

## **IGHT Member's Meeting**

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7pm in Gigha Village Hall

Present from IGHT: Fergus Christie (FC), Jon Grunseth (JG), Graham White (GW), Ian Wilson (IW)

Apologies from IGHT: Jane Clements (JC), Per Östlund (PO), Ian Pinniger (IP)

40 members were present.

Minutes: Jane Millar (JM)

### **1. Chair Welcome**

IW welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from board members were noted.

### **2. Board & Staffing update**

Viv Oliver and John McDonald resigned from the IGHT board recently. PO was co-opted for his exceptional business experience. John Bannatyne resigned from the GTL board after 10+ years. A note of thanks was made to John for his dedication and years of work with GTL.

Casey-Jo Zammit's post has been retained for another 12 months beyond Gateway and the Trust are keen to keep the Ranger Service beyond that. Morgan Russell completed her Horticultural Modern Apprenticeship and has moved into the position of First Gardener. Maurice Forster did 6 months as a gardener which was fully funded and has been offered a further 18 months at Achamore. Craig Whyte is leaving end of May as Gateway comes to an end. Leighann Burns has started as our Household Resilience Advocate which is split between Gigha and Glenbarr for 30 hours per week. The post is for 12 months and is fully funded.

Member queried GTL board vacancies. IW said nobody came forward for any of the subsidiary boards at the AGM. Members said a list of skill sets required for each board should be shared. GW noted that the board completed a skills analysis ahead of their board training which is still to take place. The skills analysis will be followed up then. Members queried what skills are needed to be co-opted onto the IGHT board. IW confirmed there is 7 spaces for island directors and 3 co-opted spaces. Co-opted spaces are made available for special skillsets from usually non-members. GW said the Memorandum & Articles states that co-opted spaces are for specific skills predominately absent from the existing forum. There should be a variety of skills on a board, but co-opted spaces are for specific circumstances where additional skills are required.

Member queried how the board consider current director vacancies. The board confirmed there is 1 co-opted space and now 2 island vacancies remaining. The board will review this again. A number of members are concerned about the balance of the board skillset given they have no insight to the skills analysis. There is an assumption that the board is heavily entrepreneurial focused and no tenants or original Gigha people are on the board. Members said it would be helpful if the board could share the skills analysis so members can be advised with how the board will fill these spaces.

Viv Oliver and John McDonald were voted onto the board in December 2022 and have since resigned. Viv Oliver had written 3 pages to the Company Secretary and has not had reply. The board felt it was not their place to explain why members had resigned as it is a personal choice, and they have to speak to their decision. JG noted it was unfortunate that both members resigned and said both are welcome back.

Members queried if the Company Secretary has ever been to a meeting and felt Office Bearers should be at meetings.

Member queried what happened to the "young board". IW said Brandon Clements started this group and hoped more young people could come onto the IGHT board through this engagement and this is why the board tried to lower the membership age from 18 to 16 years old. FC noted the hub as an example of what was achieved by the young group.

### **3. Agricultural update**

IW noted that Bidwells is no longer in place and the Trust tried to do agricultural factoring in-house however this was not possible therefore Bell Ingram has been appointed on an ad-hoc basis to support the Trust with agricultural matters. Bell Ingram hope to meet all farm tenants soon. The Trust has 1 main point of contact and a list of other consultants that will be involved as/when required. Member queried the meaning of ad-hoc support. IW clarified that rather than an annual contract and set fee, the Trust will only pay for exact work/projects undertaken. IW said that the

cost of agent exceeds agricultural rental income and the rent review process with agricultural tenants' costs more than what is achieved from a rent review. Rent reviews are carried out at different times due to different lease terms. Member queried what happens if Bell Ingram works on behalf of tenants also. FC said it is Bell Ingrams professional responsibility to manage conflicts and create a "Chinese wall" between departments.

The Woodland Management Plan has not made much progress. A map has been prepared of existing woodland currently, and the consultant will look at how this could be managed; what further woodland could be created; how this will be funded; what income could be generated, etc. Members queried why no consultation on the Woodland Management Plan had been carried out, however the board confirmed that there has not been any progress from the consultant at this stage as there is still to be consideration as to what Scottish Forestry expect in terms of inclusion of tenanted land.

Bob McIntosh reported back on his meetings with land tenants recently, however this is private matters between tenants and the Trust. Andy Clements asked if Bob would come back but he felt no more work was required at this stage. Bell Ingram will follow up on Bob's discussions.

