

ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING WEDNESDAY 7th OCTOBER 2009 IN ARDGAY HALL

Present:

Tony Gibbs (Chair)	David Hannah (Vice-Chair)
Alan Lawrence (Treasurer)	Doreen Gibbs (Secretary)
Jamie Burgess	Liz Cormack
William Maclaren	Derek Matheson
Phil Olson	Marion Turner
Councillor Robbie Rowantree	

David Laver (Ardgay) – Member of the Public

- Welcome** The Chairperson Tony Gibbs welcomed members and a visitor to the meeting.
- Apologies** were received from Brigitte Geddes, David Ross and Iain Shand,
- Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 2nd September.**

The following additions to the minutes were suggested and agreed - **item 8(c) Achany Windfarm** - Annual Spend, Potential for an Investment fund, Budgeting Allocation, Local Capacity Building, Non-interference with local fund raising, Non-profit and For-profit funding., SCF will produce a newsletter to be distributed around the community to keep everyone informed of developments and progress being made by the Panel.

The minutes as amended were then approved. Proposed by Jamie Burgess and seconded by David Hannah.
- Matters arising from the minutes**

Salt Bins As David Ross was not at the meeting no update could be given. **Action: DR**

Culrain Garden Tony Gibbs has spoken with the Chairman of the Culrain Hall Committee who will discuss this with the Hall Committee at their next meeting.

Scottish Water Phil Olson has written but no reply has yet been received.

Overhanging shrubs and trees on bridge in Ardgay. The Secretary confirmed that she has communicated with John Clark regarding this matter. **Action: Sec**

Scotrail Train Services
The Secretary has written to Frank Roache of HITRANS inviting him to come to a future meeting of the Council to talk about current issues facing the train services in this area.
It was suggested that when a date is agreed with Mr Roache the meeting should be publicised for members of the public to attend. **Action: Sec**
- Secretary's Report** The Secretary has received the following communications:-
The Highlands Small Housing Trust inviting us to join and nominate a representative. David Hannah agreed to be our rep.
A letter received from the Post Office dated 15 September apologising for the "temporary" closure of the Post Office.
A letter dated 28th September received from Chief Inspector Andy Brown, Northern Constabulary, informing us that he was moving from his post as Area Commander for Caithness Sutherland and Easter Ross to a new post at the Scottish Police College.

A communication was received from Councillor George Farlow in answer to my request for an update on efforts to reduce the speed limit in Manse Road. It appears that this is still ongoing but reaching a satisfactory outcome is a slow process. As suggested by Councillor Farlow I will write to Neil Gillies, Director of Transport Environment and Community Services to enforce our concerns. I will also write to Superintendent Julian Innes, Divisional Commander of the North Division Command Team, Northern Constabulary, who at the Ward Forum offered to help with monitoring speeding motorists.

Action: Sec

- 6 Treasurer's Report** Alan Lawrence reported that the three signatories had visited the Bank to formalise the signatures for cheque signings.

Balances are as follows:-	Treasurer's a/c	£ 1847.30.
	Projects a/c	£ 1159.40.
	Toilets	£ 1128.70.

There is at the moment only one outstanding payment and this will be paid shortly.

Action: AL

7. Windfarms

a) Beinn Tharsuinn

The Chair reported that he and Phil Olson had attended the AGM followed by an ordinary meeting of the Beinn Tharsuinn Community Benefit Fund on 22nd September in Edderton. A copy of the financial report presented at that meeting was perused and questions were raised about inconsistency in the figures relating to the columns of percentages. Phil Olson agreed to pursue this with Phil Tomalin. Tony Gibbs will ask for a copy of the audited accounts. In addition, will ask Phil Tomalin if it is a condition of the grant that receipts should be produced.

Phil Olson said that approval has been given for "consent to publish details of the grant application box" to be added to application forms. The Committee agreed that the portion of the accounts relating to Ardgay should be published on the website.

A grant application received from Gledfield School for sports strips and dance classes for £600 was agreed.

Action: Sec

b) Beinn Nan Oighrean Windfarm

Tony Gibbs informed the Committee in answer to the query raised at the last meeting (Item 8 (b) that it has been agreed that the annual payment of £2500 will be index linked to the Retail Prices Index. RPI payments will be made on the 1st August, commencing August 1st 2010. The RPI figure for June 2010 will be index linked to the payment. All future payments will take the June RPI figure for the year concerned. Should the June RPI figure be negative this will not be index linked.

c) Achany Update

Marion Turner and David Hannah attended the last meeting of the Panel. David Hannah has replaced Iain Shand as a Community Council Representative to the Panel. Marion reported that the fund opened for applications as from Monday 5th October and the first round will close on November 30th. This has been well publicised both locally and in the Northern Times. The first awards will be announced at the end of January 2010. To mark the launch of the fund it is proposed that an event should be held at a local venue to bring together members from the wider community, the police, community council members, reps from local groups, Ward Managers and reps from the SSE, and take the opportunity to mark and celebrate the opening of the Fund. The event will be organised by members of the Panel and funded by the SCF. A date in November has been suggested.

