



Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8th February 2021 on Zoom at 7.00pm

Draft Minutes for approval

Present: Betty Wright, Chair (BW), Silvia Muras, Vice Chair (SM), Marion Turner, Secretary (MT), John Denniston, Treasurer, (JD), Andy Wright (AW), Buster Crabb (BC)

Apologies: Rob Pope (RP)

Also present: Highland Councillor Kirsteen Currie (KC), David Watson, KoSDT, Anna Patfield, Planet Sutherland (AP), Christine Mackay (CM) and Valerie Graham (VG)

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder

Items 1 & 2. Welcome & apologies (as above). Chair Betty Wright welcomed everyone to this Zoom meeting, especially members of the public, commenting that without Zoom in this weather a regular meeting would have been cancelled.

Item 3. Approval of December minutes. The minutes of the December meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Silvia Muras; seconded: Marion Turner.

Item 4. Matters arising. (1) Speeding and visibility of signs near Gledfield School. THC reported that the 20mph warning signs are not working at present – Contact THC to ensure they are working ahead of the school reopening. (2) Xmas lights. Thanks noted to AW, Jamie Macrae and Bill Knott for their work taking down the lights which are now safely stored till next season. (3) Local Resilience Plan. Talks are moving the local plans forward. Jodie Ross is working on costings and funding opportunities. She is in contact with Fiona Morrison and Pamela Harvey of SSE. KC advised that she has good contacts within SSN and Scottish Ambulance if these could help.

Item 5. Chairperson's report. (BW) (1) Owing to the recent resignation of Bill Knott, a vacancy has arisen on the CC. CCs encouraged to talk with anyone who might be interested after which the co-option process could proceed. (2) BW also advised that MG has indicated her intention to stand down from the post of Minutes Secretary at the end of March. CCs should look out for anyone who could take on this paid role. (3) Thanks and congratulations given to KoSDT for the excellent work and support to the community through the Food Larder, etc. Also to all within the local NHS staff who are working hard implementing the Covid-19 vaccine roll-out.

Item 6. Secretary's report/matters raised by local residents. (MT) All correspondence has been circulated by email. (1) Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) is offering a regular report on its activities in the area. Perhaps useful though CC reluctant to load extra work on to the CAB. SM suggested they could contact her for Kyle Chronicle. (3) TECS. Water is running down Ardgay Hill and will get worse as the snow melts; flooding in the graveyard is very distressing to all bereaved/visiting people and needs urgent attention; the condition of local pavements is dangerous. Responsibility for gritting in Drovers' Square is shared between KoSDT and Albyn Housing. The salt bin for use on the pavements is empty (Albyn). As throughout the area, potholes in many places are dangerous for all road users, whether four or two wheeled. Especially difficult for motor cyclist and pedal bikes. Much of the damage has been caused in recent times by heavily loaded timber lorries. Carron road bridge surface is breaking up. KC will follow up all TECS issues. **KC Action.**

Item 7. Treasurer's report. (JD) JD had circulated the report ahead of the meeting. As of 13th Jan 2021 balance at the bank is: £42,229.43. This comprises: Restricted funds: £41865.49, CC Admin fund: £393.07, Windfarm Admin fund: £-29.13 (pending £500 transfer from BTWF). The balances of the restricted funds are: BnO: £20,789.61, CnC: £19,810.00. BTWF Community Projects: £1,156.00, RWE Path: £73.20. Toilet Caretaking: £36.68. Expenditure between 16th Nov 2020 and 14th Dec 2020: £27.00 Christmas lights related, £93.00 also Christmas lights related: £72.50 Minutes Secretary. Expenditure between 14th Dec 2020 and 13th Jan 2021: £90.00 Minutes Secretary. Income since 16th Nov 2020: None. SM proposed transferring the surplus £36 from the now unused Toilet Caretaking fund to the Admin fund – agreed by all.

Item 8. Coire na Cloiche CB funds. (BW) Chair proposed that: the CC funds three local organisations annually as discussed at the November 2020 meeting. The three named organisations have expressed their wishes to be included in this provision A decision about other organisations in Ardgay which are joint with Creich/Bonar Bridge was postponed. A template application form will be drawn up and liaison with the groups will continue. The remainder of the CnC fund will be open to applications for up to £2k from local groups. Guidelines will be established. An item will be published in the Kyle Chronicle explaining the new fund and how it will be managed. An annual review will take place to ensure the best outcomes for all local organisations. **MT/SM Action.** DW suggested that the Kyle Chronicle be considered as, although without physical assets, it is a major asset to the community and needs to be supported. As other community benefits come onstream in the future other administration may be needed and the disbursement widened.

