

## Notes of Community Shop and working group Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May

**Present** – Andy, Tony, Katy, Sarah, Bob and Donald

**Apologies**, Michael, Brona, Sadie.

- 1) Thoughts and feedback themes that broadly cover the current position/thinking
  - a. Nearly everybody recognises the island needs a shop and PO.
  - b. Simplest solution would be a buyer with enthusiasm, is a good shopkeeper and has community support.
  - c. Simplest solution not necessarily the best for long term security
  - d. An off-island purchaser is considered unrealistic due to financial viability and availability/cost of housing.
  - e. There is an on-island party interested and the Trust would be happy to look at options to support them.
  - f. There is a need to increase turnover/sales/profit to make the venture more viable/attractive.
  - g. The time, effort and vehicle costs for keeping supply of stock are significant
  - h. The current owners' digital systems may make stock control easier if used to best effect
  - i. Community shops can and do work and thrive but there is risk.
  - j. The shop probably would be best relocated/developed at some time but community ownership should probably be best done in two stages – 1) purchase of business, 2) relocation.
  - k. Timescales and actions are fluid but current owners would prefer certainty asap but end of June is their desired date to set a clear direction
  - l. The PO contract needs 3 months-notice
  
- 2) Community Share Schemes- lots of very successful examples supported by DTAS and others

Generally, a business plan is produced that sets out aspirations and the amount of capital needed. The business plan is incorporated into a prospectus that is then marketed for 6 weeks so shares are actually purchased. Lots of detail to be agreed but £94k considered initial start-up funding required (purchase of fixtures, fittings etc, appointment of manager, vehicle and additional stock)

- 3) Community engagement – “Drop in” at the Hall agreed for Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 11:00 – 3:00 hopefully with a specific short session with Iain McNicol from Appin Co-op to give an example of community ownership working. Posters and website links to be created.

Next meeting of working group Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 in Hall to agree drop in features.