), Kate Cruickshank (KC), Alda Grace (AG), Crawford Cameron (CC), Robert Jones (RJ), John Hodgson (JH), Martin Sampson (MS), Tracy Lawes (TL), Hugh Raven (HR)

Non Members: Lou Volpe (LV)

Proxies: Jim MacLeod (JML), Alice MacLeod (AML), Mairi Jackson (MJ)

In attendance: Riona Whyte (RW)

Apologies: Lilia Dobrokhodova (LD), Malcolm MacNeill (MMN)

Apologies & Proxies: LJ welcomed everyone to the AGM. RW advised that 3 proxies had been received, as listed above. AR noted that the meeting was quorate.

Minutes of previous AGM: The minutes of the previous AGM (12.12.12) were read and accepted. JSS proposed and CH seconded.

Chairperson's Report: LJ gave a brief rundown of the year.

MCDC now has charitable status and a new subsidiary group Morvern Community Trading Company (MCTC) has been formed to deal with the business side of things. Profits from MCTC will be donated back to MCDC to fund community projects.

Lochaline Harbour had 5 employees over the course of the past year – Marine Manager, Relief Manager and 3 cleaners (on a rota). Peter Lindsay had secured a full-time position with the Post Office so had resigned from his position as Marine Manager. MCTC are now responsible for the running of Lochaline Harbour and have secured HIE funding to advertise the post of Graduate Business Development Manager with a deadline of Jan 27th 2014. This position is due to commence in early February.

The Shore facilities opened to the public in June and the official opening was held in July during MGGW. The access path is undergoing a major upgrade at the moment and is due for completion at the beginning of February.

The old Scout Hut has now been demolished and RW is collating information, based on the community consultations, towards a development plan for the site.

Renewables – the company are investing 30K in the Salachan Hyrdo scheme with help from Morvern Community Trust (MCT). AR will discuss this in detail later.

Allotments are now run independently by their own committee CLAM.

Website – funding has been secured from HIE and MCT to develop a community website which RW is working on. RW will be contacting local organisations and groups for their input.

Training – As MCDC is now a charity, Directors will be required to undergo a training course outlining their roles and responsibilities.

LJ had attended a conference in Donegal which was run by Sail West, a major contributor to the Pontoon development. She was surprised and delighted that Lochaline received many accolades for their achievements as they are the only company to realise their project to date. She felt very proud.

RW and KML travelled to Ireland on a research trip based on the results of the community consultation. They visited heritage centres and sites and RW will be collating that information towards developing a plan for the future.

LJ welcomed LD back from maternity leave and thanked RW and KML for their work during her absence. RW will be continuing her work for a few months to finish off her work on the Scout Hut and Website projects.

Funding received in the past year

Awards for All – 9k towards waste management. Purchase of Polaris Ranger, waste bin and storage area.

Investing in Ideas (BIG Lottery) – 6k community consultation & development plans for Scout Hut.

HIE – 2k website & marketing

MCT – 2k website, 5k path upgrade

LEADER & HIE – 55k upgrading of access path to pontoons & village

Treasurer's Report & Presentation of Accounts: AR distributed the accounts.

AR explained the benefits of MCDC now having charitable status. The main reason being that the company can now attract other funders.

A charity is not allowed to trade so therefore MCTC was formed to deal with the business side of things. It is wholly owned by MCDC and profits will be donated to the parent company. The downside is that there is more administration and two sets of accounts.

This is our first set of accounts as a charity and the company is worth £573,427 which is £160k up on last year. This is a good figure to show funders to entice further investment.

AR also explained the Lochaline Harbour breakdown and in the first 3 years of trading the income has increased by nearly 30k. This increase will almost certainly be due to the Shore facilities.

Visitors to Lochaline Harbour have been very impressed and we need to work hard to make the development sustainable and employ staff to maintain the facilities. Part of the remit for the Graduate placement is to make the job sustainable.

Hydro investment – this has been a lengthy process and discussions and a public meeting (04/11/13) were held with Morvern Community Council (MCC) and MCT. MCDC secured a grant from CARES to employ an accountant and lawyer. The lawyer has been working very hard to strengthen our

position. It was agreed, on the advice of the accountant, to make a modest investment of 30k, 21k in a secured loan and 9k shareholding in the company. The expected rate of return is 8%. There may be further opportunities for investment in the future. MCDC own the shares and all income will be returned to MCT after deducting a management fee. Members and Directors agreed that this was a suitable first step. The project is due to start in the near future. CC confirmed that workmen had been seen on site this week.

MS asked about depreciation for the pontoons. AR confirmed that it was 20 years and that DB was making sure of that! MS also asked about expansion. DB has already drawn plans and received quotes for an expansion from 24 to 49 berths. The shore facilities were built to cater for 50 boats.

AR thanked HIE and LEADER for having faith in the company to build where they had no right of access. It is now very exciting that the upgrade of the path is now near completion and will enhance the Lochaline Harbour development as well as encouraging visitors into the village.

Appointment of Auditors: Currently using R.A.Clements. AR proposed to stay with them JSS & KC seconded.

Retirement & Appointment of Directors: LJ explained that due to other commitments Robin Smart, Hector MacKechnie and Barbara van der Meulen had stood down. Kirsten MacQuillan had been co-opted by subsequently also stood down. David Brewis & Jennifer Brewis had been co-opted and were eligible for re-election.

Malcolm MacNeill was due to retire and did not want to stand for re-election.

One postal application had been received from Tracy Lawes.

BvdM had been representative from MCC, John Hodgson would take her place on the MCDC board. There is still one more available place for a representative from MCC.

It was unanimously agreed that all four would be elected to the Board of MCDC – David Brewis, Jennifer Brewis, John Hodgson & Tracy Lawes.

JSS proposed this and AR seconded.

Election of Office Bearers: this would be done at the Board meeting following the AGM.

Subscription fee: this would remain at £1 for life. Membership forms available at the meeting or by contacting the MCDC office.

AOCB: MS asked if there would be a separate AGM for MCTC. AR explained that MCTC was fully constituted but an AGM was not required until next year. It would be good to have business minded people involved with MCTC and at the moment some Directors from MCDC were responsible for MCTC.

LJ thanked the Directors especially DB for his work at Lochaline Harbour and AR for his work with Renewables projects. She also thanked all the staff for their hard work throughout the year. A Board meeting would follow immediately and everyone was invited to stay.

