

## ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013 in Culrain Village Hall at 7pm

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

**Also present:** PC Malcolm Madeod at 7.40pm

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

**Apologies:** Highland Councillor George Farlow (GF)

**Item 1/2/3. Welcome/Guest speaker/Apologies** (see above). Chair David Hannah opened the meeting welcoming everyone to Culrain. There being no guest speaker, or police representative at this time, the meeting moved on through the agenda.

**Item 5. Minutes of last meeting.** The Minutes from the June meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Marion Turner; seconded by Alan Lawrence.

**Item 4. Police report.** PC Madeod arrived at 7.40pm at which time the meeting was interrupted to allow him to make his report. No incidents of note reported. A reminder was issued to the public to be aware of ongoing scams attempting to defraud the public of banking details. BS queried whether the open ground at The Lady Ross was being used for overnight parking but no-one else has been aware of any incidents. PC Madeod left at 7.45pm, being advised that the August CC meeting will be held in the Ardgay Church Hall.

**Item 6. Matters arising, not on the agenda. (1) Cycle ramp at Invershin.** PO advised that the project to install a cycle wheeling ramp at the Invershin viaduct is now being administered by the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust's Project Manager but is, in fact, on hold at this time. Discussions are ongoing between the ramp maker and Highland Council. Great dissatisfaction was expressed that this delay is at a crucial time for summer visitors and it is already known that Sustrans has issued an international warning that the viaduct is unsafe. Injuries have been reported in the past therefore the introduction of the ramp to allow safe wheeling of bicycles is urgently required. PO and MT will liaise with Helen Houston, KoSDT and Sandy Chalmers of Creich CC to see what action can be taken and how soon. **PO/MT Action. (2) Royal Mail pillar box.** No new information available. **(3) Toilets.** Floor treatment completed in the gents toilet with the ladies and disabled still to be finished. **(4) Newsletter.** Next copy date will be at the 20th of August. **(5) Falls of Shin Visitor Centre.** Concerns were raised regarding the provision of toilet facilities, the condition of the paths and unemptied litter/waste bins at the site. It is understood that Highland Council and the Forestry Commission are dealing with these problems. As the school holiday period has just begun and news of the destruction of the centre is only slowly spreading, many visitors are still arriving wishing to view the falls and enjoy the play-park and walks. The provision of temporary facilities, and also perhaps some form of food and drink outlet, coupled with care of the pathways and play equipment are all essential to maintaining the best visitor experience possible. Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust plans to replace the five salmon interpretation boards which were lost in the fire. Monitoring of the situation must continue. Keep on the agenda. **Agenda item. TL Action.**

**Item 7. Correspondence.** Incoming mail included information regarding nominations for the Honours List, a report from Ward Manager Andy Mackay regarding Falls of Shin, Core Paths Plan Review, Scotways subscription request and a letter from Police Scotland regarding traffic wardens and offices opening hours. No nominations or suggestions were forthcoming with regard to the Honours List. TL will access the Library copy of map of presently listed Core Paths and bring them to next month's meeting for discussion. **TL Action.** Treasurer will send the Scotways subscription of £20. **AL Action.**

**Item 8. Update on Falls of Shin Visitor Centre.** See Item 6 (5) above.

**Item 9. ARCH – Prospective Telford Project.** This project is being handled by the KoSDT, working with both Ardgay and Creich CCs and both local history societies. Noted that Croick Church is a unique example of a Telford Church.

**Item 10. Ardgay Station anniversary.** The Heritage Society plans to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Secretary will write asking what plans are being made and how the CC can support them. The ages of both Culrain and Invershin stations were queried; perhaps a project could take in all three stations. Friends of the Far North Line and Bonar Bridge Local History Society could also be asked to become involved and funding could be sought if required. The Heritage Society was thanked for the work currently underway tidying the station platforms. **TL Action.**

**Item 11. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust update.** A lengthy report has been issued by the Project Manager which includes liaison with, among others, the Bradbury Centre, Invercharron Highland Games, ARCH, Climate Change

Fund and THC Ranger Services. Full report will be circulated to CC members. Further information is available from the KoSDT website.

