

## ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at 7pm in Ardgay Hall



**Present: Elected members:** David Hannah, Chair (DH), Phil Olson (PO), Betty Wright (BW), David Laver (DL), Bob Sendall (BS), Marion Turner (MT)

**Invited guest:** Joanna Peebles, Scottish Water (JP)

**Also present:** Highland Councillor George Farlow (GF), PC Dave Thomson at 7.30pm

**Members of the public:** Teresa Langley (TL), Stuart McCarroll (SMC), Vicky and Paul Whittock (VW,PW)

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

**Apologies:** Alan Lawrence, Treasurer (AL)

**Item 1. Welcome.** Chair David Hannah opened the meeting welcoming everyone at 7.00pm.

**Item 2. Tribute to Peter Brown Armstrong (Secretary).** On behalf of the Community Council DH expressed deep sympathy on the sad loss of Peter Armstrong. DH read from the eulogy by Peter's brother, David, which was given at the funeral service. Occasions for contact between the brothers had been fewer in adult life though none the less important. Most of the reminiscences dated from their childhood and early teen years before each had gone their separate ways when they went to university. David had especially mentioned Peter's love of music and cinema expressing the opinion that Peter could well have been a professional critic, such was his insight into these subjects. Many happy memories of childhood by the seaside in Girvan were recalled. Family fears that perhaps Peter had not been truly appreciated, due to his quiet and unassuming demeanour, were dispelled by the large turnout at his funeral. DH felt there was little to add to such a genuine tribute other than to reiterate that Peter will be sorely missed.

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

**Item 4. Police report.** Arriving a little after the start of the meeting, PC Dave Thomson gave his brief report indicating sixteen incidents in the Ardgay/Bonar Bridge area. These were of the usual nature of animal/dog/stray sheep incidents, one of careless driving and one fixed penalty speeding offence in Bonar Bridge. He assured the CC that regular speed monitoring will restart, especially at the school, as recently malfunctioning equipment has now been replaced. Asked about thefts of domestic fuel oil, PC Thomson said that there had been no report of these in Ardgay and district and that these appear to be on the decrease but that householders should remain vigilant and utilise all security measures possible. With thanks from the Chair, PC Thomson left at 7.45pm.

**Item 5. Joanna Peebles, Scottish Water.** The CC's apologies were given to Joanna as owing to the sudden death of the Secretary it was not known that he had arranged for her to attend tonight's meeting. Also as she was unaware of the circumstances JP had been shocked to hear the news when she had telephoned to speak to Peter today. She expressed her sadness and condolences to all who had known him. JP went on to advise that the plans for the new treatment works in Bonar Bridge are progressing. To her knowledge no new applications for residential connections to the water supply have been refused; no business applications have been received recently, although an application for a holiday chalet development in Bonar Bridge was refused meantime. Business connections are made through a licensed provider; a list of these is available on the Scottish Water website. Residential applications are dealt with on a first come, first served basis. JP confirmed that at present Scottish Water is working to replace existing pipework in the area to bring it up to standard; recent 'sliplining' of old pipes with new plastic pipe has been carried out in Ardgay and between Ardgay and Bonar Bridge although as yet this is incomplete. This procedure helps to reduce bursts and leakages. Problems regarding mains supply to outlying settlements were highlighted. A suggestion could be for a group of residents to apply (as a developer) and contribute to pipe costs in what would be deemed a 'growth project' which in turn would trigger provision of matching capacity at the treatment works. It was appreciated that this could be too expensive for most residents to consider. JP offered to send all relevant documents regarding domestic connection/applications to MT. Tankers are still taking water into Bonar Bridge when required but Scottish Water expects to submit a planning application soon to allow an increase in capacity with improved infrastructure at the treatment works. JP left the meeting at 7.40pm.

**Non-agenda item. Development at Ardgay Garage.** After a year of negotiations with HC Planning Department, Paul and Vicky Whittock were able to present copies of the plans for the development to the meeting. These show the layout of the proposed buildings and the car parking areas. Unit 1 of the project will comprise a new shop and cafe, the latter to be run by others not VW/VW themselves. They are keen to utilise a blank wall area at the front of the building, perhaps to display the KoSDT logo and maybe a notice board with mainly local tourist information. Five bike stands will be

## Minutes approved 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013

erected. The level of parking space required by Planning (16) was thought by CC members to be excessive and could be unduly restrictive should the applicants wish to expand their business. It is hoped that construction will start in the next couple of weeks. A report will be submitted for inclusion in the next A&DCC newsletter.

