

# ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING—WEDNESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2010—ARDGAY HALL

*Present:* David Hannah (Chair), Doreen Gibbs (Secretary), Alan Lawrence (Treasurer), Derek Matheson, Phil Olson, Marion Turner, David Laver, David Ross, William MacLaren, Peter Armstrong, Cllr Robbie Rowantree.

- 1. Welcome.** The chair opened the meeting with a welcome to those present.
- 2. Apologies** received from Liz Cormack.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting** held on 13 Oct 2010 were approved as presented with amendments.

#### **4. Matters arising from the minutes**

*Core Paths.* The secretary had written to Matt Dent of Highland Council suggesting use of Paths for All funding for proposed upgrading of the Ardgay Hill/Oakwood path.

##### *Christmas Lights*

There was discussion as to who would take responsibility for putting up the lights in Ardgay this year. Opinions differed as to whether this work should be done by a volunteer, given the need for safety. It was agreed to consult the local Fire Service for advice and possible assistance. Chair to contact Fire Officer

#### **5. Secretary's Report**

Invitations had been received to attend:-

*Scottish Water* Public Board meeting in Inverness on 16 Nov, to include an update on the company's operations and capital expenditure plans. It was understood that Pete Campbell of Creich CC would be attending, and that he might be asked to provide feedback on the meeting.

*Secretary to send apologies and request feedback*

*Association of Scottish Community Councils* AGM on Sat 20 Nov in Glasgow.

*No members able to attend - apologies to be sent*

*Crown Estate* open day/exhibition on Wind, Wave and Tidal Power in Thurso on 9/10 November.

*No members able to attend - apologies to be sent*

A copy of a report produced by *Kyle of Sutherland Heritage Society* on the **Lest We Forget** project had been received and was warmly recommended by the Chair.

A letter had been received from *Gearrchoille Community Wood Ardgay*, raising the issue of future funding for the maintenance of the site and legal costs. It was agreed that this matter would be deferred until the next meeting.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report**

##### *Treasurer's Account*

The current cleared balance stands at £1546.74, with no outstanding liabilities.

*Projects Account* The current cleared balance stands at £4162 with outstanding liabilities of £126,90. An expected bill of £310 for the last newsletter has yet to be received.

*Toilets Account* The current cleared balance stands at £829.43 with outstanding liabilities of £180. One further payment of £180 is due next week, after which the remainder will be transferred to the Projects Account for the winter.

- 7. Proposal** to appoint a Vice-Chairman for the community council. The proposal was deferred until AGM in April 2011

#### **8. Grant applications to Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm Community Ltd**

*Ladybird Club, Ardgay* £200 towards purchase of art and craft materials – approved.

*Highland Small Communities Housing Trust* £615.63 for local housing project feasibility and survey work – approved

#### **9. Street Light Savings**

An email had been received from Creich CC seeking our views on the possibility of making savings on street lighting between Ardgay and Bonar by either turning the lights off after midnight, or reducing the number of lamps lit by 50%. The Chair invited discussion of this and other opportunities to make savings on unnecessary street lighting. Cllr Rowantree pointed out that since street lighting requirements were generally prescribed in appendices to statutory legislation, there would be difficulties in making local exceptions. There were also specific requirements for lighting where there was a pavement or within 30 mph limits. David Hannah noted that lights were kept on at Ardgay Public Toilets even during periods when it was closed. Marion Turner asked whether it might be possible for some of the street lighting to be manually operated with a time-switch as needed by pedestrians. It was agreed to contact Robert Gunn at Technical Services to investigate this and any other options for savings on lighting costs.

**10. Voluntary Groups East Sutherland** The AGM was due to be held on Friday 19 Nov. David Hannah is to be proposed as a director, and will attend with Phil Olson.

#### **14. Windfarms update**

*Achany* The last meeting of the funding applications panel had been inquorate, with the result that applications had to be remitted to the next meeting. It appears that there are ongoing difficulties in finding community representatives.

*Rosehall* Doreen Gibbs had attended a meeting of *the* Community Liaison Group on 26 October. E.ON had reported on site preparation, including forestry harvesting and plans to upgrade the road for site traffic. The contractors are committed to using local suppliers. E.ON intend to collaborate with Inverness College to train local people to work on the installation once it is operational.

*Beinn Tharsuinn* Phil Olson reported that the procedures to formalise the appointment of Alan Lawrence as a director were now under way, and that he and Alan would be acting as co-directors, neither having primary or alternate status.

**12. Development Post Update** A job description/contract details were being prepared for the Development Officer post by a steering group comprised of Ardgay and Creich CC members.

#### **13. Forestry Roads**

Doreen Gibbs had attended a meeting hosted by Cllr George Farlow to discuss ongoing concerns about the safety and structural impact of timber and windfarm transport using the local road network. Although the Forestry Commission had issued guidance to transport contractors, anecdotal evidence suggested that individual drivers were still contravening regulations in terms of safe speeds and space between vehicles. The transport for windfarms was better regulated, with operators obliged to survey and if necessary upgrade any roads used for site access. Cllr Rowantree pointed out that no action would be taken unless anyone witnessing a contravention was able to provide details such as registration number, time, description of driver, etc. He also noted that seven lorries had in fact already been stopped on the Struie road since the introduction of a new weight restriction in mid-September.

It was agreed to raise the issue with VOSA (Vehicle and Operator Service Agency) who have the responsibility to regulate commercial vehicle and driving safety. It was also noted that the matter would be on the agenda for the next Ward Forum.

#### **15. Any other competent business**

##### *Struie roadworks*

Several members commented on the driving hazard presented by a steep sided ramp at road works on the Struie Road. It was suggested that more warning needed to be given to motorists of the ramp, and that it should be made more visible, perhaps by means of a fluorescent strip..

*Secretary to contact, HC*

##### *Dog fouling*

Willie MacLaren asked whether a dog waste bin could be provided on the Ardgay-Bonar Bridge road.

*Secretary to contact John Clark*

*Remembrance Day* A wreath has been ordered for the service, which will be attended by children from Gledfield Primary. The public toilets would be open on the day. Refreshments would be available following the service in Bonar Bridge Hall.

The next Ward Forum will be in Melvich on the 27 November.

The Chair expressed our appreciation for Derek Matheson's help in erecting the new community notice board. He also wished to remind everyone that the deadline for submissions to the next newsletter was **11 Nov 2010**

**The meeting ended** at 8.55pm Next meeting Wed 1 Dec at 7pm in Ardgay Hall.