

Ardgay & District Community Council



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Meeting 11 September 2023	
Date & Time:	11 September 2023 at 7:00 PM
Location:	Ardgay Hall
Attendees:	Chair Betty Wright (BW); Vice Chair Silvia Muras (SM); Secretary & Treasurer Marion Turner (MT); Andy Wright (AW); Buster Crabb (BC); Rob Pope (RP); Minutes Secretary Anna McInnes (AM) <i>Full list of residents in attendance is appended to the end of these minutes.</i>

AGENDA ITEMS	
1.	Welcome from the Chairperson (BW): BW opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
2.	Apologies: Anna Patfield, David Watson
3.	Updates to members register of interests: No interests were declared.
4.	Approval of August 2023 minutes: Approved as accurate record. Proposed AW, Seconded SM.
5.	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further consideration of request from owner of Carbisdale Castle to purchase land around the castle from FLS: BW summarized: the main question for CC to answer is that asked by FLS: does CC support sale of FLS land to private owner. The CC agreed at the August meeting to await outcome of Culrain residents meeting, which was then followed by a subsequent meeting to discuss a new proposal with an altered area of land. SK gave an overview of the plans: the castle is undergoing significant investment and restoration and is not currently viable as residence or business with so little land. It is the most important landmark in this region. SK believes the restoration plans will not harm the community, the areas proposed for purchase are east of the castle including cliffside and along road and does not include the car park or other areas to the west. BW noted that as long as objections are received from Culrain residents the CC can't support the purchase. SK does not consider objections to be valid, stated she will not prevent people from exercising Access Rights. BW suggested smaller footprint. MT expressed view that the CC should not facilitate movement of public land into private ownership, the community is concerned the sale will set precedent and more land will be privatized. SM noted that the feedback from residents highlights that plans are not clear enough and more defined plans are needed to be able to form opinion; it is not just land boundary but core paths; community will need assurances that rights will be retained, which areas will be designated as private. BW noted that the community is not opposed to plans for the castle but issues surrounding land ownership. After the first Culrain meeting there were changes to the proposal that led to increased support for the plans. She suggested that SK further amend the proposal and go back to FLS with reduced land area proposed for purchase which could perhaps be considered as 'intensively managed' garden area as defined by Scottish Outdoor access code. https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/practical-guide-all/property/houses-and-gardens, then FLS can go back to residents of Culrain and the CC for comments on the new proposal which can be revisited at a later meeting. The CC was unanimous in the decision that it cannot support proposal in its current form based on feedback from Culrain residents who have also fed back comments separately to FLS. MT will respond to FLS. ACTION MT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20mph anomaly of Church St leading to Gledfield PS still being 30mph: MT contacted THC and has had no reply yet but will chase. The school area has some of the most vulnerable community members so it should be reflected in the speed limit. ACTION MT • Ardgay – Bonar footpath – request for it to be signposted to allow cycling also: MB has advised it is technically illegal to cycle on pavement, but CC would like that to be changed. BW noted other Highland Council areas where pavement is designated for both (e.g. Broadford in Skye). MB to see if there is a specialist at THC to ask about making this pavement shared access. ACTION MB
6.	<p>Chairperson’s Report (BW):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of Meetings. Recent meetings have been dominated by discussion of SSEN pylons. BW reminded that members of public/non-CC members speak at request of the chair, but the CC usually takes a relaxed approach with open invitation to speak. BW urged attendees to please try not to talk over each other to engage in respectful discussion and allow for more accurate minuting.
7.	<p>Secretary’s Report - including Correspondence & Matters raised by local residents (MT): All correspondence circulated by email prior to meeting. Items of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note of thanks received from Ardgay Hall re: CnC award. Rhonwen Copley has now retired. • Correspondence from residents were received regarding SSEN updates and conduct during the August meeting. There has been a reply from Martin Godwin however there is no substantive update. MT will share with those who have asked to be kept informed. • MT wrote to Scottish Water regarding the effects on residents of the water supply for the Gledfield Pure Leisure development. Their email reply is quoted below: • <i>“Our policy is that we offer a no objection response to planning applications, as the view is that there is potential for infrastructure to be upgraded if necessary to support development across Scotland. At the planning stage Scottish Water advise on capacity and possible infrastructure conflicts. If planning permission is granted, we ask the applicant to submit a Pre-Development Enquiry(PDE)/technical application before a connection will be approved. As part of this application and assessment process we assess new development against existing demand so that no new development can make it worse for existing development in terms of service standards. If the planning application is still pending approval, you should raise any objections directly with the Highland Council.”</i>