**Item 6. Minutes of last meeting.** The minutes of the April meeting were approved as a true and accurate record; proposed by Phil Olson, seconded by Marion Turner.

**Item 7. Matters arising. (1) Royal Mail pillar box.** The pillar box is open again. MT spoke to the engineers about four weeks ago and was told a date would soon be given for when the box will move to its new location by the hall. No further information has been received; MT will make further enquiries. **MT Action.** **(2) Ronnie McNeill's retirement.** From the Creich CC minutes it was noted that the local collection had raised £205 and that the McNeill family had requested the money be shared between the Bradbury Day Centre and the Migdale Hospital Comfort Fund. This generous gesture was applauded by the CC. **(3) Toilets.** The contractor is awaiting a warmer weather spell to complete the flooring work. Chair will check if this is now scheduled. **DH Action.** **(4) Newsletter.** Copy deadline for next issue is 20<sup>th</sup> May; articles/information should be submitted to the Chair.

**Item 8. Correspondence.** **(i)** Thanks were expressed to Marion Turner who has taken on the role of Secretary until the AGM in June. She has created a dedicated email address for CC business and this should be used for all appropriate e-correspondence, [Secretary@ardgayanddistrictcommunitycouncil.org.uk](mailto:Secretary@ardgayanddistrictcommunitycouncil.org.uk) This address is now on the mailing list for the Sutherland Partnership – up till now Ardgay has not been included. **(ii)** Friends of the Far North Line newsletter received. **(iii)** Thank you card received from Deirdre Carney in response to CC condolence message. **(iv)** Notification of changes to HC region polling stations; Ardgay is not affected. **(v)** Mrs Rhonwen Copley has written with a list of comments following the last CC meeting. These were duly noted and the Secretary will reply accordingly. Cllr Farlow agreed to go to see Mrs Copley to discuss her concerns. **MT/GF Action.** **(vi)** Information received regarding Highland Council's Planning Mentoring Scheme. **(vii)** Clean up Scotland package. Agreed to request packages with a view to a community clean up day next autumn. Secretary will order a kit on receipt of the website link from BW. **BW/MT Action.** **(viii)** BW reported that notices regarding dog fouling are being removed from the Gearrhoille Community Wood. The matter to be raised at the upcoming Gearrhoille Community Wood meeting. **(ix)** A letter will be sent to Creich CC in response to their request to share the cost of installing a cycle ramp on the Invershin Viaduct footbridge. While agreeing in principal, the CC wishes to know that permission has been received. **MT Action.** **(x)** Invitation received to attend the prize giving at Dornoch Academy. Secretary to advise that no-one is available this year. **MT Action.**

**Item 9. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust update.** Helen Houston has been appointed on a four month contract with the main aim of securing ongoing funding for the post of Development Officer. Notice boards have been placed in Culrain (key on chain), Bonar Bridge and Rosehall. BS commented that the Rosehall board is on his land but no-one asked his permission. The Ardgay board is still to be placed (see Non-agenda item above). The KoSDT AGM will be in July; date to be given to DH for inclusion in the newsletter.

**Item 10. Windfarms update. Coire na Cloiche.** Passed by Highland Council. **Braemore.** Not approved by HC. GF will ascertain if a public enquiry will be set up. CC should express its opinion again if so. **Community Benefit Funding.** Suggestion put forward that CC could apply for funds on behalf of the community, to be administered by KoSDT, to allow funding support for learning opportunities for individuals. MT will discuss the idea with members of KoSDT. **MT Action.** **Glenmorrie/Dalnessie.** Both going to public enquiry. **Sallachy/Glencassley.** HC Planning site visits today.

**Item 11. Report from Biomass Conference.** BW attended. Reported on interesting community projects in S.E Austria, running now for thirty years providing local heating supply, pumping hot water etc, produced by burning of wood chips procured from locally owned forestry. Similar projects were discussed using wind turbine energy. GF advised that pathfinder schemes are planned in Ullapool and Applecross, funded by the Climate Challenge Fund. He also said that Loch Broom Wood Fuel has been set up to supply firewood, also supported by the Climate Challenge Fund. BW was impressed by the good turnout at the conference.

