

# Ardgay & District Community Council



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## Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018 in Ardgay Hall at 7.00pm

Approved 10/12/2018

**Present:** Betty Wright, Chair (BW), Silvia Muras, Vice Chair (SM), Marion Turner, Secretary/Treasurer (MT), Rob Pope (RP), Buster Crabb (BC)

**Invited guest:** Chris Gordon, Factor, Balnagown Estate (CG), Malcolm Morrison, Forestry Manager (MM)

**Also present:** 15 members of the public

**Police Scotland:** None present

**Minutes Secretary:** Mary Goulder

**Apologies:** Highland Councillor Kirsteen Currie (KC)

**Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies** (as above). Chair Betty Wright welcomed everyone, especially the members of the public present to meet the guest speaker.

**Item 3. Guest speaker: Chris Gordon, Factor, Balnagown Estate re planting Jubilee Hill.** CG began by introducing himself and MM. Chris has been in post for one year. The land proposed for planting is a 100-acre site more than half of which is presently regenerating as natural woodland of mostly self-seeded Scots pine. A map was passed around. Five power lines cross the area which also contains Core Paths. There will be no change to the Core Paths and the area around the Fort will not be planted. Recorded archaeological sites will be respected and unchanged. Native species, mostly Scots pine but with native hardwoods, will be used. The plantation is not a commercial one and is to remain in perpetuity. Planting density is to be 1600 per hectare which will not make a thick woodland. A 9-ton digger will create the mounds for each tree which will then be hand planted. This is expected to take about 2 – 3 weeks work. Access for machinery will be from the main road where the Core Path comes off the hill. From the floor strong objections were raised with fears that planting will be too close to the houses and sunlight will be blocked from November to March. MM stated larger buffer zones could be created to alleviate this problem with grading of trees by height from the edge of the plantation. Loss of amenity as views are obscured in time was also quoted as an objection. The next step is to revise the plan following this feedback and discuss further with the owners. A final plan will be submitted to Forestry Commission which would be followed by a formal 28-day consultation period. The CC will comment reflecting local opinions at that point. CG was thanked from the floor for providing this opportunity for discussion with the residents. CG and MM left at 7.55pm.

The meeting reconvened after a short break at 8.05pm.

**Item 4. Minutes of last meeting.** The minutes of the August meeting were approved as a true and accurate record, proposed: Marion Turner; seconded: Betty Wright.

**Item 7. Chairperson's report – proposal to subsidise CC costs.** (BW) All admin budget will be used by the end of this meeting. At discussion with Ward Manager Phil Tomalin, CC members made clear that an honorarium system for administration is no longer feasible. If THC was to pay an hourly rate for secretarial work, it would be probably a maximum of £10 per hour. The suggestion was therefore made to top up to the £15 per hour presently paid for this work from the windfarm community benefit fund. Chair will advise THC Cllrs and Ward Manager that the money has run out. Administration of community benefit and windfarm liaison work is now one of the most important parts of the CC work. The proposal to use BTWF funds and BnO funds to provide top up was agreed.

**Item 5. Matters arising.** (1) Locality Plan, Martin Thomsen will attend December meeting to update. (2) Carbisdale Trails. Matt Dent, THC Core Paths Officer/Forestry Commission may help CC to find out if anything is happening. (3) Recycling Point. The bins have not yet been returned to the South Bonar Industrial Estate. (4) Ardgay/Bonar straight. Chair will write again re the proposal to introduce a speed restriction along the length of the straight as well as extending the 30mph limits at each end. Also check if the regulation covering distance between villages is still in place. (5) Speeding is again frequent past the school. People should take registration numbers and report to police, giving date and time, on 101. (6) VG-ES. No update available. (7) THC Community Council review. All CCs encouraged to make

individual submissions. (8) TECS. Street light outside toilets is not working. To be reported via THC website. Chair will action all points. **BW Action.**

**Item 6. Police report.** Report received by email. In total: 6 incidents comprising: speeding - 1; information - 2; child protection - 1; abandoned 999 - 1; domestic - 1. Nothing was noted to pass back to the police.