Item 9. Bonar straight. Response received from Tracy Urry, THC Roads Manager, providing results from the speed survey/analysis carried out last summer. KC has been actively pursuing action on this but with no response from anyone, including the MSP and MP. She met the new Roads Manager today and intends further strong discussion. She asked if the CC/community are willing to accept a compromise, e.g. extend the 30mph limit at both ends of the straight with a 50mph limit in between. KC has copies of the appropriate legislation and feels it could be possible to effect a compromise solution. CC welcomed this input but remains firm that there should be a 30mph limit across the entire straight. Speed perception varies from one individual to another and many pedestrians who would use the footpath are discouraged by the speed of the traffic immediately adjacent to the pavement with no barrier in place. In times when Scottish Government is encouraging all aspects of active travel and the use of footpaths to walk between areas, this speed limit ticks all the boxes for approval. Safe use of the footpath would encourage links between the two villages. It is felt that THC is not considering the views of the local population and only looking at traffic statistics. AW pointed out that any compromise now will remain in place for years to come and he urged that the 30mph limit across the complete straight should be the outcome sought. CC and KC will continue to push for the best solution. CM noted that to her knowledge there have been three fatalities on the straight within living memory and any number of accidents. **KC/BW Action.**

Item 10. Regular updates:

- (1) Planning issues. (1) Pure Leisure Gledfield. Opportunities regarding the upgrade of local Core Paths passed to Matt Dent at THC. CC wishes to engage with the developer and the community to establish the best way to consult with the community during Covid restrictions. Concerns expressed regarding the inevitable increase in traffic on the access to the new development on a road which is totally unsuitable at present, especially as it is currently designated as a 60mph limit. THC should be aware of the limitations of the road and the dangers around the entrance. It was suggested that the developer could produce a newsletter which could be displayed on the noticeboard in Drivers' Square, a central point for all. Further information can be published in the Kyle Chronicle. Further discussions should be held with the developer.
- (2) Climate issues. (1) BW attended a two-day online course, Zero Carbon Britain, organised by the Centre for Alternative Technology, and suggested that others could be encouraged to do this with the CC perhaps helping with course fees through the BnO Fund if required. Joe Perry, THC Climate Change Coordinator has offered to attend a CC meeting. It was proposed to set up a joint meeting with Creich CC, Planet Sutherland, etc to meet Joe Perry and colleagues from THC Climate Change to discuss steps being taken by the Council and what can be done locally. A one-off meeting in April will be suggested to interested parties. **BW Action.** (2) AP had attended the online Highland Good Food Conversation Conference which covered many exiting projects including schools growing programmes, community greenhouses and composting schemes. A report will be available in a couple of weeks. Further details available from Planet Sutherland.
- (3) Windfarms. (1) BW and MT have recently attended online meetings with both Sallachy and Strath Rory developers to discuss community benefit. Sallachy is now signed off. The Strath Rory developer wishes to share the benefit amongst the eight Community Councils whose boundaries border the proposed site. BW/MT feel that there is a danger that the spilt suggested spreads the funds so widely that those with the smaller shares will receive such small amounts they will be of little benefit. They will continue to represent the interests of A&DCC at discussions to seek the best solutions possible. (2) Meall Buidhe. It is time for further discussions with Creich CC. (3) Achany extension. Representatives will attend the March meeting with an allocated 20 – 30-minute slot. DW reported that SSE representatives recently gave a presentation to Creich CC.
- (4) Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust. (DW) (1) South Bonar proposed development. Funding bids are presently being put together to support the planned motorhome parking area with appropriate facilities. Discussions are ongoing with SEPA regarding the regulations covering development on possible flood areas. At present the proposal meets the 1 in 200 year event condition but SEPA is apparently pushing, throughout

Scotland, for a 1 in 1,000 year event. The current plans have been met with great enthusiasm by locals and visitors alike and would provide toilet and chemical waste facilities on the site. The Hub can provide showers and other facilities which would also boost its income. KoSDT would take control of the toilets which will remain in the public accessible section of the park thus ensuring the future of this facility against THC closures. (2) Other projects are currently delivering excellent support to the community via the Food Larder, addressing fuel poverty, and the Keep Active Together sessions happening online. Work continues on the Local Resilience Plan and a funding application has been submitted for a three-month Sutherland-wide hardship support scheme. (3) A new operator will take over at Falls of Shin when it re-opens. Four pitches for motorhomes will be established with a chemical waste facility. (4) SM and Marcus Munro have been co-opted as new directors to the Board of KoSDT to fill two recent vacancies.

(5) Highland Council. KC had to leave the meeting ahead of this slot to attend to other duties.

Item 11. Any other competent business. (1) SM asked for an agenda item at next meeting to discuss the poor state of repair of many benches on paths throughout the KoS area. **SM/BW Action/Agenda item.**

Item 12. Date of future meetings. The next meeting, on Zoom, will be on 8th March 2021 at 7pm.

Item 13. Applications to Beinn Tharsuinn, Beinn nan Oighrean community benefit funds. BTWF. Application by Bonar Bridge Football club was approved with an award of £2,000 towards Clubhouse refurbishment. Application by A&DCC for £500 to top-up the CC Admin Fund was approved. BnO. Application by Ardgay Public Hall for £225, as previously approved, to continue Broadband provision was approved. Phil Tomalin, BTWF Company Secretary, and applicants will be advised.

Meeting closed 9.15pm