

ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING WEDNESDAY 3RD MARCH 2010 IN ARDGAY HALL

Present:

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

1. **Welcome** The Chairperson Tony Gibbs opened the meeting with a welcome to members .
2. **Apologies** received from Brigitte Geddes, Liz Cormack and Iain Shand.
3. David Hannah introduced our guest speaker **Mr Ronnie MacRae** from the **Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust**.
Mr MacRae spoke of the role of the Trust, which is to help small Communities in the Highlands to secure good long-term solutions to their housing-related needs, and the various ways the Trust can help. From Mr Macrae's talk, it was agreed that the Community Council should carry out a "Community Needs Assessment" to look at the requirements for affordable housing, employment, transport etc. A sub-committee of David Hannah, Phil Olson and David Laver will undertake to look at this and Ronnie MacRae will advise on the best way to proceed. **Action: DH/PFO/DL**
4. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 3rd February 2009**
The minutes were approved. Proposed by Marion Turner and seconded by William MacLaren.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes**
Ward Forum
The Chair informed members that the date of the next Ward Forum meeting has again been changed, and will now be on Saturday 27th March 2010 in Lairg Community Centre. The reason given for the change is that one of the themes of the next ward forum was to be on the implications of the Budget on the Highland Council, and the Chief Executive as part of the consultation process wishes to consult fully and discuss options at ward forums and explain about the soon to be created Citizens Panel. It was felt that in order for Ward 1 to be consulted at this time the meeting should be put back by 4 weeks.
Licensing Applications
It was noted that we do not receive information from the Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross Licensing Committee about applications for licenses relevant to the Ardgay & District Community area. This was apparent when the Alladale Estate, Ardgay. recently had their license to keep Dangerous Wild Animals, renewed, It was agreed that we should write to the Licensing Committee and ask to be kept informed of future license requests. **Action: Sec.**

Invercharron Games

David Hannah informed the Committee that sponsorship of the games by Skibo Castle has been withdrawn.

6. Secretary's Report

ePlanning The Secretary presented a document received from the Highland Council Planning Department outlining the standards to streamline the planning process and enhanced service delivery. In future customers will be encouraged to submit planning applications online. Applications may also still be sent by post. From February 2010, it is intended to notify statutory consultees, including Community Councils, by emailing a standard notification, which contains details of a planning application along with a web link to the application, associated documents, plans etc. Comments can then be emailed back. This will provide a more prompt and convenient service. As an integral part of ePlanning it is intended to communicate with consultees, agents and Community Councils electronically.

Dates of Future Meetings.

The Secretary presented a list of suggested dates for future meetings until July 2011. These were agreed.

Action: copy to be circulated/Sec

7. Windfarms – Rosehall (E.ON)

Tony Gibbs reported that a Local Liaison Group is to be established for liaison between E.On, their contractors and the local community during construction. The first meeting of the group is on Thursday 4th March at Park House, Lairg, (hosted by David Walker – the Chair of Lairg CC). Peter Campbell and David Walker are to attend a meeting in Edinburgh to discuss with EON a rate and system for the payment of community benefit. It is hoped that the arrangements currently ongoing with SSE and SCF in the payment of and management of their fund can be similarly managed with EON.

8. Newsletter

David Hannah produced copies of the Spring Edition 2010 (No.7) for distribution by members.

Community Website

Phil Olson said that we should look for ways of developing one or two of the poorer areas of the web site where people do view the information but it is not presented in a satisfactory manner and he would speak to the Chairman and Secretary about how to improve the situation. He also pointed out that the web site belongs to all Councillors and speaks for them and thus all Councillors should continually ensure that they agreed with what was presented on the site.

9. Highland Council Citizen's Panel

Robbie Rowantree briefly spoke about the Highland Council proposal to form a Citizen's Panel of more than 2,000 volunteers. The purpose is to gauge representative views of the Highland population on Council services, spending priorities and specific issues. Panels will be made up from a sample of residents from the local population who agree to participate in consultation on an ongoing basis. Panel members will be asked to complete postal, on-line or telephone surveys or participate in focus groups.

10. Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust

Tony Gibbs reported on a letter received from the KOSFT (copy previously circulated to members). The contents of the letter were discussed and some issues of concern were raised relating to the finance needed to support the project. It was recommended that we should send a letter of support in principle, for the project.

Action: Chair/Sec

11. Any other competent business

It was agreed that the Secretary should write to Scotrail to thank them for keeping the area around the Ardgay Station clear during the recent bad weather. At the same time, the Secretary will write to the Highways Authority thanking them for their hard work in keeping the roads clear.

David Laver asked the Community Council to support a forthcoming planning application to Highland Council on behalf of the Gearrchoille Community Wood, Ardgay. If the application is made in the name of the Ardgay Community Council, the costs for this will be reduced by 50%, representing a large saving for the project. The GearrchoilleWood will reimburse the Community Council for all costs. David Laver will prepare and submit the planning application on behalf of the Community Council and the Gearrchoille Community Wood.

This was agreed.

The Chairperson, Tony Gibbs reminded members that the next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting, and he advised members that it is his intention to stand down from the post of Chair at that meeting.

12. Date and Time of the next meeting.

The next meeting will be the **Annual General Meeting**, to be held on Wednesday 7th April, 2010 at 7.00pm in Ardgay Village Hall, to be followed by an ordinary meeting of the Community Council at 7.30pm.

There being no further business Tony Gibbs thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.15pm.