

ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 9th September 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), Betty Wright (BW), David Laver (DL), Bob Sendall (BS) **Also present:** Highland Councillor George Farlow (GF), Liz and Sandy Cormack, William MacLaren
Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG) **Apologies:** Phil Olson (PO)

Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies (see above). Chair David Hannah opened the meeting welcoming everyone to Culrain, and hastened the meeting into the lengthy agenda. Sincere wishes for a speedy recovery were expressed to Phil Olson.

Item 3. THC Development Plan. This is at the initial stage of preparing to engage with local communities. The new Caithness and Sutherland Plan, when approved, will replace the previous Caithness Local Plan (2002) and the Sutherland Local Plan (2010). During the consultation period before production of the last Sutherland Local Plan, many residents took the opportunity to attend open meetings with THC Planners. It is felt that this process should be followed again, also that the brief timeline between notification and the deadline of 17th October is inappropriate. Secretary will write to THC indicating the wish for an open meeting with information freely available. **TL Action.**

Beinn nan Oighrean application. To save Mr and Mrs Cormack having to wait through the meeting it was agreed to move this item up the agenda. Mr and Mrs Cormack, Mr MacLaren and Cllr Farlow all withdrew to allow the private discussion to take place. The total costs of the project, to provide a presentation event following the recent retirement of the two local butchers, were given as £300. Creich Community Council has awarded £175. It was therefore agreed by a majority vote to award the remaining £125. On the return of the public, Mrs Cormack was advised of the result and the cheque was issued by the Treasurer. Mrs Cormack thanked the CC and gave the details of the presentation as Friday 27th September at 7.30pm in the Bonar Bridge Hall. She agreed that appropriate receipts will be provided to the CC in due course. Mr and Mrs Cormack left the meeting.

Item 4. Core Paths. The request was made that all Core Paths in the area should be clearly signposted. The north bank path along the River Carron were mentioned as being a particularly good walk and could be designated as Core Path, with appropriate signage. Secretary will advise THC. **TL Action.**

Item 5. Police report. It was noted that there was no Police representation and no report provided.

Item 6. Minutes of last meeting. The Minutes from the August meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Alan Lawrence; seconded by Betty Wright.

Item 7. Matters arising, not on the agenda. (1) Ardgay Station anniversary. Secretary hoped to have more information in the next day or so. **(2) Manse Road and other pavements.** Cllr Farlow advised that TECS does not have enough staff on the squads and that there is no flexibility in the work programme, e.g. inability to switch between jobs when other factors/weather intervene/s. Cllrs are trying to implement a change to these procedures. Budget cuts also affect prioritising of work. A designated TECS representative from the CC was urged by GF with DL agreeing to take on this role. All TECS issues will now be channelled through him to THC. More near misses have occurred at the Station junction. A mini roundabout is suggested again as being a possible step in avoiding a serious accident. DL will liaise with John Clark, THC Community Works Officer in Bonar Bridge. **DL Action. (3) Broadband.** A brief discussion recorded the recent poor service of both speed and connection with many dropouts. **(4) Bus timetables at bus stop.** MT will chase up new ones which were promised by July. **MT Action. (5) Village clean-up day.** **Agenda item** for October meeting. **TL Action. (6) Data Protection mandate.** Treasurer has not completed the form; awaiting further information. **(7) Tenants' meeting.** Arranged for 19th September at 6.30pm in Bonar Bridge Hall this meeting is open to THC tenants and those living in housing previously owned by THC.

Item 8. Secretary's report. (TL) Nothing of note.

Item 9. Treasurer's report. (AL) Treasurer's Account balance stands at £1587.15 with one outstanding cheque of £100.80. Projects Account balance is £4419.85 which includes £2500 received from Beinn nan Oighrean. The Toilets Account balance is £409.65 with one outstanding cheque for £189.00. Treasurer will write to THC requesting that the grant for the Toilets Account be paid now and in future paid at the start of the season. All THC grants are paid into the Projects Account and AL will request again that they are paid to the appropriate accounts (Treasurer's or Toilets) instead. **AL Action.** Mr MacLaren stated that the toilets are maintained to a very high standard and requested that Jeanie Sparling be commended for her excellent work. This was agreed and also Jeanie's fine work with the floral

displays was noted with appreciation. MT requested that a new sign be erected in advance of the toilet facility at South Bonar to give adequate indication of its position. **GF Action.**

