

# Ardgay & District Community Council

Draft Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at 7pm in Ardgay Hall

**Present: Elected members:** David Hannah, Chair (DH), Peter Armstrong, Secretary (PA), Alan Lawrence, Treasurer (AL), Phil Olson (PO), Marion Turner (MT), Bob Sendall (BS), David Laver (DL), Betty Wright (BW)

**Invited Guests:** Carol Summers and Linda Skinner, Connecting Carers; Gareth Dixon, Mitchell's Chemist

**Members of the public:** Colin Mitchell, Paul Whittock

**Minutes Secretary:** Mary Goulder (MG)

**Apologies:** Highland Councillors Linda Munro, George Farlow and Hugh Morrison

**Item 1. Welcome/ Connecting Carers presentation.** Carol Summers introduced herself as the Volunteer Co-ordinator for Connecting Carers. The organisation has been established for many years but has recently been awarded the tender to provide care centre service for unpaid carers across Highland. Anyone can be a carer, often without realising that they fall into this category, mostly usually it is a family member or close friend of the person requiring the help. All such carers should be encouraged to register with the service enabling them to access the full support of the organisation with regard to information on all aspects of 'the job'. A dedicated information/advice line operates Monday to Friday, 9.30 – 5pm and until 7pm on Wednesdays : 01463 723560. There is also a website: [www.hccf.org.uk](http://www.hccf.org.uk) and they can be found on Facebook and Twitter. Once registered, carers will have access to informal forums and in-depth support, training and advice. Young carers in particular can benefit from the various opportunities for help available through the group. Linda Skinner has been appointed as a Carers' Worker and will be working in Caithness and Sutherland for the next four months. The post is funded by NHS Highland and Highland Council. Linda has thirty-five years experience working in the voluntary community and has been a carer herself for most of her life. She stated that unpaid carers in Highland alone save the government an estimated £200 million. She will be publicising her role through posters, advertising, word of mouth and she hopes to establish local support groups, meeting in village halls etc, where carers can call in for coffee, a chat, information and support. There is no such group in Sutherland as yet. Both Carol and Linda have established links with the Bradbury Centre and will continue to liaise there as that is an obvious source of information and contact for carers. PO will put the Connecting Carers website details on to the CC website. Carol will ensure that DH receives information in the next day or so for inclusion in the next CC newsletter which goes to press at the end of this week. Taking with them thanks from the CC members, Carol and Linda left the meeting at 7.30pm.

**Item 2. Proposal to open a retail pharmacy in Bonar Bridge – Gareth Dixon.** Gareth gave a brief address outlining his proposal to open a branch of his business, Mitchell's Chemists, in the premises previously used as the old paper shop in Bonar Bridge. He has purchased the property and is now seeking the views of local residents and businesses with regard to the provision of a retail pharmacy. Gareth explained that should he be successful in opening, the present arrangement whereby the doctors' surgery is a dispensing practice would cease and prescriptions would be dispensed from the new shop. Regulations exist which govern the number of dispensaries in any one area, usually determined by population numbers. The two employees currently working in the pharmacy at the surgery would be invited to work in the new one along with a fully qualified pharmacist and possibly another health worker; one or two front of shop staff would also be needed. The Minor Ailment Service would operate here too allowing residents to register at the pharmacy for medical advice on minor conditions, thus saving appointment time at the doctors' surgery – a plan being put in place across Scotland by NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government. General advice from the pharmacist would always be available. Gareth stated that this system is working well with his other two shops in Dornoch and Golspie, both enjoying an excellent relationship with the local doctors, sharing information as appropriate and with patient consent. The Bonar Bridge premises are smaller than the other two establishments but this would be fitted out to the same high standard and would offer a range of retail products such as would be expected in a small pharmacy. An out of hours service would be put in place to enable the collection of prescriptions in emergencies. Questions from the CC included concerns about parking, the possibility of other related medical professions taking space in the building, and employment. Gareth has not yet had the opportunity to meet the doctors at the surgery but hopes to do so as soon as possible. He is currently trying to gauge local feeling and left with an overall positive opinion from CC members.