**Item 8. Secretary's report.** All relevant email correspondence has been circulated. (1) Toilets management. How this is to operate next year must be negotiated with THC. Essential supplies should be provided by/acquired through THC as it can buy in bulk with the obvious savings. The donations box is bringing in money towards costs of the caretaker. Secretary will liaise with Debbie Sutton, THC and THC Councillors. **MT Action.**

**Item 9. Treasurer's report.** (MT) The 21 September 2018 balance at the bank is £18,818.82 of which £18,502.16 are restricted funds. The CC Admin fund has a balance of £40.78 and the Windfarm Admin fund has a balance of £275.88 The balances of the restricted funds are: Toilet Caretaking - £450.31; BTWF - Community Projects - £1,545.42; Newsletter - £2,842.05; BNO - £13,493.98; EON Path - £170.40.

**Item 10. Correspondence/Matters raised by local residents.** (1) All received emails have been circulated. (2) Air ambulance landing spot. There are enough local areas available. In some cases, patients can be winched into the helicopter above. (2) Carbisdale trails. See Item 5. (3) Seat in front of Oakwood Place. No update available. (4) Wreath laying on Remembrance Sunday. BC will do this for the CC. RP will also attend as a member of the Rotary Club. (4) Community clean-up. This has already taken place. (5) Poling station review. Secretary will reinforce the decision to keep this at the Ardgay Public Hall. (6) Wild land. It was noted that there is a motion being put to Scottish Government to change the status of Wild Land areas as a Planning consideration - giving it similar status to National Scenic Areas. (7) Flow Country. Also noted, as being proposed as a World Heritage Site. (9) Bonfire wood. Via the Facebook page - firewood is available via Fiona Proctor. (10) Playpark slide. The slide has been damaged. THC will simply remove and not replace. Parents will be encouraged to seek funding for new equipment. (11) Blind spot. The plant tubs at the corner beside the Hall have grown and could soon obscure sight lines. **BW Action.** (12) Royal Mail mailbox. This requires maintenance. To be reported to Royal Mail. **BW/MT Action.**

**Item 11. Regular updates:**

(1) **Planning.** Noted that Coul Links application has been called in by Scottish Government. Application by Ardgay Game raised no objections.

(2) **Newsletter.** Issue no 41 is now distributed. It features forty pages and there are new contributors and advertisers. Next deadline is 21<sup>st</sup> November and the winter edition should be out for distribution around the 15<sup>th</sup> December. The Editor has received reports of people not getting the newsletter. If anyone is aware of someone who lives in the area who is not receiving a copy, contact the Editor on 01863 766690.

(3) **Windfarms.** (1) Sallachy. The MOU has been received. All approved. **BW Action.** (2) Meall Buidhe. Owing to the size, this application will be dealt with by THC.

**Item 12. Highland Council.** THC Community Council Review. See item 5 (6). The deadline for responses has been extended to 2<sup>nd</sup> November. (2) At last Sutherland Community Partnership meeting the Children's Plan was discussed but it does not seem to be accessible anywhere.

**Item 13. AOCB.** (1) Christmas tree. A tree needs to be sourced, also volunteers to help with decorations. It is hoped to erect the tree around the 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> December. This will be posted on the Facebook page. **MT/BW/AW/SM Action.**

**Item 14. Date and time of next meeting.** The meeting will be held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at 7pm in **Ardgay Public Hall.** Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

**Private Session. Beinn Tharsuinn Community Benefit awards.** Application by Ardgay Public Hall received an award of £861 to cover costs of maintaining the Internet provision in the hall for the next two years. Application by Royal British Legion Scotland Creich and Kincardine Branch received £850 towards the planned WW1 Commemoration events. **MG Action.** Meeting closed 9.45pm.

List of names given by members of the public attending for Item 3.

Teresa Langley, Mary Stobo, Ann Renouf, Tony Osborne, Sue Osborne, Donald Brown, Catherine Brown, Jocky Hewitt, Rene Knott, Bill Knott, Helen Pollock, Chris Ladley, Iain Macgregor, Jack Edwards, Caroline Sale