

ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Draft Minutes of meeting held on **Monday 10th September 2012**

6.45pm, Ardgay Public Hall

Present - David Hannah (Chair) DH, Peter Armstrong (Secretary) PA, Alan Lawrence (Treasurer) AL, David Laver DL, Phil Olson PO, Marion Turner MT, Betty Wright BW.

Attending - Richard Ardern, Friends of the Far North Line
Police Constable Dave Thomson

Audrey Campbell, Key Commercial Services (Minutes)

1. Welcome - DH opened the meeting and welcomed guest speaker Richard Ardern of Friends of the Far North Line who introduced the organisation and described their purpose and priorities. He stressed the need for groups to 'speak up for rail' particularly in the Highlands and suggested lobbying MPs and highlighting the issues faced to the press. Much financial support is needed in order to increase rail capacity in the north, however in the current financial climate this is particularly difficult resulting in no major works currently being planned as a result of the latest review.

The following points raised were discussed:

- a) Disabled access to Ardgay Station – this is difficult due to a lack of a suitable place to create an access, the only site having a steep gradient.
- b) Co-ordination of transport links – Existing bus timetables that do not synchronise with train times are well established and would be difficult to change. Alternatives could be community car sharing or dial-a-taxi.
- c) Disposal of railway yard to the community – utilising the space for local business or community use rather than rail, e.g. a village parking area.
- d) Ardgay/Wester Fearn Repairs – road traffic lights are still in place at Ardchronie, no progress reported.
- e) Trees – complaints have been received about trees on certain embankments being a visibility hazard. HC should be contacted and asked to advise Network Rail to remove them.
- f) Advance tickets – ADCC have written to Scotrail to request that advance purchase tickets be made available through conductors as currently these must be collected from Inverness or posted. It was thought that an e-ticketing solution might be in place by 2014.
- g) Platform information – it was noted that this has been improved elsewhere. There is a phone on the platform, which can be used to call for information, but this is inconveniently on the opposite platform to where passengers are likely to be waiting.
- h) Connecting trains – on board conductors are required to establish if passengers require a connection and relay a request that the next train is held in the event of a delay. An electronic display board would be useful to display information about trains. ADCC will contact John Yellowlees at Scotrail to request improvements for Ardgay. PA Action.

DH thanked Mr Ardern for attending the meeting and he left to catch his train.

2. Apologies – Bob Sendall BS, Cllr George Farlow.

3. Police Report - PC Dave Thomson attending, reported that there were 29 incidents between 10th August and 10th September. An enforcement day is being run on Wednesday to target mobile phone use whilst driving. No outstanding issues were brought to PC Thomson's attention although concern was expressed regarding speeding in and around the village, particularly at the school, which has 20mph restrictions in place. It was noted that the electronic sign nearest the junction at Gledfield Primary School did not appear to be working properly. ADCC will advise HC/Gledfield School. PA Action.

The CC again expressed their concern at the lack of police liaison at meetings and stressed to PC Thomson that he is welcome to drop in at any point during a meeting if he is able.

PC Thomson was invited to submit an article on a topical subject such as winter driving precautions to DH for the next issue of the newsletter and was given a current copy for his information.

PO asked if there were any issues with cyclists in the area and PC Thomson reported that there were none.

4. Minutes of last meeting - Approved – PO proposed, MT seconded.

5. Matters Arising - Street Signs – PO asked if there was an initiative to have common road signage across the local area. MT felt that if this was the case that some thought be given to including the postal code on each sign. KoSDT is currently working on designing signage for key entry points to the area. MT will find out what stage this is at and report back to the CC. DL noted that any changes would have to be approved by HC. The CC was disappointed to see that no progress has been made regarding the flooding at Culrain.

A resident in Manse Road had read in the CC minutes that pavement repairs were required in Struie Place. She wished to highlight that the condition of pavements on the Manse Road side was even worse.

6. Correspondence - Police Community Consultation Event, Helmsdale – ADCC will send apologies as no-one is available to attend. It was noted that this event has been very useful in the past. PA Action Highland Council Budget Ward Consultation (Durness) – MT felt that the lack of notice and distance to the venue was absurd. The CC will express their dissatisfaction to HC and will not attend. PA Action Ardgay Garage had donated £27.50 raised at the recent car boot sale to the Christmas Lights Fund.

EW had received a complaint from a member of the public regarding hens in Croick Churchyard. They will be encouraged to write to Campbell Stewart, HC TECS with their complaint and the CC will do so also. PA Action

7. Treasurers Report - Treasurers Account balance - £791.13, Projects Account balance - £5141.04

Toilets Account balance - £232.65, No outstanding cheques. PA is now an approved signatory on all accounts. £2500 received from Beinn nan Oighrean Wind Farm for Community Benefit.

£1163.57 received from HC into the Project account in error, this will be transferred to the Treasurers account.

Annual grant for Toilets account remains unpaid and this is operating on a loan of £500 from the Projects account.

