

2019 DRAFT AGM MINUTES

Eilean Eisdeal and Easdale Island Trading Company AGM

Held 28th December 2019 at 2.15pm in Easdale Island Community Hall

Directors present: Jess Hill, Alan MacFadyen, Iain MacDougall & Joe Smith

Members present: Tony Hill, Britt Doughty-Godchaux, Voirrey Quillin & May McGillivray

Apologies for absence: Helen McDougall, Robert McDougall, Nigel Chippendale, Ina Coombs, Annabel Gregory, Dave Rockley, Tony Doughty-Godchaux and Michelle MacFadyen.

Jess welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced the apologies.

Minutes of the previous AGM and Matters Arising: The draft minutes from 2018 were proposed by Alan MacFadyen and seconded by Britt Doughty-Godchaux.

There were no matter arising from the minutes.

Chairman's Report

It has been a somewhat frustrating year for the directors – having thought that the amendments of the M&A approved at the last AGM would release the funds to enable us to progress the purchase of the quarry, further objections were received by the Scottish Land Fund in 2019. As directors we felt that the amended membership criteria and therefore voting rights was representative of make-up of Easdale Island, and the Development Trust association certainly agreed. We were at pains to point out that any decision about development on the island was always a community-wide one.

The Community Control Model guidelines, which the Scottish Land Fund adheres to, essentially excludes part-time residents, and is weighted towards permanent residents, and only their votes should be counted. The only way to take the funding application forwards was to make a further change to the M&A in this respect, to comply. This change was proposed at an EGM in May, and would essentially have excluded the opinions of those who have played a huge role over the years in 're-establishing' the island as it is today. The amendment was not approved.

We did put forward this issue with the Island's Minister Paul Wheelhouse who visited Easdale as part of a fact-finding mission in July, and that we felt all islands were very different in their own ways and should not be shoe-horned under one set of guidelines.

The result has been because the major community funding bodies, such as the Lottery, look to the SLF guidelines or indeed are administered by them, so we have been unable to take any funding application forward. This is a great shame for the island – an example being the children's play park, which got to the stage of being unsafe. A community effort dismantled it, because it would be too much of a temptation for small people, inspite of signage. The museum is desperately in need if refurbishment and the Hall needs instant heaters to name two other funding projects which have stalled

We continue to have ongoing discussions with the Scottish Land Fund and we hope there will be some kind of conclusion.

Eilean Eisdeal continues as a partner within the Lorn Islands Partnership, but Kererra and Luing have withdrawn from the Partnership. Lismore and Easdale are continuing under a M & A of understanding and have successfully applied for further funding for Gill Law as a development officer from the Strengthening Communities Programme through Development Trusts Association Scotland. She will continue to help ongoing collaboration, on cross-island funded projects, hopefully until the end of March next year and possibly after that.

HALL

On a more positive note we were granted funding this year from Creative Scotland. This is in no small measure thanks to Keren who worked tirelessly to put a diverse programme of events together to satisfy the funding criteria. This year's events started with the panto which played to a full house. The Puppet show and ceilidh at Easter were followed by Document Scotland – a photographic and discussion evening, one of the photographers involved being Colin MacPherson. Our community Arts Festival had lots of exhibits and thanks must go to Ghalia's continued efforts in organising it. A comedy evening, local artist exhibition by Dirk Campbell, theatre production and a first for Easdale, a dance production by the Scottish Dance Theatre also featured. The pre-skim dance was a great success, and to round off the year, but not part of the Arts funding, Keren managed to secure a gig with Heron Valley – who were brilliant and the Hall was bouncing. The fireworks and bonfire were held on one of the driest evenings we have had in many years and were great fun for folk from both sides of water.

The Hall events do not happen on their own, and all the volunteers who clean, sort the stage and black-outs, help on the door and bar & provide meals for artists, build bonfires, let off fireworks, all need a mention and given heart-felt thanks on behalf of the community. Thanks to must go to Mike Cafferty who volunteers so much of his time to doing the PA/tech – it is quite a commitment. This hall, an amazing community asset, was the vision and hard work of many people, including Adrian Laycock, who sadly passed away this year.

The weather was kind for the World Stone Skimming Championships and they were once again very successful in raising over £5000 nett in vital funds to support the Hall and Museum, but also in gaining positive PR for the island. We are in-debited to the event committee headed Keren & Mellon helped by Alex, Michelle, Jan and me for their commitment year after year. But the day would not be 'such a well organised event' as was commented on more than one occasion that day, without the additional volunteers who number in their 40's without whom we could not make it happen. The funds raised are dented by £1200 – the cost for the use of the quarry, as the funding for the quarry purchase remains unresolved with the Scottish Land Fund.

HARBOUR

Harbour management did not involve any challenges this year. We are very grateful to Tony Hill for his work in helping to look after the harbour and for gathering experienced volunteers to carry out checks and maintenance on the pontoons in the harbour. Our thanks must also go to the ferrymen who keep an ongoing watchful eye over the boats in the harbour. Northwest Marine carried out the inspection and maintenance on the community visitor mooring, the donations in the honesty box for its use go some way to covering this cost. There have been some new boats on the community pontoon this year which is great to see, as well as returning ones. The ongoing erosion of the Bull is a concern, and we are grateful to Argyll and Bute Council for the continued dredging of the harbour channel.

MUSEUM

The museum continues to attract visitors and this year has been more successful than last. The team headed by Lynn & May continue to ensure that everyone receives a warm welcome and goes away having learnt something they didn't know about our island's unique industrial heritage. Thanks to all those who work to make it such an interesting experience for visitors, not only during the months when it is open but checking dehumidifiers and exhibits in the winter too.

We received a very generous donation from Margaret Tremlett to replace the football goals in the square. They had their first test during the New Year match and have been well used by Henry and Izen – the football fanatics on the island, as well as numerous others. Thanks needs to go to team Seafari for cutting the grass in the square on two occasions, and for cutting back the paths round the island and up the hill in the later part of this year.

Directors – thanks to Iain Lynn & Alan for their continued commitment and help & I would like to welcome Joe as a new director – we can always do with more.

Treasurer's Report 2018.

The accounts were received so close to the AGM date that no report has been prepared. Printed copies were available and Jess asked if anyone had queries on them. Nothing specific was raised at the meeting, but it was suggested that any subsequent ones could be emailed.

Tony - is EE solvent?

Jess – yes, but not a lot to spare, but there is enough to service ongoing running cost, for the Hall, Museum & harbour at present.

Appoint Accountant:

The members agreed to re-appoint Simmers & Co. Simmers will be asked if the draft accounts could be with directors two weeks prior to the AGM.

Director nominations:

Joe Smith was welcomed as a new Director – particularly as he is a younger member of our community, added diversity of opinion.

Iain MacDougall was re-elected – unopposed.

Any other business:

Britt – are there just 4 board members?

Jess – Lynn Noble is also a board member, 5 directors, but we could always have more.

Jess – It would be great to see more permanent residents as members, as it strengthens our hand if there is the greater proportion to members who are part-time residents, and reminding all those who are, to pay their membership subscriptions.

There was a short discussion about the permanent versus part-time member numbers and the difficulty in achieving a greater number of the former, particularly in relation to the Community Control model.

Britt – how much does membership fees contribute?

Iain – between £800 - £1000 - £862 on this year's accounts – some unpaid memberships and people possibly being put off with the problems with the SLF. All memberships were to be encouraged.

Tony – raised the point that the community pontoon chains may need replacing in the not too distant future and it may be prudent to put money aside for this.

The meeting was concluded and any further questions were encouraged to be emailed

The meeting closed at 14.40

DRAFT