**Item 12. Windfarms update. Dalchork.** MT attended a recent meeting but this development will have only a small impact, if any, on Ardgay. It is not felt that a CC representative need attend again. **Sallachy.** The three local CCs were asked to lobby MSPs and have indicated to the developers that they are not prepared to issue any letters of support on behalf of their communities. **Rosehall.** DH attended the Open Day and was disappointed at the turnout from all three communities, some whom had already received grants, although it is understood there was some confusion about the date. It was noted that holding such events during weekday working hours makes it difficult for some people to attend. **A&DCC Environment Fund.** PO confirmed that he will manage this fund within the accounts kept by the Treasurer. The allocation of £2,000 has been received from Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm Community Benefit Company Ltd. **Coire na Cloiche.** DH and MT will arrange a meeting with two representatives from both the Ardgay Public and Culrain Hall Committees to discuss implications of recent agreements. **DH/MT Action. SSE and E.ON Community Benefit Panel.** One vacancy exists on the Panel for a community representative from the A&DCC area. The election to choose from the three nominations will take place on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August at 7pm at the start of the CC meeting. The nominations are David Laver, Angela Banks and Steve Copley. Members of the public are encouraged to attend the meeting to cast their votes for their representative. Recently changes to the Memorandum of Understanding, which controls the Fund administration, have been proposed. All three CCs must approve the changes by 13<sup>th</sup> August for them to take effect. A pilot scheme to run for three years is proposed, allowing a notional three way split of annual funds to each of the three CCs, which may result in a fairer distribution of monies in each district. This was put to the vote, acceptance of the changes being proposed by PO and seconded by TL. The motion was unanimously approved; secretary will write to Foundation Scotland accordingly. **TL Action.**

**Item 13. Planning and Licensing applications.** None of note.

**Item 14. Treasurer's report.** AL passed round the report giving the current balances on each account. Treasurer's account stands at £909.23 with outstanding cheques totalling £138.80. The Projects Account stands at £3816.06 which includes the £2000 from the Beinn Tharsuinn Fund to establish the Environment Fund. There is one outstanding cheque for £35.72. The Toilets account cleared balance is £98.65. Having received advice from Highland Council that this year's grant will be the reduced amount of £980.82 with a further reduction expected the following year, AL expressed great concern over the inevitable shortfall. Expenditure from the Treasurer's account last year amounted to £1821 with all costs met considered reasonable. It was agreed that the CC should write to the three Highland Councillors for this Ward indicating the seriousness of the situation. Treasurer and Secretary will work together on the letter. **AL/TL Action.** It was also agreed to rename the Small Grants Application Form as the Beinn nan Oihgrean Community Benefit Application Form which will handle small claims applications. The application from the Ardgay Public Hall to that fund for £250 to cover essential asbestos removal was approved. **AL Action.**

**Item 15. Highland Councillor's report.** No report available in Councillor's absence.

**Item 16. AOCB. (1)** DH reported that the recent funeral of Donald Beaton was well attended. Although not a resident of the area, Mr Beaton spent many years taking care of the Ardgay war memorial. **(2)** The agenda will be sent out as a .pdf in future to allow for easier printing/fitting on screen. **TL Action. (3) Manse Road pavement.** A complaint regarding the poor condition of this footpath will be passed to John Clark, TECS, Bonar Bridge. **TL Action. (4) Road junction at station.** Further issues have been raised with regard to sightlines at this junction. Removal/cut back of bushes could help although overall junction improvement would be better. DL will arrange for complainants to meet John Clark to seek an acceptable solution. **DL Action. (5) Butchers' retirement.** No arrangements are yet in place to make a collection marking the end of thirty-eight years spent by John Matheson and Jock Macleod running the shop in Bonar Bridge. It is hoped to link in with Creich CC and Liz Cormack, placing boxes in the local shops. **(6) Ward Forum, Tain.** PO attended this event where speakers discussed Broadband provision in rural areas. Community Broadband Scotland attended although BT did not. A further Broadband event will be held in Tain on 15<sup>th</sup> July which PO will also attend. A recent edition of BBC's 'Countryfile' programme indicated that BT has a grant scheme to help rural areas attain fast Broadband. Secretary and PO will write to John Thurso and MSPs urging action here. **TL Action.**

**Item 17. Date of next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August at 7pm in the Ardgay Church Hall as the Public Hall is closed in August. At this meeting residents of Ardgay & District CC area will be able to vote to elect the new community member of the SSE and E.ON Community Benefit Panel.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm.