

IONA COMMUNITY
ASSOCIATES ADVISORY GROUP REPORT
REPORT FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING – TUESDAY 28 MARCH 2017

1. Welcome & Apologies; Act of Prayer

Present: Marlene Finlayson (convener), Jenie Lismore, Mary Duncanson, Kathryn Potts, Richard Sharples, Tony Phelan, John Dale, Rachel Hockey, Isabel Sarle, Neil Squires (for Alison Adam), Jan Maasen

In attendance: Peter Macdonald, Michael Marten (minutes), Pat Bennett, Rosie Magee, Wendy Goodsen, Sandra Kramer

Apologies: Abbi Mason, Angus Mathieson

Peter recorded his thanks to Marlene and Michael for their support during his recent period of ill health, and to Council for the opportunities afforded by his sabbatical period.

2. Register of interests

Michael explained that every Council meeting should now include a note of Trustees' Register of interests, and at the start of each meeting, any potential conflict of interests must be notified to the meeting. He would shortly circulate a request for Trustees to register other interests.

3. Items for AOCB

These were noted.

4. Minutes of the meeting of December 2017

Richard proposed and Isabel seconded the minutes, which were then approved.

5. Risk Register I

It was noted that pest control should be added, including the risk of closing the centres. Reputational risk should include island relations. *Michael will update the register accordingly.*

6. Matters Arising

a) Autumn Community Week 2018: Jan had proposed using the Mennonite Centre at School. This was accepted in principle, but this depended upon other discussions during the course of the day regarding the use of the island centres.

b) Implementation of safeguarding policy: Chris Long's paper on transferring responsibility for safeguarding was noted, and the principle accepted. It was agreed that *Michael will ask Anne*

Whiteford to take this on. Council agreed that it owes Chris an apology for not acting on this sooner, and will thank him for his work in this area; *Marlene will write to him.*

In further discussion it was noted that basic training should be carried out by a safeguarding officer on Iona, and did not need to happen on the mainland. *Neil will discuss the pattern of training with Rosie* and clarify this for future years.

He noted that Council needs to have oversight of safeguarding, and that the Safeguarding committee should report to Council once per year. It should also make appropriate reports to Iona and Camas committees, which can then report on actions taken to Council.

It was noted that Committees should examine their processes for implementing decisions and report back to Council (*Mary, Tony, Kate, Alison*)

7. Finance Report

The report was noted. The Pensions Trust problem was discussed, but it was noted that there was no action that could be taken to reduce the obligations in this regard. It was noted that we could not, at the present time, proceed with the planned ground floor work at Carlton Court. The accounts were approved (proposed: Isabel, seconded: Richard), subject to the Finance Subgroup approving the Trustees' report that *Michael was still to complete. Michael would arrange for the accounts to be signed off thereafter.* Council expressed its thanks to the Finance Subgroup for their work on the accounts.

8. Staffing Report

The report was noted. It was agreed that the Business Director shortlisting/interview panel would be Marlene, John, Pat, Michael. Pat read a message from Karen, expressing her warm thanks to the Community for their support during her recent period of illness, noting in particular the support from colleagues in the Glasgow office. Council also acknowledged the stresses faced by the Glasgow office in recent times due to various staff illnesses and absences, and expressed its appreciation of the work being sustained in this time (*Pat/Sandra to communicate*).

10 b Programme

It was decided to bring this item forward.

Tony noted that there were considerable pressures on Chris Long, Youth Development Worker, and that integrating youth work would help to increase capacity and relieve some of the pressures on him.

A proposal had come from the young adults to create a Young Adults Family Group. This was approved in principle: *Tony and Richard will write to the individuals concerned and with Michael will bring a more detailed proposal to September's Council meeting.*

The Youth Review Group has been reconvened. It was noted that there is insufficient capacity to offer an AGM programme for young people, and they could not therefore plan the autumn plenary. Council affirmed that we need to cut back some of our work, as addressing work load questions for staff is urgent; we cannot build for the future if there is no future for that work.

Richard offered to help facilitate events such as AGM programme, and this would be communicated to Chris by Pat.

Peter noted that Ewan Aitken had indicated Children in Need should be approached for support. It was agreed to look at CIN as a potential funder, although Neil felt that the strategic place of youth work in the Community's overall activities was important and needed to be explored alongside any potential sources of funding. It was agreed to remit this to Programme Committee

Tony noted that the programme work on the ground floor was over-stretching staff, and *Programme Committee were asked to look into a possible Member in Residence scheme similar to that operating on the islands.*

9. Capital Appeal update

Raymond Young and Walter Dunlop from the Project Team were welcomed to the meeting.

Raymond noted that Historic Environment Scotland, Iona Cathedral Trust, Iona Renewables Ltd, and National Trust for Scotland were all partners in this project, and any decisions taken would impact on them and many others on the island. HES cannot give grants, but they have been very helpful in developing the work, with significant advice and support. There is goodwill across the board for this project, and considerable disappointment at the decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund not to give a grant.

It was noted that Council have authorised the Project Team to take the building development to RIBA Stage 4 (i.e. develop the work to the stage where completed tender documents are available). This should be achieved by the end of April. At that point, it would be possible to pause the entire project.

Raymond and Walter emphasised that we need to meet with our partners and discuss what we want to do next, in particular HES, ICT and perhaps NTS. *They will take this forward.*

It was confirmed that the building will end up not being fit for purpose in the coming years if we do nothing, as basic services will begin to fail; inaction is therefore not an option if we want to retain use of the Abbey. Council again affirmed that we do want to continue doing so.

