**The Road To The Isles Facilities Group**

**Notes of the Trustees meeting held at**

**7.30 pm on Tuesday 31 October 2023 at**

**Mallaig and Morar Community Centre**

**Present**

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

**Apologies**

Eilidh Henderson and Catherine Young

**Notes of Meeting Held on 19 September 2023**

Proposed by Stuart and seconded by Nick.

**Matters Arising Not On The Agenda**

None.

**Community Regeneration Fund**

A list of potential projects/initiatives have been identified and Stuart, Dave, Iain and Nikki will chase their respective Community Councils to see if there are any further issues they would like help with. Clearing the weeds around East Bay and fixing the decking at the viewpoint were raised but a final decision will be made at our meeting in December.

*Action: All, December meeting.*

**Highland Nature Restoration Fund**

The plants and topsoil bought with the remainder of the balance allocated have been stored until the Spring.

*Action: Discuss at January 2024 meeting.*

**Mallaig Toilet Block**

The CCTV system has still not been installed but as reported at our last meeting, has been registered with the Information Commissioner.

*Action: Stuart to chase Colin.*

The work to create a path from the toilets directly onto the footpath at the side of the A830 (through the existing wall) has been allocated to a contractor. They await Bear Scotland’s authority to proceed.

Eilidh has approached John MacKay and he has agreed to smooth cast the retaining wall

The new signage was agreed and Stuart will place the order. At Catherine’s suggestion he had approached an alternative provider on Skye but they didn’t reply to his enquiries.

*Action: Stuart will place the order.*

Further discussion on whether or not to replace the paddle gates or rely on users making donations took place. If they were removed and not replaced, Stuart suggested moving the payment points to the exit door to avoid the congestion that has occurred when there are significant numbers of people trying to pay on their way in. It was also stated that the electronic locking system to the disabled toilet could easily itself be disabled!

*Action: Decision to be taken at December meeting.*

**Traigh Toilets**

Doors to be treated by Men’s Shed when volume of visitors decreases and the weather permits.

**Tougal Car Park**

The outstanding work on the toilet block has been completed, although the door to the female toilets won’t lock and a velux window needs to be replaced. With the exception of the disabled toilet, they are now closed for the winter.

*Action: Stuart to progress,*

Stuart has received an initial quote of circa £8.5k to provide a strip of tarmac from the entrance along the centre of the car park to try and stop the surface deteriorating any further. A second quote is needed.

*Action: Stuart to seek a second quote.*

Stuart hasn’t been able to clarify the position regarding the Fire Safety Orders.

*Action: Stuart will try to contact Shane Manning at Highland Council again to find out how they as owners would like us as tenants to proceed.*

**Mallaig Car Parking**

Nothing further to report.

**Prawn Market Rehearsal Room**

Dave reported that he had still not received a response to the planning enquiry he made to Highland Council despite having followed it up on at least two occasions. However, it is generally felt that the room in the prawn market is not ideal and whilst we would not discount it, we should continue to explore other options if they become available, including:

* The youth space Catherine would like to provide in the vacant station building.
* The library in the Community Centre if and when UHI were to move into new premises.

One possible funding source is “Music For All” but the concern remains that any potential funder would want to see evidence that the facility was going to be used and thus be of benefit to the local community. Submissions to West Word and on local social media sites have thus far not generated any expressions of interest in using a facility of this kind. It was suggested we make contact with “the Buzz” project in Fort William to learn from their experience of establishing a similar project but with a much broader catchment area and a significantly larger population.

*Action: Dave to contact the Buzz Project.*

**Mallaig Circular Walk**

Nikki Robertson from Mallaig Community Council attended the meeting to see if the RIFG would consider taking on an existing project to further improve and enhance the Mallaig Circular Walk. Whilst it was initiated by Nikki and Mallaig CC, Community Councils do not have the constitution or infrastructure that enable them to manage projects of this nature. A funding application made to the Community Regeneration Fund has now proceeded to the second stage and Nikki has already secured a significant part of the match funding required if the bid is successful, predominantly from local businesses. A survey returned 116 responses from local residents of whom 90% supported the project. Stuart proposed that we host the project on the basis that Nikki joined us as a Trustee and continued to manage the project. This was agreed unanimously by all present.

**Finance**

Nick presented the report he had previously circulated to the Trustees.

**Schedule Of 2024 Meetings**

The following schedule was agreed, increasing the number of meetings each year from 4 to 8. The date of the 2022-23 AGM will be agreed at our December meeting.

Tuesday 23rd January

Tuesday 12th March

Tuesday 23rd April

Tuesday 11th June

Tuesday 30th July

Tuesday 10th September

Tuesday 29th October

Tuesday 10th December

**Any other business**

None

**Next Meeting**

7.30 pm Tuesday 12 December 2023 Mallaig and Morar Community Centre