

**Loch Sunart Development Working Group
Note of Discussion – 19th August 2019: 7.30pm
Strontian Hotel**

1. Welcome and Apologies

Attending: J Hilder, J Jones, T Coldwell, J Taylor, S Rochford, M Calver, P Ford, C Campbell
Apologies: K Proctor, M Hilder, K Bungey.

J Hilder apologised for the short notice announcing the meeting, J Jones apologised, as it was an oversight on his part.

- 2. Minutes of last meeting (15th April 2019):** The meeting for 24th June was a discussion as only two people were able to attend. The note of the meeting was circulated.
- 3. Update - Sunart Water Festival 2019:** J Hilder recapped the points from 24th June notes: *The festival was a big success. Expenditure was £614.66, fees from activities was £1,203.20 producing a profit of £588.54 towards the Loch Development account. With the residue of grants from 2018 the Carried Forward total is £1,300.83. We wish to express our thanks to Abernethy for the wetsuits and all the organisations and local volunteers that contributed to the event.* He explained that it is hoped this will be an annual event, which will help “top up” funds.
- 4. Update - CAOLAS Events / News:** CAOLAS has been working hard on delivering a citizen science research project across the Peninsulas. This has consisted of training days with local residents (and a few from further afield) where they learn about classification of species in a down-to-earth and practical way. These then ‘qualify’ people to join any of the survey days where beaches around the region, including Ardnastang and Laudale, are surveyed at low water to identify which species are present. The data has yet to be drawn together and reports written. This will be done after all surveys have been completed. However, this is an on going project and will carry on in the future, and hopefully grow. CAOLAS has also campaigned on matters such as the mechanical kelp dredging, fish farm extension at McCleans nose, infringements of trawlers into the MPAs and other local and regional matters. Some of these issues have been raised with ministers within Scottish Government.
- 5. Updates – SMMAATA (SNH Funding / 2020 etc):** no further information from the Visit Scotland Growth Fund Project although meetings are planned for regional events to celebrate 2020 Year of Coasts and Waters. A Baton relay to promote West Coast activities is planned and M Hilder is the chair. There is a rough plan of the route and various options for dates but this can’t be finalised at the moment – the window for this is May 2020. It is hoped the Water Festival can be co-ordinated with the relay. The question of whether other villages have water based activities was asked, and yes there are a number of activities e.g. the Lochaline regatta, etc. A draft/ outline plan was requested and there are links on the SMMATTA website.
- 6. Ownership of Land & Jetty:** The Sunart Community Company now own the land, shed and jetty. Highland Council have now agreed to pay some of the legal fees. Now we will be able to draw up a lease with the Crown Estate (Bidwells) and provide photographs of the jetty, as it has been agreed the jetty can be maintained in its current state and not allowed to deteriorate further. There was a brief discussion for the need to replace/renew the “legal” signage including one requesting people to park in a manner that allows access to the slipway. A working party is needed to do some basic work on the stabilisation of the jetty.

- 7. Moorings Matters:** P Ford provided information on the number of visitors: 20 on moorings and 7 anchored. These figures are an increase on 2018, which is excellent news. There are a couple of outstanding mooring fees. J Hilder has received replacement tags for the moorings as many are missing. These will be distributed to mooring holders to affix. P Ford mentioned the mooring raft, which is afloat and currently on one of the visitor moorings. J Hilder would like to use it to move one of the moorings that is too close another and for other moorings. It was mentioned that one of the floats need replacing. Also the noticeboard at the jetty needs some attention.
- 8. Development Discussion (Jetty):** J Hilder had revised the paper by C Campbell and set out proposals for a consultation paper as per April action point. This to form the basis for a public meeting in September/ October 2019. The options set out were discussed and it was agreed that these needed to be refined to three options that will be presented at the public meeting. Outline options agreed are:

 - a.** A “Fusion Marine pontoon” type i.e. that lies on the shore at low tide
 - b.** To increase the height, length and width of the existing jetty and encase it in concrete. This will allow access at all tides, however at low tides access to and from boats would have to be by ladder.
 - c.** Option b) and add a rise and fall pontoon so people can step on and off boats more easily.
- 9. Rowing Skiff:** J Hilder gave an update on the Men’s Shed portacabin and options to locate another temporary structure in which to build a skiff. The suggestion was made that the portacabin be used, however it might not be big enough. Funding bids for a shed and to build a skiff are being explored. The suggestion that people interested in rowing a skiff might want to attend Lochaline sailing club as they are happy and willing for people to attend and row their skiff: they meet on Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons. If there were three or four people then all might travel in one vehicle. Also, this would allow people to gain experience and skills whilst a skiff is being built. If anyone is interested then people can contact the secretary.
- 10. AOB:** What is going to happen with the green Shed at the jetty? This can be discussed at the public meeting and in the interim we need to consider options and obtain idea of costs of repairs.
- 11. Date of Next Meeting:** 4th November 2019, 7:30pm, Village Hall, Strontian