



SCOTTISH LAND COMMISSION
COIMISEAN FEARAINN NA H-ALBA

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Minutes of the meeting of the Scottish Land Commissioners held on Tuesday 23 May 2017 at Longman House Inverness

Present: Andrew Thin (Chair), Dr Sally Reynolds, Lorne MacLeod, Prof David Adams, Megan MacInnes (Land Commissioners), Dr Bob McIntosh (Tenant Farming Commissioner), Hilary Pearce (interim CEO), Scott Strachan (interim HR Manager), Claire Bremner, Posy MacRae, Caron Munro (Scottish Land Commission), Sarah Allen (guest).

1. Minutes of meeting held on 18 April 2017

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

The interim CEO reported that she had met with the Environmental Analytical Services Team in Scottish Government. It was suggested that it would also be beneficial for Hilary to meet with the Communities Analytical Services Division. **(Action: Hilary to arrange a meeting with the Communities Analytical Services Division.)**

The Commissioners discussed the plans for their future monthly meetings. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to meet with Our Land. **(Action: Hilary to invite Our Land to a future meeting)**

2. Interim Chief Executive's Report

The interim CEO provided the Commissioners with an update on staffing, noting that it is hopeful that the three new members of staff will be joining the organisation in June 2017.

The budget has been amended to now show any committed expenditure and any reductions or increases in areas have now been reflected.

The Commissioners' were provided with a communications update from the past month. It was agreed that all Commissioners' were happy with the work being done to promote the Land Commission and any events that will be held.

The Commissioners thanked Scott for all his work in the recruitment so far and Lorne and Bob for their involvement in the interviewing process.

3. Media Protocol

The purpose of the Media Protocol is to outline to the Commissioners how to handle any media enquiries and interview requests. It was requested that any media requests are sent through the Communications team.

It was agreed that currently all news releases will be approved by the Chief Executive before being sent to the media.

The Commissioners all agreed that they were happy with the media protocol and found it to be a beneficial document.

4. Tenant Farming Commissioner (TFC) Update

The TFC shared an update from the work carried out over the past month. The key focus over the past month has been on developing the codes of practice. The TFC would like to ensure that the Scottish Tenant Farmers Association, Scottish Land and Estates and the National Farmers Union all agree the codes of practice. It was shared that the first of the four codes of practice which are currently in development is due to be published after the purdah period.

The TFC is looking to set up a meeting with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and would like to identify some key rural members of RICS to create contact and work with.

Since the Land Commission came into being on 1st April there has been some contact with Tenant Farmers and Landowners who are looking for advice from the TFC.

It was agreed that there will be a fuller update at the next monthly meeting prior to the Commissioners' meeting with Scottish Tenant Farmers Association.

The Land Commissioners expressed their thanks to the TFC for his work and are all happy with the progress being made. They also thanked Posy for her work in promoting the work of the TFC and the media attention she has brought.

5. Any other Business

Paper 4.1

It was agreed that the Land Commission will submit five recommendations in response instead of a direct response to the question. It was also agreed that there needs to be some more strategic comments added to the paper before it is submitted.

The Commissioners discussed the term 'communities of interest' after it was suggested that this could be interpreted in different ways. It was agreed that this term was to be changed in the paper. **(Action: Megan to draw out the second**

sentence in recommendation three to expand on this term and recirculate the paper to the commissioners after the paper has been redrafted)

Paper 4.2

The interim CEO provided the commissioners with an update on what has been changed in the Code of Conduct following the new model which has been adopted. All Commissioners agreed that they are happy to sign off this version.

Fees

The Commissioners were advised that there will be a double payment at the end of May to cover the April and May payments which will now result in the Commissioners being paid at the end of each month for the work they have undertaken in that month.

Other

The Chair recently met with Rosanna Cunningham, Fergus Ewing and Michael Russell. All three Ministers were looking for the Land Commission to be holding more public meetings, if possible.

The Chair gave the Commissioners three options for how best to increase the number of meetings. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to hold an additional Commissioners' Meeting in July providing there is a date that will be suitable. **(Action: Hilary to coordinate dates that Commissioners will be available in July. Posy to look into the possibility of two or three Commissioners meeting with Our Land)** It was also discussed that the Land Commission should look into increasing the number of public Meet and Greet events across the country and where issues are prominent. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to hold one of these meetings in Inverness. **(Action: Posy to explore the possibility of holding more public meetings over the coming months taking into account the availability of venues, Commissioners and staff. Action: David to share with Caron and Posy details of areas he thinks that Urban Land issues are prominent.)**

6. Developing the Strategic Plan

The interim CEO reminded the Commissioners of the timetable for preparing and submitting the strategic plan so that it can be launched at the Land Commission conference in September.

The Commissioners held a workshop to develop the strategic plan. **(Action: Each group to send Hilary their suggested objectives from the breakout sessions. Everyone to think about objectives and email any thoughts they have to Andrew in the next couple of weeks)**

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 27th June 2017

Scottish Land Commission
May 2017