

# Ardgay & District Community Council



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## Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in Ardgay Hall at 7.00pm

**Present: Elected, co-opted and associate members:** Betty Wright, Chair (BW), Silvia Muras, Vice Chair (SM), Leslie Pope, Secretary (LP), Sheila Lall, (SL), Andy Wright (AW), Rob Pope (RP)

**Apologies:** Marion Turner, Treasurer (MT)

**Also present:** Highland Councillor George Farlow (GF)

**Police Scotland:** PCs Angus Morrison and Steve MacKenzie

**Minutes Secretary:** Mary Goulder

**Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies** (as above). Chair Betty Wright opened the meeting and welcomed the return of Rob Pope wishing him a continued good recover from recent surgery.

**Item 5. Police report.** The report itemised one wildlife crime, one theft, one medical matter, one advice call and two sudden deaths. The public are reminded that over the coming festive period the drink driving campaign and also that of use of mobile phones while driving. Roadside parking issues near Gledfield School were noted. Also the regular speeding log lorries over the Struie road – one recent incident resulted in the wing mirror of a car being damaged in passing. The officers noted these points and with thanks from the CC, they left at 7.08pm

**Item 3. Minutes of last meeting.** The minutes of the September meeting were approved as a true and accurate record, proposed: Sheila Lall; seconded: Andy Wright.

**Item 4. Matters arising/updates.** (1) Christmas lights. BW has been in discussion with Paul and Vicki Whittock who remain enthusiastic to put up six festive lights in the village. Also the lights can be stored in their garage when not in use. Robbie Gunn, THC Road Lighting, has indicated there should be no ongoing costs. AW confirmed that there is access to the electricity supply linked to the street lights where the village Christmas tree is erected. He also repeated his offer to supply the tree. The purchase of new professional white tree lights at a cost of £245 for a long string was approved.

**AWMT Action.** The first week in December was agreed as the time to erect the tree. The Magical Wood ceremony at Gearrhoille Wood is scheduled for December 11<sup>th</sup>. (2) Rotary Club Fund. RP will gather costs for options regarding a new bench. The picnic bench in Gearrhoille Wood needs to be replaced, perhaps an option. **RP Action.** (3) Finches Playpark. Steps are still taped off. Andy Shaw, THC Waste Management Officer, will be asked to replace novelty bin with a wheelie bin and to ensure it is regularly emptied. **BW Action.** (4) Culrain Station. It was agreed to write to Abellio regarding the present issues. A Hi-Trans meeting is scheduled in Inverness for 16<sup>th</sup> December, MT and PO hope to attend. CC will aim to discuss issues with MP Paul Monaghan. **BWLP Action.** (5) Toilets. Jeanie Sparling has resigned as cleaner/caretaker therefore a new person is sought before next season. An item will be placed in the Newsletter and a thank you card will be sent to Jeanie. The facility is now closed for the winter. **SMBW Action.** (6) An email received from the Hall Committee indicates that it has a surplus of £400 in hand from a recent Beinn Tharsuinn award and it requests permission to put this towards engaging a reliable acoustic consultant. Approved. **LP Action.** (7) Email received from Steve Copley regarding tree damage to a dyke at Croick cemetery. John Clark, THC CWO, is aware of the issue and is dealing with it.

**Item 6. Archiving of CC documents.** It is thought that there is sufficient cupboard space in the Hall. Also it was suggested that documents could be stored on 'cloud space'. PO to be asked for an opinion. Discuss at a future meeting.

### Agenda item

**Item 7. Chairperson's report.** BW discussed the length of recent CC meetings and the need to find ways to share information ahead of meetings in order that discussions can be more focussed. It is understood that the newer CC members find discussions/explanations helpful especially when relevant historical information is shared. Items which can be circulated ahead of meetings should be read as part of preparation in order to minimise the time spent in face to face discussion when appropriate.