Noting that some of the work had already been completed, Walter and Raymond made the following recommendations:

1. ICT needs to proceed with the conservation of its books and some work on the library.

2. Funds permitting, we should proceed with the Welcome Centre and cloisters work (it was noted that the Shop work was separate and would cost about £50k).
3. We should proceed with the ground source heating system.
4. Work on making the buildings more accessible can be isolated as a distinct phase, with possible funding just for this (lift, bathrooms, bedrooms etc.).
5. Decisions still needed to be taken regarding the refectory, MacNeill library and other aspects of the work, including the insulation of the walls was to be done. It was noted that all the plumbing will need to be refitted.

There are ways of taking this forward, and we should not be put off by the HLF decision.

Walter explained that if we are to phase the work, the Welcome Centre and cloisters could be separated out fairly easily. The other phases would require the Design Team to extract appropriate quantities and related costings etc. The project can be broken down into multiple small projects, but it is economically more viable to do it all in one go. If going ahead with a phased programme, costings would need to be revised. Council noted that this would also require careful planning with contractors, ideally in a way that would still allow us to do some programme work as we would need the income.

Peter is trying to arrange a revision of the rental agreement for the Welcome Centre, aiming for a peppercorn rent, and would report back to the next Council. Financing the work remained an ongoing concern.

Council agreed that we need to integrate the three strands of work much more closely: building refurbishment, future usage, fundraising, as outlined in the CAAG paper. This would be renamed the Iona Abbey Project Group, and would operate as suggested by CAAG. There would be no public launch of the appeal at the time originally planned, and this would be reviewed at the June Council.

Council further affirmed that *the Project Team should proceed to RIBA Stage 4.* Council agreed that to initiate detailed discussions with our partners, as suggested by Raymond and Walter. Council requested the *IAPG to bring a detailed progress report on each of the three elements of the project to June's*

It was agreed that if we are now phasing the work, as we could open the centres for a shorter summer season; *Iona Committee to discuss this.*

10. Committee Reports

a) Communications & Fundraising Committee The report was noted.

Wild Goose Publications was identified as a strategic priority for the Community, which meant that Neil Paynter's role and the future of Coracle required urgent attention. It was noted that Neil's job description should be re-assessed with some urgency in the staffing review. Whilst noting that Coracle is a key link to Associates, the proposal to change the format of Coracle was an important

suggestion as it both raised income and reduced expenditure. It was also noted that we should examine the quantity of printed material we produce and the environmental and economic implications of doing so.

It was noted that Coracle is part of our wider communications strategy, which Michael will be seeking to address from June in any case; in consultation with Marlene, he had identified this as an early priority.

It was agreed that the proposed review (item 3 in the C&F report) should include Coracle and that Michael should be there as Leader-Elect, not as SSM (and that the new Business Director should ideally be part of this group too).

Peter suggested that *C&F should address this further, and bring a proposal for a decision to September Council; in the meantime, we would continue as before, noting the pressures on Neil and WGP.*

b) Iona Committee

The report was noted. Thanks were expressed to the Iona staff for completing the season and for all the work on Iona and in Glasgow that had gone into the 2017 season recruitment process. Two key vacancies remained (Shop Manager & CRC), but recruitment for these was underway. The staff were looking forward to the season. The strategic planning group for the Iona work was discussed. The following recommendations had been supported by the Iona Committee and were agreed by Council:

- 1) we should refer to the closed period as a 'sabbatical period';
- 2) there would be no Christmas house party on Iona – if there were to be a house party on the mainland, this would be for Programme Committee to take forward;
- 3) Council should develop a strategic group that addressed wider business strategy, *with Neil, Peter and Michael to meet and discuss the integration of the work of the business planning group (from December) and the Iona strategy group.*

It was agreed that we needed to rethink what will happen in what had been expected to be a closed period in 2018, with possible programme for part of the season in 2018; *Michael to work on this with the strategy group and Pat (as Programmes Development Worker), as required.*

Michael explained that Roseneath cottage required additional fencing, and a quotation had been received for this. It was agreed to pay this, and *Rosie would take this forward.*

c) Camas Committee

The report was noted. Thanks were expressed to the staff for their work last season, and for the preparations for the coming season, which appeared to be going well. The arrangements around the

birth of the baby and subsequent planning appeared to be going well. The crowd-funding proposal was agreed, and Camas Committee was asked to report back to Council on how well it worked. Mary explained that we had been told we needed to install an extractor fan, but that this was not in the budget. Council agreed to this expenditure. *Camas Committee was encouraged to develop the 2018 plans, and to report back more fully in June.*

11. Iona Community Charter

Peter noted that this is a 'living document' but in its present stage could now be agreed by Council. It was noted that as next Leader, Michael could make minor changes to it, but that the document in principle was approved, and should then be made publicly available.

It was agreed that the process would be to review the Charter approximately mid-way through the Leader's term of office, and then again as the Leader's term drew to a close.

12. AGM & Autumn Plenary arrangements

Michael suggested that the deadline for nominations to serve on the committees should be 26.5.17 – this was agreed.

It was agreed that we could not provide lunch; *Marlene and Michael would oversee all the other practical arrangements.*

Michael noted that the autumn plenary was likely to be in York.

13. Membership Updates

Peter noted that there were no firm details available, but there were about 10 people being hallowed this year. The Camas New Members Programme week would be in August. *Peter and Michael will be interviewing potential new Members in the coming months, and would report back to June's Council meeting.*

14. AOCB

Rachel: noted that at the AAG earlier this year an induction for Associates had been suggested. *There is a small group considering this, and it would report to Council in due course.*

Isabel presented the business planning group's work, and a paper from January was presented. It was noted that the possibility of separating out WGP would need further information and consideration (finances, taxes etc.).

15. Date of next Meeting

Friday 2. June, 11:00-16:00, Glasgow