

Ardgay & District Community Council



Approved Minutes of AGM held on Monday, 13th June 2016 at 7.00pm in Ardgay Hall

Present: Elected members: Betty Wright, Chair (BW), Silvia Muras, Vice Chair (SM), Marion Turner, Treasurer (MT), Sheila Lall (SL), Andy Wright (AW)

Also present: Highland Councillor George Farlow (GF), Phil Olson (PO)

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Apologies: Leslie Pope, Secretary (LP), Rob Pope (RP)

Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies/(see above) The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

Item 3. Minutes of last AGM. The Minutes of the last AGM held on Monday 8th June 2015 were accepted as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Marion Turner; seconded: Betty Wright.

Item 4. Chairperson's report. (BW) I have been chairperson of the cc since first meeting of the newly convened council in March. The previous cc was dissolved at end of Nov 2015 following elections earlier in the month when not enough people came forward as candidates, so the cc remained in abeyance until another election was called early in 2016 when there were sufficient numbers to form a new council following an uncontested election. Our first meeting of the new council comprising Betty Wright, Silvia Muras, Marion Turner, Sheila Lall, Rob Pope & Andy Wright was held in March, when we welcomed Leslie Pope as an associate member and Mary Goulder agreed to continue as our invaluable minutes secretary. Mary also keeps us up to date with minutes of Creich & Lairg ccs, who also receive minutes from this cc.

I would like to thank the members of the previous cc – Alan Lawrence, Phil Olson, Bob Sendall, Theresa Langley & David Hannah – who for many years served as chairperson & represented the community on a number of local organisations. The current community council has not been able to send representatives to all of these groups, so we hope that others attending will be able to report back on items of note which should be shared with our community. We do continue to have reps on the E.ON Rosehall/ SSE Achany windfarm community benefit panel, the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust and the Beinn Tharsuinn community benefit.

The current cc is a good balance of previous members, who give a sense of continuity & new members who bring a fresh perspective. It is good to have representatives from a wide area of our patch – indeed the only area not represented is the village of Ardgay! As the cc is not up to its full complement, the opportunity is still open for others to join us.

Communication is key to the functioning of the cc. I see the community council as a vehicle with which local residents can raise issues which affect our community which can then be raised with the relevant public bodies, primarily the Highland Council. To that end I would like to thank our 3 local councillors, Linda, Hugh & George – particularly the latter who attends most of our meetings & raises issues with & answers questions about THC. We communicate info to residents via newsletter – Silvia Muras continues as editor; Facebook – recently set up by Leslie Pope; website – thanks to Phil Olson who has agreed to continue with this meanwhile – we welcome dialogue via newly organised Saturday chats in Ardgay café, & of course our regular meetings. It would be grand to see an increased attendance at these events.

There have been no new windfarm projects consented in our area over the last year – indeed THC has raised objections to several. This cc maintains a neutral stance regarding these planning applications – reflecting the varied opinions of our residents, but it cannot be denied that the community benefit funds have had a large positive impact to our area & I personally can't help thinking that the move towards shared ownership being offered by the latest projects would have had an even greater impact.

The development officer post at the KoSDT is currently funded by 'windfarm' money and Helen Houston has made very effective use of community benefit grants from EON, SSE & Beinn Tharsuinn to leverage in many times the amounts in inward grants to fund several large ongoing projects e.g. Shin Falls & Ardgay Regeneration Project. These already have made an impact by providing local employment & both will continue to do so for many years. KoSDT also has other projects running – Greening Kyle (now finished), Cosy Homes ES, KAT as well as taking

forward the community broadband initiative that should help broadband reach the parts that BT can't get to and organising other local events – including this weekend's Queens birthday celebration street party.

Numerous other projects also benefit from funding including our local community wood – the Gearrhoille – refurbishment of village halls, supporting Gala Week.

The cc continues to ensure the village flower tubs are maintained – the Growing Group has taken on the task this year; and the Xmas lights will be discussed at our next meeting. The toilets in Ardgay remain open & looked after by Jeannie Sparling – a big thank you to her for this. We also will be involved in addressing opportunities offered by the NC500 route, helping to ensure that local attractions are not ignored.

We look forward to the challenges of the coming year when we will all endeavour to serve our local community. Non- community project – Carbisdale – fell through – local people doing it for themselves – NC500 opportunities.

Item 5. Treasurer's report (MT). The audited accounts were approved and will now be submitted to THC to trigger the annual grant payment. **MT Action.** Report below:

Following CC elections in February 2016 there was a change of Treasurer. I would like to record my thanks to Alan Lawrence who was Treasurer for two previous councils including the greater part of the past financial year. He handed on the accounts restructured, up to date and well organised which made the job of taking over the Treasurership and preparing the annual accounts so much easier.

Last year the CC altered the way it reports its accounts coming into line with the preferred HC format. One advantage of this is that it is now much easier to see how the CC balance is made up.

The accounts show that the CC has a balance of £12354.84 of which £11731.32 are restricted funds.

By far the biggest component of the balance is the money held by the CC which comes from the BNO windfarm benefit which is there to be disbursed to community groups through the CC's Small Grants Applications. The accounts show that five awards were made totalling £950.

Each year the CC is given two grants from THC. One is to carry out the running of the CC and the other pays for the caretaking of the Ardgay Toilet. It is important that the level of these grants is maintained as any decrease would adversely affect the work of the CC and the level of service to the Toilets. The figures show that the CC stayed within its budget for administration - this was helped by the gap for elections - but a slight overspend on toilet caretaking was incurred.

The overall balance also includes grants and awards which the CC has applied for on its own behalf for particular purposes. Of the BTWF award £878.48 remains.

During financial year 15-16 the award from the EON windfarm fund for the production of the newsletter came to an end. Because the CC considers it important that this newsletter is delivered free to every household in the A&D CC area the CC will now look to make applications to secure further funding to continue the production of the newsletter. It is gratifying to note however, that revenue from sales, donations and advertising is increasing year on year.

Item 6. Election of Office Bearers 2016-17. All members of the Community Council stood down and Councillor Farlow took the chair for the purpose of electing the Chair. He expressed his enjoyment in attending the CC meetings but stated that this would be his last time of chairing the AGM elections as he stands down from office next year.

Betty Wright was proposed to continue as Chair; proposed: Marion Turner; seconded: Sheila Lall.

Silvia Muras was proposed to continue as Vice Chair; proposed: Andy Wright; seconded: Marion Turner.

Marion Turner was proposed to continue as Treasurer; proposed: Sheila Lall; seconded: Betty Wright.

Leslie Pope was proposed to continue as Secretary; proposed: Marion Turner; seconded Sheila Lall.

Phil Olson agreed to continue to maintain the CC website and was warmly thanked for his work on it.

Sylvia Muras was proposed to continue as Newsletter Editor; proposed by Betty Wright; agreed by all.

Mary Goulder was proposed to continue as Minutes Secretary; proposed: Silvia Muras and agreed by all.

All proposed accepted the positions; LP had indicated her acceptance, should she be nominated, prior to the meeting. Any other responsibilities within the CC will continue as before, by unanimous agreement.

Item 7. Any other competent business. None raised.

Item 8. Date and time of next AGM. This will be on 12th June 2017.

Meeting closed at 7.25pm.

Minutes approved 12/06/2017