

MULL & IONA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2004 in Craignure Hall

PRESENT: Sandy Brunton, Michael Ackerley, Tom Bettley, John Cable

APOLOGIES: Derek Crook, Alan Parker, Olive Brown, Georgia O'Neill

TRANSPORT: Michael Ackerley reported back on the ferry committee meeting. They had presented everyone at the meeting with a new document (despite the last one being the final one!) entitled 'A Discussion Document on the transport strategy for Mull & Iona'. In it ALL mention of air transport had been deleted. One paragraph stated that the chamber (amongst other organisations) had been consulted and comments received. Another stated that 'after wide consultation, this document represents the views of the majority of those consulted. This was bitterly disappointing, as the document clearly does not represent our views, and M.A. is to resign from the committee (with our support) due to the lack of effect our views and comments seem to have. Further action will be considered at the next chamber meeting.

Michael also reported on the Calmac Users Group Committee meeting, where there was discussion of a 2020 vision of the ferry service of the near future. This was thought to be very informative from the aspect of realising that other islanders on other islands had the same problems as us! One notable point was that ferries should be based on the island they serve (thus enabling a quick getaway for those wanting/ needing to get off island for their work. Another comment was that the timetable at present makes a discrete jump from summer to winter, and it was thought that there should be a ramping up or down of services.

INSULAR: Sandy was just back (literally) from Crete where he had attended the recent Insuleur meeting. A positive point was that Sandy was on the 'high' table being still counted as part of the board - despite our not being able to pay membership. One of the Greek delegates spoke up in favour of very small chambers being allowed to have membership for nothing. This is going forward to the next meeting for discussion. The main point is that they want us to be there. (Very encouraging).

RENEWABLE ENERGY FORUM: JC apologised for not attending. He had tried to find someone to go instead, but no-one was available.

WOOD CHIP MEETING: No-one actually managed to go, but JC and MA had second-hand info. It appears the systems are good for large scale projects such as the swimming pool and/or a hotel, but rather too expensive for a normal household.

NATIONAL PARK: JC reported on the latest letter from DWoodhouse trying to persuade us that NP status would mean more visitors and therefore more prosperous businesses. Our feeling was that this might put up house prices, possibly forcing out more young people and reducing the economically active population. DW is hoping to come up with new figures.

WEST of SCOTLAND CHAMBER mtg: MA had managed to attend in SBs absence. As only 6 persons turned up the discussion was as to whether this group should be wound up. There will be a follow up meeting on Feb 17th 2005. Should these always be at Dumbarton. MA found he could have just made a 10.30 start if he caught the early (Lochaline?) ferry. Sandy thanked MA for attending. (and MA and JC for their work)

TREASURER: The total in our account is at present £5933.04p

The meeting closed at about 22:40

J. Cable 06-10-04

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 1st November 2004«Bo

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