8. Communications

a) Newsletter Copies of the latest newsletter are ready for delivery by members. Phil Olson suggested that in keeping with the idea of communication members should try to attend meetings of other groups. Jamie Burgess said that he has been asked to represent the Community Council on the Ardgay Village Hall Committee. The Committee welcomed this. David Hannah remarked that we should bear in mind that the SWRI is now open for men to attend their meetings.

b) Community Website

Phil Olson said that it is still early days but more hits have been noted, and the minutes and newsletter are put on the site immediately they are available.

9. Ward Forum

The Ward Forum held on Saturday 25th September in Ardgay Hall. Councillor George Farlow chaired a successful and interesting meeting. Tony Gibbs thanked the members who helped to prepare and organise the Hall. A letter has been sent to Yvonne Lowe thanking her for the excellent catering.

The meeting was divided into three groups for presentations and discussions:-

Group 1 – First Responders/Scottish Ambulance Service.

Group 2 - The Highland Council's Tecs Service.

Group 3 - Highland Plan & Coastal Strategy.

The Corporate Manager for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, Ian Hargrave spoke about the First Phase of the **Review of Community Councils**. In the first phase, views are being sought from Community Councils and members of the public, on the area and composition of Community Councils in the Highland Council area. Existing boundaries are asked to be considered; whether, as they stand or whether changes in population and settlement patterns should be reflected in realigned boundaries. Closing date for submission of views of the first phase is Wednesday 23rd December 2009.

The Secretary distributed to each member a copy of a map showing the existing boundary of the Ardgay & District Community Council. The Chair said that supporting papers on this item would be sent out following this meeting, and asked for feedback and views for discussion at the next meeting.

Action: TG & Sec.

10. Sutherland Summit – Held in Lairg Community Centre on Monday 14th September 2009

David Hannah attended the meeting but felt that it was regrettable that there had been less than a full attendance with some 40 non-attendees. He was disappointed that no one spoke up for Sutherland. Robbie Rowantree said that a number of positive ideas had come out of the meeting, which had been promoted with good intentions. A report of the meeting is to be circulated.

11. Christmas Lights

Jamie Burgess said he would find out who is responsible for checking and maintaining the Bonar Christmas Lights. They may employ an electrician for this and it might be that in the interest of health and safety Ardgay may have to follow suit. Jamie will also check with the Fire Brigade Team if they are able to put the lights up in Ardgay on the first Monday in December. Liz Cormack said she would order two Christmas Trees from the Forestry Commission, 1 for Ardgay Village and 1 for Culrain Village.

Action: JB/LC

12. Service of Remembrance - Sunday 8th November 2009

David Hannah said that unfortunately this year Ardgay just missed out on maximum points for a Best Maintained War Memorial award. Liz Cormack agreed to order the wreath for Ardgay. **Action:LC**

13. Ardgay Old Petrol Station Site

Marion Turner said that the state of the Old Ardgay Petrol Station has been an eyesore for too long now. The site enclosed as it is by wire fencing, does not enhance the general appearance of the village, and asked for suggestions how the site could be improved or developed for the benefit of the community. The owner, Mr Brown of Edderton, has fenced off the site for safety reasons but wants to sell it with planning permission for house building.. Land to the rear of the site is owned by Network Rail and is part of the old railway yard. A suggestion that the Community Council should declare an interest in the site was discussed with a view to a possible community buy-out and future development for affordable housing. Further help and advice will be needed if this suggestion is to be taken forward. and David Hannah suggested that the Highlands Small Housing Trust could be asked for help and advice. The setting up of a Community Interest Company might be a useful first step. It was also suggested that this might be a good project for KOSI.

David Hannahh suggested that we should co-opt David Laver to the Committee as a specialist adviser (he is a chartered surveyor) and his input could be helpful if the suggestions discussed should develop. The Chair said he would look at the Constitution to see if we can make another co-option.

Action: DH/TG

14. Any other competent business

Derek Matheson asked about the empty school house at Gledfield School. As the property is part of the school site the future of the house will be decided by the Highland Council

Date time and venue of next meeting – Wednesday 4th November 2009 in Ardgay Hall at 7.00pm.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Minutes approved
4th November 2009