

# Ardgay & District Community Council



[www.ardgayanddistrictcommunitycouncil.org.uk](http://www.ardgayanddistrictcommunitycouncil.org.uk)

## Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 in Ardgay Hall at 7.00pm

Minutes approved 12/08/2019

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

**Apologies:** Buster Crabb (BC), Rob Pope (RP)

**Also present:** Vicky and John Denniston, Lee McNeish (LMN)

**Police Scotland:** No representative

**Minutes Secretary:** Mary Goulder

**Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies** (as above). Chair Betty Wright opened the meeting which followed directly after the AGM.

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

**Item 4. Matters arising.** (1) Highland Council and Climate change. The CC has asked THC to declare a Climate Emergency. A motion on this subject was carried and a committee is being formed within THC. CC will monitor with interest. A local group, Planet Sutherland, has been set up aiming to spread awareness and action. At the April CC meeting Cllr Currie spoke about THC's Waste Management plans. It was agreed that the Waste Management Officer should be invited to the next CC meeting. A list of specific questions will be sent to him with the invitation to the August meeting. **BW Action.** (2) Recycling point. The bins are back in place. (3) Development at Port of Cromarty Firth. No reply as yet from Joanne Sutherland. Fears remain regarding the increase in traffic to and from Ardchronie Quarry though it is understood some of the required stone will be brought in by sea. (4) Bonar straight speed limit. The Hub should be the organisation to push forward the call for the speed reduction. Chair will liaise with Chair at The Hub and will also chase up THC with regard to the promised traffic survey. **BW Action.** (5) Tree planting on Jubilee Hill. No-one reporting back to CC. Secretary will write to MSP Gail Ross asking if any progress is being made. **MT Action.** (6) Ardgay toilets. The amenity is now open 24/7.

**Item 5. Police report.** No report received.

**Item 6. Chairperson's report.** (BW) BW and MT recently met Richard Gale, Chair of Sutherland County Committee. Discussion covered the CC Review which refers to procedural matters only. Other relevant issues are of transport, funding, website costs, and use of highland.gov email address by CCs to ease financial burden. Poverty Scotland organised a Community Transport meeting which MT and BW attended. The Locality Plan has highlighted the huge and widespread problems. AW and BW also attended a CARES Conference where they encountered many positive and creative ideas coming from many small groups throughout the country. A Health & Wellbeing meeting will be held on June 18<sup>th</sup> at Tain Royal Academy; BW plans to attend.

**Item 7. Secretary's report.** (MT) All relevant correspondence has been circulated.

**Item 8. Treasurer's report.** (MT) The 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019 balance at the bank is £16,434.66 of which £16,413.91 are restricted funds. The CC Admin fund has a balance of -£20.54. The Windfarm Admin fund has a balance of £41.29. The balances of the restricted funds are: Toilet caretaking £644.70; BTWF Community Projects £1,298.66; Newsletter £1,536.17; BnO £12,763.98; E.ON Path £170.40.

**Item 9. Correspondence/matters raised by local residents.** (1) Christmas lights. AW will put a piece in the Newsletter appealing for a Christmas Lights group to be set up; both Lairg and Creich have similar groups which seek funding for lights, maintenance, etc. A suggestion was made that local businesses and residences could do their own decorations/lights – perhaps a competition could be held for the best decorated/lit up.

**Item 10. Regular updates:** (1) Planning issues. Nil of note.

(2) Newsletter. Issue 44 will be delivered after 12<sup>th</sup> June. Editor is in ongoing discussions with KoSDT (see AGM report). She will attend Creich CC's meeting in June to appraise the members of her plans.

(3) Broadband. Highland Wireless is working in the Strathcarron area.

(4) Windfarms. Sallachy. Next meeting is in August when it is hoped the community benefit agreement will be signed. If the KoSDT enters into the Shared Ownership agreement it may be seen as supporting the planning application and no longer considered neutral. Lairg 2. Another meeting in June. Coire na Cloiche. Commissioning has commenced.

(5) Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust. LMN explained his role as a researcher conducting an evaluation of the Trust, its effectiveness, and the various projects past, present and future. He has found people in the community are confused about the Trust and its aims. Projects dealing with social isolation and food poverty are being addressed. More, clearer communication is needed between the Trust and the community. There are many fragile people in the area, the elderly in particular but also younger age groups. Major transport issues highlighted. LMN will report to the Trust after three months; the CC should be able to access his report, details of which should be fed back to Scottish Government.

**Item 11. Highland Council.** No report in KC's absence.

**Item 12. Any other competent business.** (1) (MT) Caithness & Sutherland Town Centre Strategy. In Sutherland this applies to Dornoch, Golspie and Brora and is open for consultation. Within the consultation is a reference to National Cycle Route 1 (NCR1). This well-established national cycle route currently comes along the B road behind Tain (the Scotsburn road) and then follows along the firth through Edderton to Ardgay. From there it goes to Culrain, over the viaduct to Invershin, past Falls of Shin to Lairg and then on to The Crask where there is an official marker post. Local businesses benefit from the many cyclists who follow this route and these cyclists make a significant contribution to the fragile local tourist economy. One of the proposals for Dornoch threatens this. Statements on pages 21 and 22 suggest that NCR1 should be diverted from its current route through the Kyle of Sutherland onto the A9 to go through Dornoch thus cutting out our area. This proposal fails to recognise the damaging effects that taking cyclists from the main NCR1 would have on the communities of Ardgay, Bonar Bridge and others. (For example, we have a bicycle shop/repair shop which gets business from NCR1). There is also the real risk that diverting cyclists off the NCR1 at Tain onto the A9 to go to Dornoch may result in their then following the A9 route to JOG rather than going up through the centre and north west of Sutherland (NCR1). This could only exacerbate the current A9/(NC500) problems. The Highland Council should not support diminishing the tourist assets of this area in order to support another, already tourist-rich, town. Secretary will highlight this issue to other local CCs and also write to the local Highland Councillors. **MT Action.** (2) CPR training. SM will liaise with Jason Gardiner, Scottish Fire Service to arrange a short refresher course. (3) Gledfield Primary School Parents group is concerned that the children have had seven different teachers in the last two years and that the current teacher will be leaving at the end of the teaching year, even though the teacher and parents are keen for her to stay. SM will keep the CC informed. **SM Action.** (3) It was suggested that the Kyle of Sutherland Gala Week should re-consider using a public vote via Facebook for the 'Gala Queen' as this does not encourage best online practice. (4) Carbisdale Castle. No recent contact with the CC; no-one aware of the progress or plans though it is good to see that the castle is being restored.

**Item 13. Date and time of next meeting.** The meeting will be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August at 7pm in Ardgay Hall.

**Item 14. Beinn Tharsuinn/Beinn nan Oighrean Community Benefit awards. Beinn Tharsuinn.** Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust was awarded £2,000 towards continuing the Keep Active Together/Community Food Stop project, the award conditional on the success of the main funding application. The applicant and BTWF Company Secretary will be advised. **MG Action.**

Meeting closed 10.10pm.