**Non-agenda items. (1). The Lady Ross.** Colin Mitchell expressed his disapproval of the mention in the CC Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> February where it stated that Mr Mitchell had neither sought nor been granted permission from the Village Hall Committee for access to carry out repairs at The Lady Ross. Mr Mitchell had with him, both when he attended the January meeting of the Community Council, and tonight, a handwritten letter from Jennifer Burnett, a member of the Hall Committee at the time. Although the letter is undated Mr Mitchell maintains it was issued at the time of the work and before Ms Burnett left the Hall Committee. With regard to various rumours circulating around the village, Mr Mitchell stressed that the property is not on the market for sale and that he is in negotiation to regain ownership with a view to re-establishing a business presence in the future. Marion Turner explained the background workings of the Community Right to Buy and advised Mr Mitchell that the initial stages of that procedure will be put in place, with regard to several properties and plots of land in the village, starting with a survey to gauge public opinion. She made it clear that registering an interest is an essential part of the procedure, but it should not necessarily indicate that a move to purchase would ever be made, only that the community would be assured time to decide should the property ever be placed on the open market. Mr Mitchell felt that these moves might still impact on his negotiations, stated he would prefer it if such steps were not taken and said he would keep the Community Council apprised of any developments or changes with his plans. Disagreement at this stage between Mr Mitchell and David Laver over the Hall Committee minutes entry and the letter by Ms Burnett led to the Chair intervening, as this was a matter between the Hall Committee and Mr Mitchell and was not appropriate to Community Council business, at which point Mr Mitchell left the meeting.

**(2). Christmas lights.** Paul Whittock, Ardgay Garage, reported to the CC regarding his research into costs for the purchase of new lights for the Christmas display, particularly those it is hoped to place by the school. The children were asked what themes they would like with the popular choices being for a shooting star, a snowman and a Christmas pudding. All the figures for each were passed to the Chair who will talk with Highland Council to ascertain what might be available from their resources. He will report back next month. Not only has Paul taken on this research and work to do with the lights and the Christmas tree but he also refused any remuneration for it. He stated that the takings from the next car boot sale would be put towards the Christmas lights fund. He was sincerely thanked for his work and commitment and left at 8.25pm. **DH Action.**

**Item 3. Apologies.** See above.

**Item 4. Minutes of April meeting.** The minutes from 9<sup>th</sup> April were accepted as a true and accurate record; proposed: Marion Turner; seconded: Peter Armstrong.

**Item 5. Matters arising from April minutes. (1) CC logo.** Carol Laver has produced a design which was approved by all and will now be used on Community Council headings. Carol was warmly thanked for her time and expertise. **(2) Ward boundaries.** PO has drafted a letter with regard to the possible re-drawing of Ward boundaries. He will circulate this for consideration and it will be an agenda item at the next meeting. **PO/PA Action. Agenda item.** **(3) Flag raising.** There have been no contacts received from local ex-service personnel following the display of posters asking who might wish to attend this event in June. The Treasurer will send the approved £100 donation once the address is provided by PA. **PA/AL Action.** **(4) Scottish Community Councils conference.** DH attended the final meeting and encountered varying reactions to the wind up of this body. He stated it is a real shame that so many dedicated people now have no central body, although it was felt that the Central Belt had perhaps benefitted more than Highland during its time of operation. **(5) Core Paths.** Matt Dent has identified several 'gate issues' which he is investigating. **(6) Tuiteam bridge.** Nothing new at this time. **(7) CC AGM date.** Confusion has arisen following email communications from Highland Council indicating that all CCs must hold an AGM in June, in spite of only have been elected in November last year. This meeting approved the financial report, audited in April and submitted to Ward Manager Andy Mackay at that time. The Secretary will write to the three Highland Councillors for this Ward asking for clarification as it was previously understood by all that the next AGM would be in November, after one year in office. **PA Action.** **(8) ScotRail.** Secretary has written again to ScotRail on several matters including the need for a notice indicating the platform of departure for the early train. Awaiting the supply of hi-viz jackets which must be worn when work is carried out on the floral decorations at the station. **(9) Social Enterprise course.** PA attended this course in April in Lairg where he made some useful contacts.