A member claimed land was taken from Drumyeonmore Farm. IW stated that Bidwells put a recommendation forward following a tender process. FC is to follow up with Drumyeonmore. IW said it was a personal situation and will be dealt with by Bell Ingram.

Directors Register of Interest includes land tenancies and is to be uploaded to the Gigha website.

#### **4. Community Fund update**

Ian Wilson, Keith Wilson, John Martin, June Watson, and Morven Beagan are the Community Fund board members. All Community Fund awards are announced in newsletter but a summary of awards over the years is to be issued. A member noted that dog fouling bags can be requested for free from Argyll and Bute Council. A member queried the Masters Module award. Keith Wilson noted that one of the Fund objectives is developing skills and this member of the community wanted to develop skills which would have a direct benefit to the community. Keith Wilson noted that there are 6 objectives for the Fund and normally more than 1 objective is met on successful applications. Those that do not meet any of the objectives are turned down. John Martin declared a conflict for the Cost-Of-Living Lottery Fund which the Fund board were overseeing.

#### **5. Gateway to Gigha project completion**

IW noted that the project is coming to a completion and thanked the main paths contractors – Scott Murdoch & Tim Lister. IW noted there is grant claims still to be processed so there is money lying out on this project. A member raised the issue of cattle roaming near paths and more warning for path users is needed. A member noted the interpretation panels that are to be installed do note that paths go through agricultural land and to be aware of livestock in fields. A member noted there shouldn't be cattle near Johnny's shore path. A member noted that paths are being worn by cattle, so more consideration is needed as to their maintenance. A donation box is to be installed to help towards future paths maintenance.

#### **6. Housing Development update**

The housing development is due to start and has a 60 week build period so is due to complete in July 2024. The development has 2 and 1 bedroom properties as this was the demand shown within the community survey. A member questioned the cost of the development. JM noted that the full development will cost approx. £1.8m which is majority grant funded with only a £320k loan to be paid back. There will be security held over those properties only, but unsure of the timescales for security as the paperwork has not been finalised. The loan agreement is for 15-years as this is all Social Investment Scotland can offer, so at the end of the loan period there will still be approx. £100k to repay or re-mortgage. IW confirmed the Trust does not intend to sell the properties; however, the board cannot guarantee what will happen in future with different boards.

A member said that policies should be reviewed and approved by members. A member said that revisions of policies were not discussed with members. IW noted that this is part of the purpose of the working groups (plots in particular) which would be discussed later on the agenda.

## 7. MUGA

Members asked what the expected total project cost is to be. JM said it is expected to be £150k and full grant funding is needed. SportScotland has been identified as potentially the main funder. The proposed development is a 5-a-side pitch size (36x18m) however this does not accommodate for a full tennis court size. It was noted that a compromise may be needed as the pitch will be primarily used by the school children and not for competitive/club sport standards. There is cost implications to a bigger pitch however this will be reviewed by the project partners. Joe Teale noted that the Parent Council led the discussions and proposed design of the facility. IGHT is involved to help deliver the project as it is a registered Charity and can access funding opportunities. Maintenance, insurance, and liability issues have been noted and will be discussed further between project partners. JM noted that the project designer had previously commented that MUGAs have a long lifespan and have low maintenance requirements due to there being no moving parts. It was felt that the project partners could come together to access future funding opportunities and volunteer to help with maintenance. A member suggested that the current pitch at the Village Hall should be preserved. When the Parent Council first discussed the idea, one of the main considerations was the time it takes for the children take to get to the Village Hall from the School. It was noted that the Village Hall committee needs to be consulted. Joe Teale said that the Village Hall are happy to invite any new committee members and look at the future of the facility. A member said that a discussion should have been held sooner. The Parent Council noted they had a drop-in session and only 1 person came to it.

## 8. Next Steps

### Gigha Hotel

The situation with the Hotel is on-going. Members queried timescales for the Hotel re-opening. The board are unsure of timescales for when the bar and restaurant will open and cannot comment on the situation at this time. IW confirmed that the board do not intend to sell the Hotel. HIE still hold security over the whole island. IW said no lenders hold security over the Hotel, but FC is to check this. GW confirmed the sale of the hotel has never been discussed or raised by the board. Members said visitors should at least be informed of the Hotels closure. Members questioned whether there are any plans for a temporary provision. The board agreed to review this.

