

Applecross Community Company Minutes

23rd February 2016, 8pm Applecross Inn

Attendees: Judith Fish (chair), Ewen Gillies, Nick Goldthorpe, Sean Kilbride, Alasdair Macleod, Alison Macleod, Marion Gilroy, Elodie Matthews

Apologies: Jill Olsen

Note taker: Zuzana Vojackova

Meeting opened at 8.10pm

Agenda topics

1. Update on admin and finance
 - 1.1 Hydro expenses
 - 1.2 Filling station and AppleNet finance

Discussion:

- 1.1 CARES loan is to be paid off by the end of this month
Applecross Community Trading Ltd (ACT) and Applecross Community Company have both covered a lot of legal fees, marketing, insurance costs etc and should bill AppleJuice for the more recent of these.
Instalments were suggested by Ewen.
Profits from AppleJuice are to be passed onto ACC
- 1.2 Filling station (FS) and AppleNet cost estimates were presented to the directors to familiarise them with the financial situation. Exact costs will be forwarded once the company accounts have been finalised.

Suggestion has been made to market the Filling station with the new North Coast 500 project as there is potential for higher sales perhaps through Applecross Inn.

Filling station has been tidied up last year and many volunteers have contributed towards the flower plantation at FS. Another volunteer tidying and planting day to be organised soon. Alison will arrange this.
More oil spill needs to be ordered.

Zuzana has been appointed to take over admin and finance from Alison and will be also added as a signatory and have online access to RBS bank account. She will be taking minutes at ACC meetings and upload them onto ACC website promptly.

This has been approved by all directors.

Alison has suggested a new ACC website. Emma Noble, who has designed AppleJuice website, could design more professional website for ACC. ACC would benefit from a new logo etc, such as Valerie produced for AJ and AEE.

Conclusions:

ACT and ACC will invoice AppleJuice for expenses regarding hydro once AppleJuice earns more income. This may be paid in 50% instalments.

Annual accounts are to be passed onto all directors once they have been processed.

Alison will gradually pass all admin work onto Zuzana.

Judith to suggest a suitable way of marketing FS further.

Info on ACC website to be updated.

Actions:

Personnel responsible:

Purchase of more oil spill for FS

Alasdair Macleod

Zuzana to be added as signatory and to have on-line access
Macleod

Alison

Zuzana Vojackova

Obtain quotes for new website and logo
design

Alison Macleod

Pass annual accounts onto directors

Alison Macleod

Another day for FS tidy up and planting to be arranged

Alison Macleod

2. AppleNet update (Sean)

- 2.1 WHAN
- 2.2 Extra lines

Discussion:

2.1 WHAN (West Highland Access Network) work has been delayed but is still going ahead.

Mallaig is connected to fibre but the WHAN equipment is situated at Mallaig school and BT says a new duct has to be installed before the connection to the High School can be provided. No date has been given for this.

Lease of this line will be subsidised by WHAN for 2 years.

James Sweet (from WHAN) is coming to Applecross next week to test connection between Applecross and Isle of Skye.

Possible WHAN connection to Kyle as well as Mallaig in the future has been mentioned.

No speed has been claimed by WHAN yet. WHAN is a research project and a precise outcome is unknown.

A different way of paying for the system will be introduced once it's in place. ACT will be billed monthly based on usage. Pricing to customers will be adjusted accordingly. A different way of monitoring is to be put in place. Suggestions have been made of bandwidth management, different connection packages.

Existing AppleNet equipment will be kept in place in case of future need and as a backup.

Sean has proposed a way of managing visitors' usage of AppleNet. ACC would supply the connection instead of businesses (Applecross Inn, Visitor Centre, VT hostel) that offer free connection to customers at the moment. This will be a low bandwidth connection and visitors will pay through a donation. Vouchers have been suggested by Ewen. Better signage and information will be needed for this.

- 2.3 It was discussed that 2 new broadband lines should be added to Broadford by Goscomb company (suggested by James Sweet) that offers a contract on monthly basis. Zuzana said she will find out from James how easy it is to extend the contract if needed and exact terms.

This is to be done in order to obtain better speed.

Marion has suggested to install internet access at the toilets as this may bring more donations.

Conclusions:

It was decided that 2 new broadband lines are needed on a three month contract.

WHAN is a pilot project and once in place more monitoring will be needed to get the best out of the system.