Minutes approved 12/12/2016

**Item 8. Secretary's report.** (1) Email received regarding timber extraction route from Garvary wood via Kincardine. BW will circulate to CCs. Also for Newsletter. **BWSM Action.** (2) Cromarty CC sent email regarding ship to ship oil transfers in the Cromarty Firth. An online Survey Monkey has been set up and individuals should make their own responses on the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GKFBPN8> (3) Michael Baird has emailed regarding a possible local collection/presentation to Doris Calder. It was agreed that this should be a community-led project and not initiated by the CC. BW will reply to MB. **BW Action.** (4) A system will be put in place to acknowledge receipt of emails during the 'gap' months in the CC meeting schedule. **LP Action.** (5) £20 annual renewal of CC subscription to Scotways now due. Approved. **MT Action.**

**Item 9. Treasurer's report. (MT)** The October 2016 balance at the bank is £14,794.54 of which £13,994.18 are restricted funds. The Admin/General Fund has £800.36 available to carry out the business of the CC. The balances of the restricted funds are: Toilet Caretaking - £330.00; BTWF - Community Projects - £414.53; Newsletter - £1669.45; BNO - £10,780.20; EON Path - £800. GF commented that Creich CC now circulates its financial report by email prior to each meeting thus reducing the time spent on it at meetings and maintain a level of confidentiality regarding actual transactions where this is appropriate.

**Item 10. Planning issues.** Nothing relevant.

**Item 11. Newsletter.** (SM) PayPal account is now set up so that the public may donate directly. Automatic response also being set up. 25<sup>th</sup> November is deadline for next issue. Interest in purchasing copies expressed from Bonar Bridge area. For a trial period starting with the spring issue a few copies will be placed in the Bonar Post Office. GF offered to send SM documents pertaining to the Sutherland Committee.

**Item 12. Website & Facebook.** SM updating. Discussion regarding who should have access to these to keep up to date.

**Item 13. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust report.** (AW) Discussions ongoing regarding the naming of the new development on Lady Ross site. Lady Ross Square favoured by CC. This will be passed to the Ward Manager and also should be an item in the Newsletter. **BWSM Action.** A steel shell will be erected inside the barn to house a new business hub. Other projects all progressing well. CHESS has highlighted serious fuel poverty issues in the local districts. The project is gaining awards across the country; local tradesmen are advising customers to contact CHESS when relevant. A Community Shop and cafe is now open on Mondays in Bonar Bridge Hall.

**Item 14. Highland Council** (GF) The CC's priority list has helped to highlight six areas of concern including Broadband, verge cutting, and cycle routes. It is hoped that THC will acquire suitable vehicles to carry out a sensible verge cutting programme. Branches on roadside trees often cause issues but these are often actually on private land. Community Partnership Committee, chaired by Police Scotland and covering wide range of issues will meet next in January at Drummie. GF will send dates to CC. The pump is still awaited to return the South Bonar toilet facility to service. The middle section will be accessible by use of a key kept at the local library. GF has supplied the link to the Scottish Parliament Rural Development and Connectivity Committee; SM will post this on Facebook. Individuals are encouraged to write to this committee regarding the failure of BT and HIE to progress an efficient Superfast Broadband service in rural areas. The Scottish Government consultation regarding Forestry has now finished.

**Item 15. Broadband.** MP Paul Monaghan has requested a meeting with CC on 10<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm in Ardgay. Sec will confirm with MP's secretary and request a list of topics to be discussed. CC intends to raise the Broadband issue.

**LP Action.** AW will research other third party provider options, other than BT. Medical issues in rural areas which can be helped by an efficient and reliable Internet connection will be highlighted in discussions and emails. **AW Action.**

**Item 16. Windfarms. Kyle of Sutherland Apprenticeship Scheme** – next meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November. Chair reiterated CC's neutral standpoint on developments, reflecting the various opinions held within the community, while maintaining a positive position regarding the usage/distribution of community benefits from operating windfarms. BW will attend the upcoming Pre-exam meeting for Caplich as an individual not as a CC representative. Both Creich and Ardgay CCs have signed documents with Muirhall (Caplich) regarding shared ownership.

**Item 17. Any other competent business.** (1) With regard to the possible removal of the payphone at Culrain BW has commented on THC website that this should not take place until mobile connectivity is greatly improved. (2) SL advised that she is now Chair of Gledfield Primary School Parent Council.

**Item 18. Date and time of next meeting.** The meeting will be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm in Ardgay Hall. Room to be booked for this and upcoming meetings.

Minutes approved 12/12/2016

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

At the private meeting following the CC's monthly meeting, application by the Ardgay Public Hall Committee was awarded £1700 from the Beinn Tharsuinn Fund towards insulation improvements to the committee room.

All applicants will be advised. **MG Action.**

Meeting closed 9.08pm.