### GREL

A Member queried why T2 still isn't working. Tim Lister, GREL/GGPL Director, confirmed the gearbox has broken and it takes some time to replace and find spare parts for a machine of this age. The replacement gearbox wasn't delivered when it was expected to be and has been delayed, but its installation is due within the next few weeks. Preparations for the crane access have already been made. A member asked why there wasn't renewables update in the newsletter.

A member asked for subsidiary board minutes to be circulated and for cashflow projections to be inserted into minutes. Another member noted that the membership needs to be aware of how far they stray into board detail, particularly on the commercially focused entities (subsidiary companies) and circulating minutes from these companies may not be helpful. The board need to ensure there is a meaningful and sensible level of information made available.

### Finances

IGHT cashflow has been tight due to grant claims being in arrears and not paid out quickly. A member said there needs to be more communication about finances. Members also said papers should be circulated in advanced of members meeting with subsidiary updates including finances. GW said this will be reviewed but it needs to be manageable for staff to prepare and deliver.

### Working groups

FC gave an update on the Memorandum & Articles working group. The group have met 6 times so far with another meeting soon. The group are proposing some changes which will be detailed, explained and brought to members for discussion and feedback. FC said there are vacancies on this group and 2 members requested to be on the group. Their next meeting date is 4pm on Thursday 25th May. FC confirmed there would be a vote on any changes to the Memorandum & Articles are per the Constitution.

The 10-year strategy group is to be set up and reflect on their methodology. PO and JG will sit on this group.

Plots working group is due to meet soon and review the plots policy, how plots are identified, and the rural housing burden. All will be presented to the members for discussion. IW and GW will sit on this group.

## Achamore Gardens

Achamore Gardens received seven 1<sup>st</sup> place prizes at the National Scottish Rhododendron Society Competition and also took home 3 trophies, one being for the best hybrid. Bryony White said the awards are a testament to the current and previous gardens team. Members noted the improvements in the gardens.

### 9. AOB

JG noted the interesting interaction on democracy. There is a difference in opinions, but everyone wants the best for the island. The island will be faced with substantial financial challenge over the next 10 years or so. There will be some good ideas to make the island self-sufficient and everyone needs to work together.

A member noted there were some good points and legitimate concerns raised, and examples of how the board could have handled things differently. However, they wanted to thank the directors for giving up their own time to address these problems. The member also thanked the 2 directors that stood down and noted that it is good there is enough people wanting to be directors.

A member said the meetings should be more frequent. The board are to discuss next meeting dates.

A member noted there was a slow removal of the decision-making process from members, but it appears to be coming back and will help satisfy more members.

A member noted concerns of board confidentiality as some members are told things that others are not.

### Close of meeting – 9pm

Action	Allocation	Update
Review board vacancies	Board	An offer was made to an island director at the members meeting however this has since been declined. The board will review the skills analysis at the board training and consider vacancies from there.
Board skillset to be reviewed and published.	Board	To be completed at board training at the end of May.
Review Viv Olivers resignation letter sent to Company Secretary.	Board	The board have now reviewed this, and the Company Secretary is to send acknowledgement.
Drumyeonmore follow up.	AC	Bidwells tender report on North Ardmish Land and 2017 Bidwells report on Drumyeonmore is to be shared with Directors and followed up with tenants.
Request free dog fouling bags from Argyll and Bute Council.	SB	Enquiry sent to the Council on 11.05.23.
Register of Interest to be uploaded to the Gigha website.	JM	Uploaded to website: <a href="https://www.gigha.org.uk/viewItem.php?id=9284">https://www.gigha.org.uk/viewItem.php?id=9284</a>
List of Community Fund Awards to uploaded to website.	JM	Uploaded to website: <a href="https://www.gigha.org.uk/viewItem.php?id=9283">https://www.gigha.org.uk/viewItem.php?id=9283</a>
Confirm security detail for housing development.	JM	Follow up sent to solicitors on 11.05.23.
Review MUGA comments (pitch size, location, Village Hall committee).	MUGA project partners	JM contacted project partners on 11.05.23. Project Partners will review in the meantime until more feedback on funding opportunities is received.
Confirm security held over the Hotel.	Board	Confirmed that Triodos does hold security over the Hotel as does HIE.
Members Communications regarding board minutes, financial reports, etc.	Board	Board meeting minutes are to include all company bank and loan balances. Subsidiary board minutes are not to be circulated but a report of each company along with finances will be presented at members meetings.
Next members meeting date to be confirmed.	Board	Next members meeting – Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> August 2023. The board are to consider the format of future meetings following concerns raised from members after the recent meeting.