Item 10. Correspondence. Incoming mail included (i) the Community Transport Consultation which came in too late for any CC member to attend; (ii) Sutherland/East Ross District Partnership meetings which gave rise to discussion indicating the reason behind Ardgay being included in East Ross rather than Sutherland. This is based on the associated school groups which, with Tain as the designated feed secondary school for Ardgay pupils, takes Ardgay into East Ross District Partnership. The CC should engage in this through Cllr Hugh Morrison. (iii) North West & Central Ward Forum to be held in Lairg on 26th October when the subject matter is Police & Fire Services. Further discussion to be scheduled for the October CC meeting to establish points which should be raised, most notably why the Ambulance Service is not included in the Forum. **Agenda item/TL Action.** (iv) Community Council Evaluation 2013. Large document now available giving feedback. (v) THC Quality Awards 2013. Nominations were suggested for John Clark, Community Works Officer, TECS, Bonar Bridge and the Ardgay Roads Depot Team. **TL Action.** (vi) Highland Road Safety Seminar, now scheduled for 22nd November, to be discussed at CC October meeting. **Agenda item/TL Action.** Other incoming correspondence noted referred to the SSE Depot Doors Open Day in Inverness on Sept 10th, supplementary information from Wind Energy regarding Glenmorie Windfarm (passed to BW) and the receipt from Scottish Right of Way Society for membership subscription (passed to AL).

Item 11. Cycle ramp at Invershin. It is understood a meeting is proposed to be attended by THC, A&DCC, Creich CC and the fabricator of the ramp but as yet no details of date or time are available.

Item 12. Falls of Shin update. Cllr Farlow advised THC has made continuous requests of Balnagown Estate to remove or update the brown signage throughout area. As stated previously THC will not erect temporary toilets as there are four sets of toilets with ten miles of the site. CC members are conscious of a possible Environmental Health issue and urged GF to have THC use this legislation to make the Estate take action to provide temporary toilet facilities.

Item 13. Core Path – Ardgay Hill. Cllr Farlow advised that landowner Mr Calum Macrae has indicated he is happy to work with the CC on this. Mr Waite from Dingwall has yet to be in touch.

Item 14. Windfarms update. SSE Achany. Panel meeting held last week at which several awards were made, recipients still to be advised. Discussion covered the new arrangements for the three way splitting of the funds. Three new apprenticeships were approved, details not given tonight. **Beinn Tharsuinn.** Nothing relevant. **Beinn an Oighrean.** See above. **Braemore.** PLI awaited. **Coire na Cloiche.** Meeting with Halls Committees has been postponed; a new date will be set. **Glenmorie.** Scottish Government Recorder's site visit on 10th September. **Glencassley.** PLI awaited. **E.ON Rosehall.** Panel meeting held last week when several awards were made; recipients still to be advised. **Sallachy.** Passed by THC now at Scottish Government. Developers questioning SNH Wild Lands designation procedures.

Item 15. Easter Fearn – proposed Hydro. Plans were passed round. CC will apply to Planning applicant for consideration for community benefit to Ardgay. **DHMT Action.**

Item 16. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust update. Projects continue as per Development Officer's report last month. Key Commercial Services in Ardgay is to cease trading at the end of September. KoSDT hopes to maintain its office in the KCS building and perhaps continue to provide some of the same services.

Item 17. Highland Councillor's report. Cllr Farlow advised that the Citizens' Panel is being well received – a report is available on THC website. 50% of Panel members return opinion forms. CC concerned that THC may see this as a means of establishing public opinion in future.

Item 18. Newsletter distribution. Copies given to distributors at the end of the meeting.

Item 19. Any other competent business. (1) SSE Community at Heart scheme. TL offered to enquire as to whether this scheme might be of use in helping to solve the problem of the footpath at Oakwood Place. **TL Action.** **(2) Mr MacLaren** reported that the trees and bushes at the railway bridge have overgrown to the extent they present a serious sightlines obstruction. They should be cut back to clear 50 yards on either side of the bridge. Secretary will contact Network Rail. **TL Action.** **(2) Agenda.** BW welcomed the new layout of the agenda with clear spacing. She also recorded for the Register of Interests that she no longer works for Highland Council. **(3) Poor support for CC.** The apparent lack of interest in, or wish to engage with, the CC by the public was once again bemoaned by members. **(4) Community notice boards at new cycle shop/café.** KoSDT is supplying a notice board for community use. All agreed to fund the Planning application costs. **(5) Donation to Church Hall.** A donation of £10 was approved with regard to the recent use of the Church Hall for a CC meeting. **AL Action.**

Item 20. Date of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Monday 14th October at 7pm in Ardgay Public Hall. Treasurer submitted his apologies for that meeting and that there will be no financial statement available.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Item 21. Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm grant applications (private session)

There were no applications to discuss this month, therefore no separate minute is provided.

Meeting closed 9.35pm.