Actions:

Personnel responsible:

Look up effective ways of supplying visitors with broadband (interface on mobiles, vouchers etc)

Sean Kilbride

Order 2 new lines and find out exact terms (via James Sweet)

Zuzana Vojackova

3. Hydro update

Discussion:

Last week there has been a first full production (7 days, hydro running at full capacity).

Ewen has mentioned a link where production is monitored.

Extra heat is being extracted to the Flower tunnel at the moment.

Plans for usage of extra heat:

Highland Eco has raised issues with private wire scheme as it is complex. Alison has applied for funding and made it to 2nd stage but hasn't gone further due to issues raised. She will be meeting with the funder in the near future and discuss the potential for an amended project to be funded at the second stage.

Potential supply to local businesses nearby has been discussed (Inn, Campsite) Jamie from Highland Eco suggested ground source heat pump (that could also earn RHI). This could potentially supply future building development in the immediate area of the scheme e.g. laundrette, affordable housing, business units. Also possible is a heat pump for the hotel.

Alison mentioned that if the trust would agree to sell land surrounding the turbine house it would probably be possible to access funding to pay for this through the Scottish Land Fund. The land would be purchased at market value. She had proposed this to the consultants currently working on the estate's development plan.

Turbine house is still to be cladded. Planning permission had stated harling.

Opening ceremony has been postponed until weather improves. Newsletter is to be issued for shareholders.

ACC and AppleJuice are two separate companies and have separate boards of directors.

<i>Action:</i>		<i>Personnel responsible:</i>
Link to be forwarded to all	directors	Ewen Gillies
Regarding hydro production		Alasdair Macleod

Approach council planning to ask permission to use cladding	Alison
Macleod	

- 4. ACC accounts update
 - 4.1 Establish AGM date
 - 4.2 Potential new directors

Discussion:

Accounts have been submitted late but paperwork is with the accountant at the moment and should be ready soon.

New directors are needed, especially for Applecross Community Trading Ltd (ACT) as there are only 2 at present.

Conclusions:

AGM date to be arranged when accounts are ready

Newsletter/email/Facebook update will be put out to encourage more people to join the directors' board.

Actions:

Personnel responsible:

Newsletter/email/Facebook update to be issued in order to encourage more people to volunteer as directors

Alison Macleod

5. Public toilets

Discussion:

Alison has mentioned that there will probably be no Comfort scheme this year and fundraising has been suggested instead.

Anna Gilroy has reported that one of the toilets isn't flushing properly and there is a need for new taps and an outside sink.

Anna is off at the moment and Judith has agreed to lend her staff to clean toilets in a meantime.

Suggestion has been made to change the wording on donation notice.

Elodie has mentioned potential better signage for public toilets.

Highland Council had suggested that ACC might like to buy the car park and surrounding land or part of it. Various suggestions have been made about use and improvement of the land behind and in front of the public toilets and also at the back of Filling station.

Conclusions:

Fundraising will be need in order to financially support the public toilets. Alison will contact the Council to let them know ACC would like to explore the option of owning an area of land there and ask what the terms of the offer might

be. If terms are of interest then the next step would be to look for funding for a feasibility study.

6. Potential new projects

Discussion:

Planning is going on at the moment for NHS surgery ground to be used for affordable housing (for elderly or disabled personnel who would potentially free up other housing). This would also create a job (Carer). Alison is working with the Highland Council and the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust on the development.

These houses would be owned by ACC and the rent would subsidise carer's salary.

Highland Council has indicated that they would likely be able to give planning permission for 2 houses.

The Housing Trust could provide funding for the first year of an apprenticeship. Alison has submitted one funding application towards the costs of this. It's possible that a new Scottish Government Fund for community owned affordable housing would provide a grant for a good percentage of the building costs and there are a few other potential funders. A loan may also be an option for a proportion of the costs.

Alison has also put in application to Climate Challenge Fund for a 1-year transport project.

This would create a full time position for Development Officer, funding to buy electric vehicle, installation of a charging point and training for maintenance of bicycles and 50% of the costs of a feasibility study for Toscaig Pier and a potential ferry service. Marion is the second contact for this application, Alison will forward the application to her.

7. Any other business

7.1 Funding from HIE

Discussion:

HIE has confirmed further funding for the Local Development Officer job for the next financial year (Alison)

Meeting closed at 10.10pm

Next meeting to be held on 21st March 2016 at 9pm, Applecross Inn