**Item 12. Planning and licensing applications.** Nothing relevant this month.

**Item 13. Treasurer's report.** Details supplied by AL prior to meeting indicate the Treasurer's Account cleared balance is £1186.63 with two outstanding cheques totalling £78.80. The Projects Account stands at £1938.66. The Toilets Account cleared balance is £665.65 with one outstanding cheque of £189.00. Martin Calder currently has the Community Council accounts for annual audit. Their return is expected next Friday.

**Item 14. Councillor's report.** GF has spoken to landowner Calum Macrae regarding the Ardgay Hill footpath and has arranged that Phil Waite, HC Dingwall, can go ahead to install gates at either end of the path. Road safety issues raised by Creich CC, primarily at Invershin will be discussed at a soon to be arranged meeting with HC road engineers, Police

### Minutes approved 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013

and representatives of both CCs. He will advise of the date. Asked about speed monitoring strips for the Gearrhoille end of Ardgay, GF agreed to make enquiries to see if this can be done. He has been in discussion with parents and Head Teacher regarding the Safer Routes to School plans. Arddronie traffic lights/road and embankment repairs remain ongoing with assessment underway regarding the engineering involved. A brief discussion regarding HC per capita spend in both Caithness and Sutherland resulted in GF agreeing to provide figures to MT. **GF Action.**

**Item 15. Vacancy on CC & appointment of a CC Secretary.** Teresa Langley was asked to consider accepting co-option to the CC as a co-opted member. With her agreement this was proposed by David Hannah and seconded by Phil Olson. The appointment of Secretary will be an item for the AGM in June. MT was thanked for taking on this role meantime.

**Item 16. Any other competent business.** (1) Jeanie Sparling to be asked if she would like any more tubs to put more floral displays around the village. SMC has some barrels he could supply if so. **DH Action.** (2) The 10<sup>th</sup> June meeting will be the CC AGM. Notices to be displayed locally for twenty-one days beforehand. GF will officiate. **DH/GF Action.** (3) Carbisdale. It has been suggested that as the Culrain Village Hall is in need of replacement it could be put to SYHA that it could build a small hostel there which could incorporate a new village hall. No response to this suggestion has been received from the Culrain community as yet. (4) CC should check with Jeanie Sparling regarding the floral tubs on the station platforms. A reminder was given that the station will celebrate its first one hundred and fifty years in 2014. Friends of the Far North Line could be encouraged to mark the achievement. Urgent assistance is required with the station floral tubs. (5) As an onlooker to CC meetings, until her co-option tonight, TL expressed some concern over lack of communication amongst all the local groups/committees. Clarification was given as to where information on all local bodies can be found (websites, etc) and it was reiterated that CC members should always declare interests when matters arise concerning committees that they are on within the area. (6) GF advised that HC is proposing giving 'On the Spot' fining powers to community wardens and countryside rangers with regard to the dropping of litter. HC is adopting a policy of zero tolerance to litter. (7) The Sutherland Access Forum will next meet on 16<sup>th</sup> May. PO is a new member of this Forum. The ongoing closure of the Tuiteam Bridge could be raised. **PO/GF Action.**

**Item 17. Date of next meeting.** The next meeting, which will be the AGM followed by the monthly meeting, will be held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm in Ardgay Public Hall. MT will book the hall. **MT Action.**

**Item 18. Beinn Tharsuinn funding applications (private session).** There were two applications to be discussed. The Lairg Learning Centre application for £2,000 which had been carried over from last month while further information was received, was approved at £1,380 after removal of the management/administration fees which it was understood will be covered from grants elsewhere. The Ardgay Public Hall application for £7,781 falls outwith the £2,000 individual award limit set by the CC on grants from the Beinn Tharsuinn Fund. £2,000 was therefore approved in principal but the Hall Committee will be advised to seek the full amount from the Achany Fund. It was intimated that as a result of the delay this would cause, the hall will probably be closed to allow the work to be carried out during the months of September to December. Both applicants will be advised of the decisions, as will Company Secretary, Phil Tomalin. **MG/DH Action.**

Meeting closed at 10.30pm.