

**URRAS OIGHREACHD GHABHSAINN AGM 7 NOVEMBER 2019 HELD IN THE CLAN
MACQUARRIE COMMUNITY CENTRE, BORVE AT 7.30 PM**

Directors Present: Agnes Rennie (Chair), Colin Maclean, Carola Bell, Donald S Macleod, James Macleod

Calum Macdonald, CIB Services, Catriona Hill, CH Architecture

Agnes Rennie welcomed all to the meeting and provided an overview of the evening's format.

Directors' Nomination Forms: 2

Forms of Proxy: 1

1. Apologies for Absence

Murdanie Macleod (Director), Donald Macsween (Director), Alasdair Smith (Director), Michael & Judy Harry (Eorodale), Hugh MacInnes (Lionel)

2. Minutes of AGM 13 November 2018 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 2018 AGM were approved by Donnie Macleod and seconded by Donald S Macleod. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. Chairperson's Report

Report read out at meeting and printed in Fios.

The AGM is the formal report to the members and the presentation of the annual accounts which have already been circulated in abstract along with the papers of the meeting. My report will give a flavour of the work of the Urras and some of these may be familiar to you through the regular features in Fios and on local radio. Following the formal AGM Lisa will provide a much more detailed report and there are tables around the room with information about specific projects.

Crofting administration is central to everything that the Urras does and throughout the year Lisa and her team work hard to provide a service that ensures an efficient response is provided to all inquiries. As you all know the Urras is not the only link in the chain of crofting administration and depending on the type of business it might require to be processed by the Crofting Commission for a final decision.

These are challenging times for crofting and the Urras takes every opportunity to represent the crofting community wherever and whenever possible. Political and climate change challenges will require new solutions, but we need to work together to make these work.

The Urras is engaged in a wide range of other activities and these reach out across the community. Some examples include the Energy Efficiency Project which is delivered working in collaboration with Urras Oighreachd Charlabhagh. If you haven't already been visited by the project team please get in touch for advice and a pack of LED bulbs! The Climate Change film made by the team working with young film makers was first

screened in the CMCC in September and since then has been shown to great acclaim in schools and community centres all over the island.

Another very good example of a project that reaches across the community is the Duthchas heritage week and in this its second year it was a great success involving over 30 different events and aimed at all age groups. It was interesting this year that as well as local participants the number of visitors grew substantially.

The Community Investment Fund provided funds to a wide range of projects through the year and to mark reaching the quarter of a million pound mile-stone Lisa will give more details later. Many groups including school groups, townships, Port of Ness Harbour Association, Ness Social Club, Young at Hearts and Community Councils, have been able to successfully complete projects which without Urras CIF funds would have been difficult or impossible. None of this, would be possible without the income stream generated by the Baile an Truiseil wind project.

In May of this year we were very pleased to welcome Christine Amos to the staff team in the new role of Operations Manager. Christine's post includes supporting staff in the day to day running of projects and on a more strategic level supports the day to day running of the estate.

We were sorry to bid farewell to Malcolm Morrison who retired after several years working at the Habost Household Recycling centre as site supervisor, but we were very pleased that Ali Finlayson took on the role of site supervisor and he is now assisted by Jon Freck who has joined the Urras team. We also said goodbye to Courtney Morrison who completed her graduate placement in February this year.

I want to mention the fire that destroyed the Urras office on the morning of 15th February. In some respects, it is still a very vivid memory and in other ways when I pass the site it's hard to believe it ever happened. I want to take this opportunity to say again how grateful we were to the fire service and everyone who helped to make the site safe. We were overwhelmed by the many messages of support and offers of practical help that came from other organisations locally and throughout the island. We appreciated every message received and took strength from the solidarity shown by fellow community organisations.

I think it's fair to say that this was a test which the Urras would not have chosen to be faced with just 12 years after being established. However, having been confronted with the reality of the devastation the resilience of the organisation was clearly demonstrated. By the Monday immediately following the fire, Lisa was working with core staff to consider options and within two weeks the staff team was together in South Dell in the Linux centre and later tonight, just 9 months after the fire our architect Catriona Hill will present the plans for the new building back on the site in Galson.

I want to express sincere thanks to Lisa and all her team for the way they handled the aftermath of the fire and were able so quickly to resume "service as usual" to the community.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow board members who have given generously of their time in this year with its unexpected challenges. I want to mention especially Mairi Smith who stepped down after many years' service.

Finally, I'd like to thank the members and especially those who continue to support the work of the Urras. We are always keen to welcome new members and would encourage anyone with an interest in the future of the community to join. We welcome visitors and encourage folk to call or write to us if you would like more information.

4. Report on the Director's Report and Audited Financial Statements for the period ended 30 September 2018.

- 4.1 Calum Macdonald, CIB Services spoke to the report and the continuing development of the Trust. Looking first of all at the Statement of Financial Activities, the main income comes from Baile an Truiseil Wind Energy Project with a mix of rent income and grants making up the total. Expenditure figure of £173,483 is mainly salary costs and Community Investment Fund Awards totalling £90k for financial year. Total funds carried forward are £2,434,205 which builds on assets formed by the Trust giving this very credible figure.
- 4.2 The Balance Sheet on Page 3 shows a very strong performance by the Trust over the last 2 years. The balance is a good mix of Fixed Assets, Investments and Bank Balances. The Investment figure of £1,200,027 included £700,000 invested in Galson Estate Trading Ltd for the building the Business Centre. The cash balance of £432,207 is very healthy, and overall, there having been significant income and outputs over the year.
- 4.3 Questions were invited on this statement, with the following responses given. The Business Centre is wholly owned by Galson Estate Trading Ltd, which is a subsidiary of Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn. The fire has had no impact on this set of accounts and the insurance monies will help with the rebuild, with next year's figures reflecting the effect of the fire on the Balance Sheet.