**Item 6. Correspondence.** PA listed incoming communications. The **Data Protection Act** registration is complete. Letters of opinion were submitted regarding the **Braemore and Glenmorie** windfarm planning applications. No reply

received from **KPMG** regarding The Lady Ross. The **Friends of the Far North Line** group has expressed an interest in coming to a future CC meeting. PA will contact them. **PA Action**. Fiona MacKenzie, Development Officer, Sutherland Partnership is seeking help to do an inventory of local information 'brown signs'. Agreed to pass this to Lynsey Burns, KOSDT. **MT Action** Letter received from 13 year old Frances Hull seeking financial assistance towards costs to enable her to attend the International Scout Jamboree to be held in Blair Atholl. £50 donation approved, to be paid from the Project Account. **AL Action** (once address passed to him by PA). **Dornoch Academy** has invited a representative of the CC to attend their upcoming prize giving ceremony. Chair will reply that unfortunately no-one is available this year. **DH Action**.

**Item 8. Windfarms update.** **Achany** – panel meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July to assess next round of applications. Volunteers needed to deal with interviews for the post of co-ordinator of the apprenticeship scheme. DH available and possibly BW. DH will attend the upcoming Open Day in Strathpeffer. The Panel will have a stand at the Rosehall Community Day on 19<sup>th</sup> May. **Braemore** – updating letter received on status of current planning application, now for 24 turbines, south access at Inveran removed. **Coire na Cloiche** - CC hopes to approach Charlie Brooke regarding community benefit. **Dalnessie, Glencassley, Rock by Sea** – nothing new. **Glenmorrie** – awaiting discussions re community benefit. **Rosehall** – last liaison group meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June. Community benefit beginning in August. **Sallachy** – meeting next week. WKN is understood to be open to discussions on community benefit.

**Item 9. Treasurer's report.** The Statement of Accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> March has been audited and submitted to Highland Council. The annual accounts were approved. The balance in the Treasurer's Account stands at £1,425.86 with one outstanding cheque of £127.10, the Project Account stands at £3,228.39 with one outstanding cheque of £120, and the Toilet's Account at £677.65 with an outstanding cheque of £189. The Highland Council mileage rate of 45p per mile was agreed as being payable to Mary Goulder, Minutes Secretary, and others as appropriate.

**Item 10. Ardgay 'Open Shop' week proposal.** The idea of having a central point open in the village for a week during the summer where people could drop in to discuss any/all village matters, to encourage volunteers to become involved with various local groups and committees, to disseminate information and generally express opinions was greeted favourably by all. Peter will seek out suitable premises, liaise with KOSDT regarding 'free hall slots' and all members with free time volunteered to help out from time to time. Notices will be displayed to publicise the event and an item will be in the newsletter. Peter will plan a programme. **PA/All Action as appropriate**.

**Item 11. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust update.** The April report had been circulated to CC members by email. MT will discuss with Lynsey Burns further ideas for wider distribution throughout the community. She will also investigate the procedures for instigating a Community Right to Buy with regard to various land and properties in the area. **MT Action**.

**Item 12. Newsletter – printer.** Dingwall Printers, which has been producing the A&DCC newsletter, has gone in to liquidation. A4 Printers in Inverness has taken over most of the work previously handled in Dingwall and DH will discuss with them the future of the newsletter. The next issue is due to be printed within a week and it is expected that A4 Printers will do this.

**Item 13. Ward Forum.** The Forum scheduled for May has been cancelled. The date for June is still to be confirmed.

**Item 14. Any other competent business. Notice boards.** The two existing Hall Committee notice boards and the soon to be delivered two Community Council boards are/ will be all sited on Hall Committee land. All four boards should be placed together in an easily accessible position. Planning permission is required at a cost of £80. This expense was approved. DL and AL will liaise on this. **DL/AL Action**. It was agreed that Angie Banks at the Library should hold a key for the notice boards, also that there should be a time expiry on notices, perhaps one month. **Grit bin for the hall.** PA will ask John Clark if Highland Council can supply a grit bin to be situated at the hall. **PA Action**. **Highland Small Communities Housing Trust.** This organisation is keen to conduct a survey in the autumn into local housing needs. It was agreed that they should be invited to attend a meeting after the CC 'Open Shop' week by which time public opinions might be more clearly defined.

**Item 15. Date of next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at 7pm in Ardgay Hall with the 11<sup>th</sup> July meeting taking place in Culrain Hall. The invited guest in June will be Morven Smith of SSE. PA will book the hall. **PA Action**.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.