Minutes of Meeting

Point and Sandwick Trust

7pm Thursday 21 April 2011 Aird Hall

Present: Donald M Macdonald, Scott Conner, AJ Murray, Willie MacFarlane, Donald MacRitchie, George Ken Macdonald, Angus McCormack, DJ MacSween, Calum MacDonald

Apologies: Liz Chaplin, Kenny Morrison, Donald MacBain, KD Macdonald.

1. **Minutes and Matters Arising.**

The minutes were agreed and the matters arising were to be taken under the appropriate agenda headings. It was also agreed to defer Item 2, the appointment of the legal advisor, till after the financial report item.

2. **Stornoway Trust Lease and Beinn Ghrideag Update.**

PST needs to provide the final site layout to the Stornoway Trust but we are still waiting for it from Islepower who, in turn, are still waiting on the soil analysis results from the laboratory.

CM gave a report on his recent meeting with Michael Huntingford and Peter Crone of the Pentland Road scheme. 5 of their 6 consented turbines will be built early next year which means that a number of things will be put in place which will be very helpful to the Beinn Ghrideag project. These include a statcom device to stabilise the local grid and a new electric line from the Pentland Road area to the nearest substation on the Lochs road. Also, the upgrading and widening of the turbine delivery route from Arnish to the Pentland scheme will help us greatly, as we will be able to use much of it for BG. CM has commissioned Collett to do a transport study on extending that route to the BG site. The PST Committee expressed their gratitude to Michael Huntingford and Peter Crone for their helpfulness.

CM also reported on a presentation by Statkraft who are interested in providing the PPAs for the community energy companies on the islands.

3. **Melbost-Branahuie Planning Application.**

Willie MacFarlane and Angus McCormack reported on the recent Sandwick Community Council meeting at which the Council decided unanimously to sponsor a planning application by Melbost and Branahuie Grazings Committee to develop 6 turbines on the Melbost and Branahuie apportionment. SgurrEnergy had agreed to prepare the planning submission, with a bird survey expected to commence in May and to finish in August or September.

4. **Townships Update.**

5. **CM reported on a meeting of the Sheshader Grazings Committee, to which he gave a presentation on the current progress on the Beinn Ghrideag scheme. An email update from the East St grazings clerk, Kenny Morrison, indicated that East St hopes to hold a shareholders general meeting on the 9th of May. The Committee welcomed this support from the Grazing Committees and it was decided that one of the first tasks of the new legal advisors, when appointed, should be to advise on the arrangements between PST and the grazings committees who wished to affiliate to PST. ACTION: CM**

6. **<u>Finance Update.</u>**

CM reported on the paper he had presented to the CnES Economic Development Dept and the Council Leader proposing a revolving loan fund for community energy companies, as agreed at the last PST meeting. This had led to a meeting of all the community energy companies in the HIE offices with Calum Iain MacIver attending from CNeS. All the companies but one said that they faced a potential funding gap which the revolving fund could help bridge and CI MacIver undertook to prepare a report to councillors on this issue.

CM distributed an update of future PST costs likely to be incurred in the run-up to financial close in September (at least £107,000), as well as those costs which will be incurred from financial close to the Commercial Operation Date (approx. £12 million). The last of the CES and CCF award (approx. £20,000) can be set against some of these costs (and there may also be scope for delaying some bills till after financial close) but there is still a financial gap that needs to be bridged between now and financial close. PST is applying to CES, Social Investment Scotland, Leader, the Business Gateway and the Big Lottery to raise funds. ACTION: CM

In line with the decision of the last meeting, Roddy Cunningham has been asked to prepare a detailed business plan and budget forecast for the period from now till financial close, and from financial close to COD. The Board asked the Chairman to ensure that the plan includes the Development Director's role as part of the projected administrative arrangements. ACTION: DJM

7. **<u>Appointment of Legal Advisors.</u>**

Tenders from three legal firms had been previously circulated. After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to opt for the best fixed-price approach, in addition to specialist crofting law expertise. On that basis, the proposal from HBJ Gateley Wareing was unanimously selected.

8. **<u>Membership Update and Summer Events.</u>**

There was a discussion on ways of increasing membership and raising awareness in the summer. It was agreed to look at holding an exhibition in the town, possibly with other members of EcoHeb; a mail-shot to households provided it was affordable; and going on

Facebook as well as the *pointandsandwick.com* website. ACTION: Angus McCormack (Lanntair space); CM (mailshot options); Donald MacRitchie (Facebook).

9. <u>Registration of Directors Update.</u>

The Garrabost and Melbost-Branahuie Directorships would be finalised before the next meeting. ACTION: Donald MacBain and Willie MacFarlane

10. <u>AOB.</u>

The proposed new solar farm on the Arnish moor was raised. Donald MacRitchie offered to provide a briefing on the viability of solar power in the islands for the next meeting. ACTION: Donald MacRitchie