

# Ardgay & District Community Council



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## Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 13th June 2016 in Ardgay Public Hall at 7.00pm

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

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

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

**Police Scotland:** None present **Minutes Secretary:** Mary Goulder

**Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies** (as above). Chair Betty Wright welcomed everyone to this meeting which followed immediately on the closure of the AGM.

**Item 3. Minutes of last meeting.** The minutes of the May meeting were approved as a true and accurate record, proposed: Marion Turner; seconded: Silvia Muras.

### **Item 4. Matters arising/updates.**

- (a) Bank of Scotland, Bonar Bridge. The 26<sup>th</sup> May saw the 'Open Day' in Bonar Bridge at which members of the public were invited to give their views on the service of the Bonar Branch, now reduced in opening hours to five on Tuesdays. BW attended and stressed the community wish to return to a two day service and the concern that ever-reducing footfall due to the few hours available would inevitably lead to complete closure of the branch. If more hours cannot be provided, the very least the Bank can do to supply service to customers is to install an ATM once again in the village. Out of shop hours it is impossible to obtain cash locally with the nearest ATM being in Lairg. The campaign to improve this situation continues.
- (b) WiFi Ardgay Hall. The Hall Committee is awaiting outcome of applications for funding and is awaiting installation by BT.
- (c) Broadband. Project still awaits BT survey regarding where it will roll-out service.
- (d) NC500 route. BW and AW plan to attend the meeting in Lairg tomorrow night, aimed at encouraging local businesses to get together to promote the area through the NC 500 website and information leaflets. Existing 'Meanderings' leaflet does this for other areas with information about 'off route' buildings of interest, etc. Something similar could be produced for this area with details of accommodation, restaurants/cafes, etc.
- (e) Flower tubs. The Growing Group will take on care of the tubs, working with Jeanie Sparling. Planting expected to take place this week.
- (f) Playpark bins & dog bag dispensers. THC has confirmed it will not supply free dog waste bags once present stocks are exhausted. Bags are on sale in Ardgay Stores. It is understood that THC does now empty the bins at the playpark.

**Item 5. Police report.** CCs were disappointed that no police officers attended the meeting. The report from the officers after last month's meeting indicated that they had spoken to the local resident whose parked vehicle/s cause obstruction on the road approaching Gledfield Primary School. The resident indicated that he does this as a 'traffic calming measure' to reduce speeding but CCs feel the obstruction causes more harm than good. The pavement runs out at this point on one side of the road and children must cross to reach the school. Their lines of sight are obscured by the parked vehicle/s. Also the parked vehicle/s cause traffic to be on the wrong side of the road when passing which in turn raises the expectations of collision. This area should fall under the 'Safer Routes to School' regulations but this issue heightens dangers and does nothing to promote safety. Not all the appropriate yellow line markings are in place on the road. Cllr Farlow will follow up on this. The proximity to the junction also means that parking must flaunt the Highway Code Rule 243, '... you should not park opposite or within 10metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised

parking space.” You could be given a fixed penalty notice (FPN) and fined under the offence of ‘unnecessary obstruction’.

Cllr Farlow will advise CC as to who in THC can act on this issue and BW will ask the Head Teacher to report the problem to the ‘Safer Routes to School’ team. **GF/BW Action.**

**Item 6. Secretary’s report.** (LP) Correspondence. All relevant incoming mail had been circulated to members.

**Item 7. Treasurer’s report.** (MT) The May 2016 balance at the bank is £15,369.52 of which £14,969.10 are restricted funds. The Admin/General Fund has £400.42 available to carry out the business of the CC. The balances of the restricted funds are: Toilet Caretaking - £1464, BTWF Community Projects - £695.26, Newsletter - £2,974.84, BrO - £9,035 and E.ON Path - £800.

**Item 8. Planning issues.** Nothing relevant.

**Item 9. Newsletter.** (SM) New issue available tonight and taken for distribution by CC members. Excellent issue once again with an increase in advertising. Copies are now available in Ardgay Store.

**Item 10. Website & Facebook.** Facebook contacts increasing; LP, SL and SM all contributing to content. The report of the recent fire in Gearrhoille Wood on their website was of great interest with 500-600 views.

**Item 11. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust report.** (MT/AW) The street party at Bradbury Centre to mark the Queen’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday was well attended and successful. All other projects making progress. New Scot Grad placement has begun. CHESS is gathering much useful information regarding local issues with fuel poverty.

**Item 12. Highland Council.** (GF) Sutherland County Committee recently established has a limited remit so far covering local community services such as verge cutting and winter maintenance. CCs reported verge cutting required on many single track roads; cutting should be undertaken particularly where lines of sight are compromised. Sub-contracting locally could help alleviate this problem. THC restructure continues with the need recognised not to replace those posts recently cut. A 50% cut is expected in the provision of public toilets over the next two years with the Ardgay facility included on the list. CC will have the opportunity to comment as THC is duty bound to consult. This facility, maintained by the CC, is the only one locally which can accommodate tourist coach parties and is of strategic importance. Discuss again after summer break. **(September agenda item)** GF advised that next year the Bonar Bridge Gaelic Medium unit will have only one pupil and therefore will be moved to within the Dornoch facility. New clustering arrangements for schools will come into place next term with Gledfield, Edderton and Tain Primary cluster feeding into Tain, and Bonar Bridge with Rosehall feeding to Golspie. At some future point the Rectors of the secondary schools may take over the Primary Schools also. Secondary schools are already closing early at 1pm on Fridays.

**Item 13. Windfarms.** The proposed amendments to the MOU of the SSE & E.ON Community Windfarm Panel were explained and approved, proposed: MT seconded: BW. Foundation Scotland will be advised. **BW Action.**

**Item 14. Any other competent business.** (1) The first ‘drop-in’ session saw a couple of folk stop by; it is hoped that word of mouth will encourage further contacts at future sessions.

**Item 17. Date and time of next/future meeting/s.** There being no meeting in July the next meeting will be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August at 7pm in the Ardgay Public Hall. BW submitted apologies; SM will take the chair.

#### **Beinn Tharsuinn/Beinn nan Oighrean Community Benefit awards.**

At the private meeting following the CC’s monthly meeting, the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust application to the Beinn Tharsuinn Fund for funding towards the final costs of purchasing the site for the Falls of Shin development was approved in principal pending further information from the applicant. It was also agreed that the saving recently made by the Kyle of Sutherland Angling Association should be retained by the group and used to its benefit. **MG Action.**

Two awards were made from the Beinn an Oighrean Fund – Gearrhoille Community Wood Ardgay, £250 towards costs of community activities; Ardgay & District Community Council, £198.80 to provide a projector and screen for the Ardgay Public Hall Committee Room. Thanks for help with this project received from the Hall Committee. **MT Action.**

Meeting closed 10pm.