

Ardgay & District Community Council



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Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 8th April 2019 in Ardgay Hall at 7.00pm

Minutes approved 10/06/2019

Present: Betty Wright, Chair (BW), Silvia Muras, Vice Chair (SM), Marion Turner, Secretary/Treasurer (MT), Andy Wright (AW), Rob Pope (RP)

Apologies: Buster Crabb (BC)

Also present: Highland Councillor Kirsteen Currie (KC), David Watson, Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (DW), Anna Patfield (AP)

Police Scotland: No representative

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder

Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies (as above). Chair Betty Wright opened the meeting.

Item 3. Minutes of last meeting. The minutes of the February meeting were approved as a true and accurate record, proposed: Marion Turner; seconded: Rob Pope.

Item 4. Matters arising. (1) Tree planting on Jubilee Hill. Secretary has had a reply from Amanda Ophoff, Forestry Commission Scotland stating that FC had met with estate factor who is to produce a revised plan and meet with local residents to discuss their concerns. A local resident reported that there are no Red Listed bird species nesting on the land at present. (2) Recycling point. THC Waste Manager has indicated that THC will resurface the area and, hopefully by the end of March, replace the bins at the South Bonar Industrial Estate. (3) Development at Port of Cromarty Firth. Secretary will now write to THC Acting Head of Roads, Joanne Sutherland, as no information has been forthcoming following her previous correspondence. (4) Bonar straight speed limit. As in (3) Acting Head of Roads will be contacted. Police and THC will be asked again regarding the speed survey. **BW Action.** (5) Ardgay toilets. Facility is open for the season, damaged lock and light fixed. THC will provide the consumables and bill CC. SM and MT were thanked for their efforts in getting the facility up and running.

Item 5. Police report. The police report, received by email after the meeting showed one fire call, eleven fixed penalties, one theft, two road safety matters and three domestic incidents.

Item 6. Newsletter. SM was thanked for her updating information on her proposal for a new local magazine. Two more issues of the A&DCC newsletter will be produced after which SM will stand down from the post of Editor. Further thanks and praise were recorded for her work in producing such an excellent publication over the last five years. Talks continue with KoSDT as to how the proposed magazine will come together, content, funding, etc.

Item 7. Chairperson's report. (BW) Jean Richardson will be asked if she is willing to take on the flower tubs again this season. £100 will be paid by the CC towards the costs for replanting, etc. **BW/MT Action.**

Item 8. Secretary's report. (MT) All relevant correspondence has been circulated. (1) Discussion regarding the BnO guidelines agreed to amend to include up to four grants of £250 per year towards training costs. The details will be ratified at the AGM in June. **BW/MT Action.** (2) Details recently sent by THC regarding CC elections in November will be published in the Newsletter. **SM Action.** (3) Deadline for CC Scheme Review is 31st May. MT stressed the importance of maintaining the current format for submission of annual accounts and will write to THC. **MT Action.** (4) Community transport Meeting to be held on 25th April. DW plans to attend if possible; BW may also. Transport is considered the biggest problem facing the area; many issues involved.

Item 8. Treasurer's report. (MT) The 26th March balance at the bank is £17,227.06 of which £17,088.26 are restricted funds. The CC Admin Fund has a balance of £53.76. The Windfarm Admin Fund has a balance of £85.04. The THC Toilet caretaking grant of £800 for April to August has been received. THC paid £440 in error which has to be repaid. The balances of the restricted funds are: £1,284.70 Toilet Caretaking (includes the £440 to be repaid); £1,441.53 - BTWF Community Projects; £2,281.25 Newsletter; £12,763.98 – Beinn nan Oighrean; £170.40 – E.ON Path. KC

advised that the annual grant for the coming year will be as last year, but the Ward Discretionary Budget will be larger. Treasurer advised that the annual end of year figures will be done following the receipt of the next bank statement.

Item 10. Correspondence/matters raised by local residents. (1) Nil of note.

Item 11. Regular updates: (1) Planning issues. Lairg 2 windfarm has submitted a full Planning application; 14 turbines and battery storage area.

(2) Newsletter. See Item 6.

(3) Broadband. Highland Wireless is planning to erect two transmission stations in Strathcarron and hopes to begin taking orders within the next few months.

(4) Windfarms. (1) Sallachy. Discussions continue regarding Community Ownership. KoSDT will assess the MOUs for both Community Benefit and Community Ownership thanks to funding to employ an expert. Next meeting in June. (2) Meall Buidhe, Croick. CC is not necessarily interested at this time in Community Ownership. DW will be given contact information for Angus Elder. **BW Action.**

(5) Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust. (DW) AGM was held last week and the annual report is available. The Trust and the community have felt severely the loss of the energy advice service due to lack of continued funding. The Trust is taking steps to improve its method of operating and communicating with the public.

Item 12. Highland Council. (KC) Cllr Currie recently attended the European Summit in Bucharest for the Committee of Regions. The knock-on effect of Brexit in Sutherland is worrying for European nationals living and working here. The Summit provided useful insights into European thinking on what may/may not happen. Scottish Government is working on a Rural Areas Bill. Concerns abound as most jobs are project, not core, funded meaning there are no careers. The rural areas need sustainable jobs. As yet there is no real evidence, other than anecdotal, of the benefit to the area of the NC 500. The issues with poor infrastructure, the quality of the roads, throughout Highland are being felt. There seems to have been no real understanding of the condition of the roads prior to the launch of the route. The number of second homes has greatly reduced those available for locals. KC also reported that THC has agreed to lobby the Scottish Government to build more nuclear reactors in Highland.

Lengthy discussion in Item 12 led into extended talks regarding the climate emergency. CC has produced and will submit a statement asking THC to declare a climate emergency. AP called on the CC to help pull local people/organisations together to brainstorm ideas, promote education, formulate energy saving schemes, etc. KC agreed to support such a plan; DW suggested windfarm companies could be encouraged to use innovative thinking and to invest in smart local energy use. SM will publish an item in the newsletter. AP will write to various local groups suggesting an initial meeting to gauge support and gather ideas/momentum. KC advised that THC have plans for a new waste facility at Longman site in Inverness. THC said "The Council is proposing that the Materials Recovery Facility proposed at the Longman within the current Planning Application will receive approximately 83,000 tonnes of green bin waste from throughout the Highlands. Recyclable material will be removed from this waste where possible, and the remaining waste material will be transported to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities in either the Central Belt of Scotland or the North East of England for final disposal..

.. we are investigating building our own Energy from Waste facility at the former Longman landfill site. However, I must emphasise that no decision has been taken on this, and there are a number of issues that will need to be addressed before any decision can be taken."

Item 13. Any other competent business. Questions were asked if any progress has been noted with work at Carbisdale Castle and the vague plans for benefits to the community which were proposed following the last change ownership. KC will make some enquiries and report back. **KC Action.**

Item 14. Date and time of next meeting. The meeting will be held on Monday 10th June at 7pm in Ardgay Hall. This will incorporate the AGM.

Item 14. Beinn Tharsuinn/Beinn nan Oighrean Community Benefit awards. Beinn nan Oighrean. At the private session following the main meeting application by Hair at the Barn was approved with an award of £200 towards training costs. CC has revised the rules concerning training costs allowing for up to four awards in any one year. The Ardgay Christmas Party application received funding of £250. **Beinn Tharsuinn.** £535 was awarded to the Kyle of Sutherland Gala Week towards this year's event; Ardgay & District Community Council's Small Projects Fund also receive funding of £2,000. The Kyle of Sutherland Hub awarded £1,000 towards Hub Holiday and After School Clubs. **MG/MT Action.**

Meeting closed 10pm.