**The Road To The Isles Facilities Group**

**Notes of the meeting of Trustees held at**

**7.30 pm on Tuesday 12 March 2024 at**

**Mallaig and Morar Community Centre**

**Present**

Jacqueline Mcdonell (Vice Chair) Nick Murray (Treasurer) and Dave Newnham (Secretary). Niki Robertson, Iain Macniven and Eilidh Henderson joined the meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams.

**Apologies**

Stuart Griffin and Catherine Young

The meeting was chaired by Jacqueline in Stuart’s absence.

**Notes of Meeting Held on 23 January 2024**

Proposed by Nick and seconded by Niki.

**Matters Arising Not On The Agenda**

None.

**Project Updates**

* Mallaig Toilets

Fencing has been erected and painted, the new signs are up, CCTV is up and running, the bench has been replaced, the paddle gates locked open and the donation box has been delivered but not installed yet. Jacqueline reported that she had to free someone from a cubicle recently because the lock failed. It has since been taken out of action pending repair.

* Traigh Toilets

The Men’s Shed have planed and treated the doors and the benches have been delivered.

* Tougal Car Park and Path

Having been tarmaced, the car park is looking good. The path to the beach from the car park is going ahead and the materials have been delivered.

* Circular Walk

Niki reported that she has still to secure the match funding needed before Highland Council would release its contribution to complete the next phase of the scheme. The Trustees at Scottish Seafarms are meeting at the end of the month to consider applications for funding including one Niki has submitted. If successful this would secure a proportion of the match funding needed. Niki has issued a tender document to identify a Contractor in the even funding is secured.

**Lessons Learnt From Winter Improvement Projects**

The discussion also covered two further agenda items: Decision **Making and Information Sharing** and **Contractors**.

Jacqueline reported that whilst the initiatives/projects identified were completed and the money was spent, it had been a fairly chaotic process and one that we now have the opportunity to learn from and that should focus on in the Strategy Meeting scheduled to take place in April.

One issue had been identifying Contractors to take on jobs when there are tight timescales. In addition, there was at least one occasion when two Trustees identified different Contractors for the same job.

The article Jacqueline wrote for West Word to highlight the projects that had been commissioned by the Group (including the work around East Bay, the decking at the view point, the bin stores etc.) also invited local tradesmen to express an interest in being informed routinely of any jobs RIFG wanted completing. Irrespective of the trade, any job would advertised via e-mail to all of the tradesmen who had expressed an interest in doing work for us. Prior to doing so, a Trustee would be identified as project lead and a timetable agreed. The Project Leads contact details, project/task outline and timescales would all be shared via e-mail with the tradesmen who could then express an interest in the job. A set of criteria will be agreed by the Trustees against which the Project Lead will issue the contract.

We also touched upon how we might better communicate the work of the group to the local population in addition to the updates Jacqueline and Stuart have both submitted to West Word. It was suggested that the notes of the meeting be routinely submitted for publication as the notes of Community Council meetings are.

Discussion took place about how decisions are made by the Trustees and it was agreed that this be explored further at the Strategy meeting.

It was also noted that a lot of the decisions in recent weeks had been made and communicated via WhatsApp but two of the eight Trustees were excluded from this process as they were not members of the WhatsApp group as they don’t use it.

**Community Giveback Scheme**

Jacqueline suggested that a small budget (of perhaps £500) be established against which local groups could bid to fund small-scale local initiatives. A discussion took place in regard to existing potential sources of funding although these varied across the three Community Council areas. In Mallaig there are no established local funding sources, in Arisaig their Community Trust receives a donation from the Gower Trust every year but it is often over committed whilst in Morar, their Community Trust also receive a donation from the Gower Trust each year which is allocated jointly between the Council and the Trust but there have been very few applications in recent years. To discuss further at Strategy Meeting.

**Finance**

Nick issued the first quarter accounts following the last meeting of the Trustees. He will now prepare quarter two’s.

Nevis Accounts still haven’t signed off the 2022-23 Accounts which may impact on our ability to hold the AGM in April. Nick will monitor the situation and determine whether the AGM can go ahead or whether it will have to be deferred until our following meeting in June.

**Loo Of The Year**

This is a scheme that assesses the quality of public toilets. It costs £150 per year per toilet to join but apart from issuing a certificate once they have inspected a toilet which can be displayed proudly in it, those present thought there would be little or no return from the £300 we would have to pay for Traigh and Mallaig.

**Any Other Business**

The state of the wall in West Bay car park has been highlighted where a number of the coping stones have deteriorated. For discussion at a future meeting.

**Date and Time Of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 23 April 2024 at 7pm - AGM followed by Strategy Discussion