Minutes

Point and Sandwick Trust

7pm Thursday 24 March 2011 Aird Hall

Present: DJ MacSween, AJ Murray, Murdo D Macleod (Garrabost), Alexander Murray (Garrabost), Kenny D MacDonald, Andrew Mackenzie, Liz Chaplin, Angus McCormack, George Ken Macdonald, Scott Conner, Donald MacRitchie, Nan Morrison, Duncan Mackay, Willie MacFarlane(Melbost-Branahuie), Calum Buchanan, (Sandwick East St), Kenneth Morrison (Sandwick East St), Norman Macleod, Calum MacDonald.

Apologies: Tom Clark, Donald M Macdonald

1. **<u>Minutes and Matters Arising.</u>**
   The minutes were approved. CM confirmed that the grid connection offer had been accepted (Item 2); that he had attended the meeting of the East St Grazings Committee (Item 2); and that SgurrEnergy has been appointed as technical advisors (Item 5).

2. **<u>GeoTech Survey and Beinn Ghrideag Update.</u>**
   CM reported that Islepower and a sub-contractor, Structural Soils from Glasgow, had carried out the site investigation works in the past week. The final layout can now be determined and it was hoped to have the site plan ready next week.

3. **<u>Stornoway Trust Lease Update.</u>**
   CM had obtained a meeting with the Trust Chairman, Factor and Bert Frater earlier in the day to ask them to progress the lease documentation. The Trust position was that the Section 75 could not be signed until the final site layout was determined. CM chose not to query this as the site layout was now almost ready anyway. As regards a draft lease, the Trust agreed to provide an Option Agreement with a skeleton lease which could be filled in as various requirements were met. CM agreed to this approach. The Trust solicitor had requested the name of the PST solicitor so that he could progress these matters. The Committee discussed the above and agreed to write to three or four solicitor's firms as recommended by CES and to move to appoint one as quickly as possible. ACTION: CM

4. **<u>Township Update.</u>**

WMcF reported that Melbost and Branahuie Grazings Committee wished to submit a planning application for 6 turbines or 18 MW in April on their common grazings. Sandwick Community Council would be approached to sponsor the Melbost application and, after discussion, it was agreed that PST would support a Melbost-Sandwick Community Council application. ACTION: CM and ANGUS MCCORMACK (re Sandwick CC).

Amec-EDF had held consultation meetings in Stornoway last week and a number of Committee members had attended. It appeared that Amec were looking to submit their own planning application in June. Amec had repeated their offer to allow the Stornoway Trust to purchase 20% of the turbines at an estimated cost of £40 million.

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

   CM distributed a list of estimated future costs in the pre-construction period before financial close with the Coop Bank in September, and also for the subsequent construction period from then till December 2012. He reported that the CES and CCF funds we had used up to now would both be finishing at the end of March. Other funding was being applied for but if we were unsuccessful there would be a funding gap between April and September. Andrew Mackenzie expressed concern that the project might need administrative and organisational support in addition to that provided by CM as it grew bigger and more complicated. It was agreed that future budgeting should include any such costs. Angus McCormack reported that he had begun discussions with the Council Leader about setting up a loan fund that could be used to help community energy projects such as PST. He undertook to pursue this further with the Council Leader. ACTION: ANGUS MCCORMACK

   After further discussion, it was agreed that the first recourse to fill the funding gap would be grant funding and any loan facility provided by the Council, but that if neither of these transpired in time, PST would take on short-term loans up to a ceiling of £50,000 from other sources (eg, RBS, Coop Bank, business 'angels') so long as these private sector sources were not expensive and did not impact upon the Beinn Ghrideag project. ACTION: CM

6. **<u>Membership Update</u>**
   No update.

7. **<u>Registration of Directors Update</u>**

The representatives from the Garrabost Grazings Committee reported that the Committee had agreed that Donald MacBain would be their formal representative on the Board. CM undertook to arrange his registration as a Director with Companies House. It was also agreed that Melbost-Branahuie would appoint a Director to the PST Board and WM agreed to arrange this. ACTION: CM and WILLIE MACFARLANE

8. **<u>AOB</u>**

Andrew Mackenzie reported that Dr Daniel Aklil from the PURE Energy Centre in Shetland had approached him to request that PST be used as a case study, or associated partner, as part of the FREE project. The aim of this project is to develop services and tools that will support the uptake of renewables in the Northern Periphery Programme region. It will focus on providing renewable based solutions to remote populations using a minimum of 9 case studies showing how to successfully install renewable energy systems in both strong and weak grid situations. The Committee were happy to cooperate in this but wished Lews Castle College to be involved if at all possible. ACTION: ANDREW MACKENZIE