

Ardgay & District Community Council

www.ardgayanddistrictcommunitycouncil.org.uk



Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 9th March in Ardgay Hall at 7.00pm

Minutes approved 10/08/2020

Present: Betty Wright, Chair (BW), Marion Turner, Secretary (MT), John Denniston, Treasurer (JD), Rob Pope (RP), Andy Wright (AW), Bill Knott (BK), Buster Crabb (BC)

Apologies: Silvia Muras, Vice Chair (SM)

Also present: Highland Councillor Kirstin Currie (KC), Anna Patfield, Planet Sutherland, Teresa Hewlett, Stuart Hewlett

Police Scotland: Report received by email

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder

Items 1/2. Welcome/Apologies. Apologies as above. Chair opened the meeting and welcomed new faces.

Item 3. Minutes of last meeting. The minutes of the February meeting were approved by Marion Turner, seconded by Bill Knott.

Item 4. Matters arising. (1) Tree planting on Jubilee Hill. No further update available. (2) Date of postponed presentation by Brookfield Renewables. Currently rescheduled to 11th May; this will also be the AGM. (3) Update on Ardgay-Bonar straight. Background given for the benefit of new residents. Cllr Currie querying a misleading email received from Joanna Sutherland, THC Head of Roads, which gave an inaccurate report regarding THC current position. She considered the report unacceptable and will compile a letter to submit on behalf of both A&DCC and Creich once she has discussed it with both CCs. It is essential that the speed limit is reduced; the community and both CCs have been asking for this for well over two years with no action taken by THC. The request is backed by the local MP, MSP and Highland Councillors. The arguments in favour have been laid out many times. KC will keep CC updated if any response/action forthcoming from THC. (4) Response from THC re Ardgay toilets. The proposals received are a change from the usual arrangements and are unacceptable in their present form. The suggestion of an asset transfer to the CC is out of the question as the CC is advised not to hold any assets. Such changes should have been discussed fully at the end of the last season. No-one will sign the new agreement but would agree to opening the facility as per last year on 1st April. Talks could then be undertaken to seek possible solutions. (5) Recycling centres vehicle access. Changes to charging arrangements see no pick-ups or large trailers allowed unless authorised and paying new fees. £500 charged if THC employee at the site reports unauthorised vehicles. This is a rural area where many people use trailers of varying sizes. Inability to utilise the skips will undoubtedly lead to an increase in fly-tipping. (6) Strathy Ward, Migdale Hospital. The ward is open with six beds. It is understood that NHS Highland is still seeking more nursing staff.

Item 5. Police report. There have been seven incidents in the wider Ardgay area in the last month consisting of the following: 1 x abandoned 999, 1 x theft, 1 x scam caller, 1 x fire, 1 x intruder, 1 x planned shoot, 1 x weather warning.

Item 6. Chairperson's report. (BW) Nothing to add.

Item 7. Secretary's report. (MT) (1) All relevant correspondence has been circulated. (2) CC insurance. Invoice received from Zurich Insurance; policy renewal due on 1st April. (3) Lubcroy Forestry Consultation. No comment required. (4) THC Car parking charges consultation. Eventually received documentation. Current deadline 13th March. When Traffic Order is produced CC will submit objections.

Item 8. Treasurer's report. (JD) (1) The 28th February balance at the bank is £ 21,226.98 comprising restricted funds of £20,695.02, CC admin fund £244.66 and the windfarm admin fund £287.30. The balances of the restricted funds are Beinn nan Oighrean fund £18,212.11, Beinn Tharsuinn Community Projects, £2,275.83, E.ON Path £170.40 and Toilet Caretaking £36.68. Outgoing cheques sent but not yet on the bank statement were for Hall hire and the agreed grant from BnO to the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides group.

Item 9. Correspondence/matters raised by local residents. Oakwood Path. Stones have been delivered; the invoice will be passed to the Treasurer when it arrives.

Item 10. Regular updates: (1) **Planning issues.** One relevant for a met mast at site of proposed Braelangwell windfarm - no issues raised. Mention made of recent THC approval for three large houses to be built in random corners of big fields, not near to transport, services, etc. Concern that THC is approving such applications, possibly against local Councillors recommendations, which will see heavy carbon use due to their situation. Planet Sutherland would encourage that all new housing should be carbon neutral or Passivhaus standards. Scottish Government should implement a transition plan as standards move towards sustainable/renewable energy sources.

(2) **Climate issues.** (AP) Planet Sutherland workshops arranged for the Greening Your Business scheme. A proposal has been submitted to Interface with a view to seeking solutions to the farm plastic waste issues. Talks ongoing regarding growing schemes locally. (3) **Windfarms.** (a) Lairg 2. Full planning application by Energiekontor has been submitted. Government is reinstating the subsidy to onshore developments. No comment required from CC on Lairg 2.

Discussion once again raised the issue of the higher cost of electricity in the Highland while the areas suffer the worst fuel poverty in the UK. Calls made that cheaper energy provision should be a Planning condition. (b) Braelangwell. Met mast erection, no comment. (c) Sallachy. Public meeting planned for 23rd April in Ardgay Hall. KOSDT Manager hopes to attend. (d) Meall Buidhe. Change of access application noted. No impact in Ardgay. (e) Glencassley. Meeting scheduled 16th March to discuss community benefit.

(4) **KOSDT report.** (AW) Five page report received. AW will summarise and circulate to CCs. **AW Action.**

Item 11. Highland Council. Nothing to add to items covered during the meeting.

Item 12. Any other business. Carbisdale Castle workday planned for 5th April at 10am.

Item 13. Dates for future meetings. The next meeting will be held on May 11th. This will also be the AGM. All meetings will be held in the Ardgay Public Hall starting at 7pm. It was noted that the dates on the CC website are incorrect and will be amended. **MT Action.** Dates of meetings later in the year will be set at the AGM.

Item 14. Beinn nan Oighrean Community Benefit award. Application by Planet Sutherland for £60 towards running Carbon Café and Film & Discussion events was approved. AP and the group were commended for their work and progress since start up. Applicants will be advised. **MG/JD Action.**

Meeting closed 8.40pm.