

MULL & IONA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2004 in Craignure Hall

PRESENT: Sandy Brunton, Michael Ackerley, Tom Bettley, Alan Parker, John Cable, Olive Brown, Georgia O'Neill

APOLOGIES: Derek Crook

MINUTES: Proposed by Olive, seconded by Tom

MATTERS ARISING:

Ferry Committee Update Michael had written to Michael Elwis about the Chamber withdrawing its support for the Transport Strategy document. He will give a full report after the next Ferry Committee Meeting which is to be held on Sept 7th.

Transport Lobby list No report in Derek's absence.

Chamber's Mail Georgia had enquired about the Chamber having a Post Office Box, but this service is unavailable on the island. The Chamber will continue using the distillery as its mailing address.

Private Hire Vehicles Argyll & Bute Council are now having a consultation on the problems encountered by Arthur Brown surrounding private hire vehicles. The consultation may take up to six months. Glasgow Chamber's assistance was not sought in the end.

TRANSPORT: Michael asked for questions (not involving timetabling) that members would like putting to the Shipping Service Advisory Committee. Issues raised included: Ferry capacity - what strategy is there for the increasing numbers of visitors? How many visitors are being turned away? Concern about the increased frequency of breakdowns on MV Isle of Mull. Second linkspan – when is it due to come into use?

A letter of praise to CalMac has been composed highlighting the improvements in service this year.

CONSTITUTION: 15 minutes was devoted to discussing changes to the constitution. <Michael> will email Glasgow Chamber for their constitution.

MEMBERSHIP: Still ongoing.

ECO CHARTER: Article about the charter featured in the Scottish Islands Network Newsletter.

RENEWABLE ENERGY FORUM: John is compiling resume of questionnaire replies. Allenergy is holding a meeting on 27th Sept about woodchip burners. <Georgia> will email details to members. Allenergy will be at the next REF meeting to talk about all forms of renewable energy. Michael will attend in John's place. The forum aims to provide information to the people of Mull to make decisions about various forms of renewable energy.

NATIONAL PARK: John had replied to David Woodhouse's letter. The Chamber will gather information about the impact of becoming part of a National Park, but is unable to take a lead in this matter. It was suggested that Mr Woodhouse be asked to prepare a document citing the pros *and* cons of Mull being a National Park.

PRESIDENT: Sandy received correspondence regarding the proposed weight restrictions on island

roads. Jim Mather MSP described the situation as dire and that roads will inevitably continue to decline. Stuart Turner wrote that the Council are imposing these weight restrictions to avoid further damage to roads they cannot afford to repair anymore. The limits will apply from Dec 2004. Vehicles will be restricted by their *plate weight* rather than the previous *gross weight* limit. They will now be restricted on capacity rather than load. A discussion took place about the consequences of these restrictions (especially regarding domestic and emergency services that may be affected). <Alan> will investigate the facts about heavy service vehicles being exempt from the restrictions.

Maureen McMillan MSP wrote that in 18 months an application for planning permission to extend the Tob/Salen road will be made.

Alan Reid MP replied to issues raised by Sandy about Parcelforce imposing a surcharge for Scottish Islands and the fact that Schoolhouses on Mull are still vacant.

AILLST sent details of new position of Mull's stand at the VisitScotland Expo 2005. <Sandy> will fill in application form.

WEBSITE: Change of host for site will have to be made, as renewal for Freezone is due in October.
TREASURER: Tom reported a balance of £5,933.04p
SECRETARY: Georgia brought correspondence received during the month.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 4th October 2004«Board_Members»