8.	<p>Treasurer’s Report (MT): As of 31 August 2023 balance at the bank was: £77111.64. This notionally comprises: Restricted funds: £75,466.61; CC Admin fund: £813.17; Windfarm Admin fund: £831.87. The balances of the restricted funds are: BnO: £31,426.37; CnC: £42,687.14; BTWF Community Projects: £1,279.90; RWE Path: £73.20. Expenditure since 31 July 2023: CnC multi-yr award - yr4of5: £3,000.00. Income since 31 July 2023: Coire na Cloiche Windfarm Community Benefit- Year 4: £23,841.00; Beinn nan Oighrean Windfarm Community Benefit: £4,077.00. Expenditure not yet in statement: Nil. Income not yet in statement: Nil.</p>
9.	<p>Sutherland Community Transport Consultation: MB provided update: other CC’s have not input to consultation. Voluntary Group Sutherland to be up and running in March 2024 and Focus North is also on board. More updates to be provided by Fiona/David at a future meeting.</p>
10.	<p>Regular Updates:</p> <p>SSEN Proposed Pylon Route: No updates from SSEN. Martin Godwin advised they are still working on results of consultations and have no dates yet. Community Liaison Groups will be setup at early stage in development, no dates yet. The forum of CCs is still trying to organise Zoom meeting.</p> <p>Planning issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23/03888/FUL Expansion of Kyle of Sutherland Hub: Pland submitted to replace temporary marquee with permanent building. CC agreed to submit a note of support. ACTION MT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pure Leisure Gledfield development</i>: going before planning committee on 12 September, MB notes it is likely to be recommended for approval. <p>Windfarms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sallachy meeting attended by BW, MT for CC and AW for KoSDT. Development pushed back until grid connection in 2028 at the earliest. Decision will need to be taken on how to treat CC benefit funds; preference is to manage jointly with Creich, and have local Sutherland-based organization to manage the funds with applications decided by panel of local people. • Beinn Tharsuinn board meeting 19th September, RP to attend. <p>Kyle of Sutherland Resilience Plan: No updates.</p> <p>Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (DW): BW readout DW email update regarding Falls of Shin. They are progressing with legal aspects of the acceptable offer and hope to issue an update in coming weeks.</p> <p>Highland Council: MB: Regeneration Fund open for expressions of interest, previously received funding for Culrain Hall roof. Reallocation of KoSDT Bonar picnic area funds. No known RAAC issues in area schools.</p> <p>Climate Emergency: BW noted this has been a standing update for the last few years and is important to talk about as a community. There is a lot of action locally, especially with Planet Sutherland. Highland Climate Festival is ongoing throughout September. The Big Picnic will be held in Ardgay Square on 30th September. BW also announced she will not stand for CC election, and this will be her last meeting.</p>
11.	<p>AOCB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas Lights AW to ask Ardgay Hall committee to store lights in the Hall. • Screen Machine BC noted funding is at risk and suggest local Film Club could help with sourcing funding. £1.4m is needed for a new one. • Upcoming CC elections: to be held in November, with nominations open 5 September to 3 October for anyone over 16 on electoral record, encourage younger residents to stand.
12.	<p>Date of next meeting: To be resumed after CC elections are held.</p>
13.	<p>Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Applications (private session):</p> <p>Beinn Tharsuinn Wind Farm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application from Ardgay Badminton Club for training & kit approved in the amount of £436. • Application from A&DCC for permanent Christmas tree approved in the amount of £1250. • Application from Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust for the Kyle Feeds project approved in the amount of £2000. • Application for £2000 from St Andrews Church, Tain for belfry repairs was rejected. <p>Beinn Nan Oighrean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application from Hannah MacFarlane for training approved in the amount of £250. • Application from Gledfield Primary School Parent Council for Gledfield Polytunnel approved in the amount of £249. <p>Coire na Cloiche end of year reviews were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gledfield PS parent council: £1000 • Gearrchoille Community Wood Ardgay: £1500 • Culrain Hall: £3000

List of residents in attendance at A&DCC meeting held on 11 September 2023:

11 Sept
14 May 2023 A&DCC Meeting *Arday*

Name	Post Code	Resident of Arday & District
Lady Samantha Kone of Calbisdale	IV29 3DP	✓
KATHY SMITH	IV24 3EB	
Jan Charge	IV24 3DP	✓
TOM TOMLINSON	IV24 3DW	✓
Anne Henderson	IV24 3DW	✓
Sabrina Ross	IV24 3BW	✓
Christine Mackay	IV24 3BW	✓
Robert Andrew	IV24 3EW	✓
Bailey Babbitt	IV24 3DW	✓
G GILES	IV24 3BW	✓
Sue Giles	IV24 3DW	✓
SARAH VINELL	IV24 3DW	✓
Michael J Baird	IV24 3EB	
Teresa Langford	IV24 3AG	✓