AL continues to find the operation of the HC Finance Department highly unsatisfactory. CC agreed that AL should write to both the HC Chief Executive and Head of Finance to complain.

8. Beinn Tharsuinn Applications guidelines. - Item held over until next meeting.

9. Windfarm Updates - Coire na Cloich – DH and MCT will be involved in negotiations commencing shortly.

Glencassley – EW and MT are meeting this Thursday to discuss. MT will collect a paper copy of the proposal from Lairg Service Point prior to their meeting.

Achany/Rosehall – all applications at the August panel meeting were approved. It was noted that very few applications come from within the ADCC area and the CC wish to encourage applicants to come forward.

10. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust Update - The latest update was not received in time for inclusion in the newsletter but has been circulated by email to all members.

11. Achany Apprenticeship Scheme - Lairg Learning Centre has been appointed scheme co-ordinator. DH will attend a meeting with LLC and SCF at the end of the month to discuss their future plans.

12. Open Shop Week - PA has circulated to CC members a questionnaire, which can be used at Open Shop Week. He will collate and report back to CC. PA also plans to meet with Andrea Madden of HC to discuss plans for the project. It was provisionally agreed to hold the event in October/November.

DL reported that the hall is currently open for public business. The next part of renovations, the addition of a fire escape, is in the process of being organised. DL requested that the Hall Committee be allowed to apply for their building warrant through the CC in order to take advantage of cost savings, this was approved.

13. Clach Eiteag Plaque - AL removed the loose plaque and will repair and replace it. CC approved any expenses which may be incurred, likely to be minimal.

14. Welcome to Ardgay signs - It was agreed that a sign should be placed at the end of the Bonar Bridge.

15. Ardgay Ice House - DH noted the current state of disrepair. It was suggested that it might be promoted as a historic monument and perhaps funding could be sought for an information board. CC will contact Balnagown and Historic Scotland about repairs. PA action.

16. Service Bus to Asda / Tain Swimming Pool - Two members of the public approached MT to find out if the bus service to Tain could be extended from the current stop in the High Street to Knockbreck Road. CC will write to Macleods Coaches about the possibility, and also to the supermarkets regarding the possibility of providing funding to help facilitate this. PA action.

17. Gledfield School speed limit signs - Covered in item 3.

18. Ardgay Hill /Oakwood path - The CC received a grant of £800 from Rosehall Community Benefit Fund towards repair of the path. DH will communicate with the residents who use the path to determine if they could form a group to carry out the work themselves, with the CC providing necessary materials, as suggested by Matt Dent, Access Officer. CC will then contact Rosehall Community Benefit Funders to ask if the balance of funding could be used elsewhere in the CC area.

19. Ardgay Walks/Cycle Routes - DH noted that it would be good to have a leaflet collating all the walks/routes that have been featured in past editions of the CC newsletter. MT intends to do this.

20. Carbisdale Castle - DH attended a SYHA meeting. It is looking likely that Carbisdale will remain closed for some time.

21. Creich CC Minutes – matters arising - DH summarised the minutes. It was noted that CCC are working hard and have suggested to SYHA that the old Midgale Hospital may be able to be used as an alternative hostel to Carbisdale Castle.

22. Our Phone Boxes – Both have been painted and cleaned. DH advised that use of these as community noticeboards should now be encouraged.

23. Local Facilities for glass recycling - Public concern has been raised that with the loss of the GREAN service there are no facilities in Ardgay or Culrain for glass recycling, although there were also concerns about the broken glass that tends to collect around recycling points. The CC will request that HC look at a solution to the lack of this facility and express their general dissatisfaction regarding the re-cycling service currently being provided. PO recently saw a specially adapted trailer unit being towed and positioned at scheduled stops elsewhere and felt this was an innovative solution. PA action.

24. Ward Business Meeting Arrangements - Item held over to next meeting due to lack of Highland Council representation at meeting. CC noted that they do not feel encouraged to attend and are disappointed and disillusioned by the response to date from the Ward Manager.

25. Caithness and Sutherland Capital Spend Provision to 2013 - Item held over to next meeting.

26. AOCB

Posters have been received and displayed for 'The Milk's in the Oven', a Fun Day at the Bradbury Centre aiming to raise awareness of dementia.

27. DONM

Next meeting is 8th October in Ardgay Hall

DH will be unable to attend, DL will chair in his absence.

28. Newsletter

The newsletter has been distributed. MT's batch can be reduced to 29 for the next issue. Printing is now carried out by Alness Heritage Centre and costs £360 for 350 copies.

MT suggested that the summarised version of the minutes be displayed in the notice board in the hall car park.

Agreed. Action PA

Photos taken of wood lorries travelling together had been sent to HC and the complaint acted upon by HC.

Membership of FoFNL approved. AL action.

AC will produce draft minutes and forward to DH/PA for comment prior to distribution.

Chair thanked everyone for attending and especially Audrey for taking the Minutes.

Meeting closed at 8.58pm