5. Level of Membership Fee for 2019/20

It was proposed that the fee remains at £1 and this was agreed by all present.

6. Appointment of Auditors

It was proposed that CIB Services be reappointed as auditors of the company and this was agreed by all present.

7. Election of Directors

Two directors are required to resign as part of the usual rotation (Carola Bell and Alasdair Smith). Both were renominated with no other nominations received and are duly re-elected to the board. The Chair encouraged people to put their names forward for election next year.

This concluded the formal business of the AGM.

An informal period of refreshments followed, giving those present a chance to look at the various stalls which were set up in the hall, reconvening at 8.15 pm for Part 2.

Lisa Maclean gave a slideshow presentation of the work of the Urras over the last year providing a brief overview of key areas of work and a little detail on the Community Investment Fund. The Urras employs 13 people, with a graduate placement starting next month, which will take the total to 14.

The Strategic Priorities for the community are:

- (1) Elderly Care
- (2) Crofting and Land Use
- (3) Tourism
- (4) Community Initiatives

Lisa gave an overview of each priority, with community care, health and wellbeing highlighted as a key priority during the consultation process.

Community Led Support - an approach being adopted by an increasing number of areas now in Scotland and other parts of the UK to address how communities, local organisations and partners can come together, working with statutory services to support people who are risk of being isolated, who are caring for a loved one, or who may need help themselves to continue to live at home

Safe and Independent Living – working with partner providers such as the Fire Service, a range of Community Planning Partners have come to consider how best to support people's independence at home by ensuring that their environment and circumstances are safe and protective. The focus has largely been around environmental issues: quality of housing; care and repair; home safety; aids and adaptations; and other technologies that promote safety at home.

Mpower – This initiative is run by the NHS, and you can ask for an appointment with a Wellbeing Adviser to visit you in your own home. A Wellbeing Plan will be created for you, to access other services which may be of benefit.

Community Health Walks – ongoing programme of walks around the estate.

Sunnd – health and wellbeing programme run over the winter months with and varied offering of activities.

Tourism - A tourism event in February 2019 was held to help inform a tourism strategy. One main area of feedback was the requirement for a destination/place-based website for visitors. We have been working on this and will launch the website ahead of the 2020 tourist season.

Crofting and Land Use – Strengthening the relationship with the John Muir Trust (JMT) having recently signed a “Memo of Understanding”, which will support a transition project in the early part of 2020 for P7 schools across this estate and across Carloway Estate, supporting young people to achieve their JMT Discovery Award. As part of our agreement with JMT we

hope to be able to offer a Ranger Placement post in partnership with other land trusts. We continue to manage all estate administration, continue to work with RSPB at Loch Stiapabhat and continue to undertake habitat management as part of our land management commitments

Community Initiatives

Outdoor Sessions – Plòigh Programme delivered, in collaboration with RSPB, Sporsnis, GAIN and Taigh Dhonnchaidh, giving a full and varied programme of activities over the school holidays with over 156 attending the sessions.

Dùthchas – lots of visitors attending along with members of the local community. It has been nominated for event of the year by Bord na Gaidhlig and Daily Record awards.

Energy Efficiency Project - The Community LED by Energy Champions project is being run Carloway Estate and ourselves, working in partnership to offer free support to residents of both estates. It is funded through funding granted through the Climate Challenge Fund.

Community Investment Fund – Handout on each chair detailing fund activity since set up. The following funds have been awarded to date:

£1,000 Fund	£56,420
£5,000 Fund	£46,572
£10,000 Fund	£158,543
Growth Fund	£80,000

Income from the turbines goes into the Community Investment Fund, with 91 projects assisted and all align with strategic priorities.

Catriona Hill, CH Architecture was introduced as guest speaker. CH Architecture focus mainly on community projects and are working with UOG to rebuild the business centre in Galson.

A powerpoint presentation was provided detailing the following:

1. Brief for the building.
2. Spatial arrangements
3. Timescale – planning application formally lodged with building warrant to be submitted by end of December. Tender submissions by end January 2020 and looking to be onsite before the summer with a 6 month construction period. There will be space set aside for 4 campervans and toilet block, but these will be in Phase 2 of the project. New foundations are needed but the building will be sitting on the original floor plan albeit a slightly larger one.
4. Proposed plan of the building and materials.

Agnes thanked Catriona for her presentation, and encouraged the audience to ask questions, with the following responses:

- Circle outside of the building could be used as an outside event space, once ground is levelled off.

- There is sufficient ventilation in the building to prevent it from being too warm, given that the windows are south facing.
- The location of the entrance door is due to quality of light, which is facing NW.
- Regarding renewables, a ground source heat pump will be reinstated. 4kW PVRA will be placed on the south facing roof and will be connected to the building, not the grid.

The meeting was closed with the Chair thanking all for attending the meeting and staying for the presentations.