

Ardgay & District Community Council



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Meeting 15 May 2023 - Draft Minutes	
Date & Time:	15 May 2023 at 7:00 PM
Location:	Ardgay Hall
CC Members Present:	Chair Betty Wright (BW); Vice Chair Silvia Muras (SM); Secretary & Treasurer Marion Turner (MT); Andy Wright (AW); Buster Crabb (BC); Minutes Secretary Anna McInnes (AM)
Also attending:	Cllr Michael Baird (MB), David Watson, Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (DW), Keith Williams, Chair of Creich Community Council (KW), Christine Mackay (CM), Liz Cormack, Christiaan Maris, Trudy Williams, Kelly Raven, David Baker, Diane Ross, Robert Sawyer, Liz Sawyer, Kim Sawyer, Stuart Hewlett, Sarah Vinnell, Louise Worthy, W. Mackenzie, John Farachor, Samantha Kane, Rob Gale, Elspeth Calder, Katie Wilson.

AGENDA ITEMS	
1.	Welcome from the Chairperson (BW): BW opened the meeting to welcome all and asked attendees to sign-in on sheet provided. Reminder of public meeting with discussions being minuted.
2.	Apologies: Anna Patfield, Rob Pope
3.	Updates to members register of interests: AM registered connection to agenda item 10 Green Freeport to note she is employed by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities.
4.	Approval of March 2023 minutes: Approved as accurate record. Proposed MT, Seconded AW.
5.	Matters Arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parking at Carron Bridge: No reply or acknowledgement from Gledfield Estate has been received to CC letter querying parking sign. MT/BW will write again. ACTION MT/BW (Update: The sign has now been removed) ● Lack of regular updates from Police: No updates; postponed for future meeting. ● Noticeboard: New board installed for CC notices, 2 other boards for general notices.
6.	SSEN Spittal – Beauly 400kV pylon line: BW provided summary of CC actions on behalf of community over last 2 months including encouraging residents to contact SSEN with comments, signposting to information available online, and contacting MSP Maree Todd whose meeting with SSEN resulted in consultation deadline being extended and joining the Forum of Community Councils. CC sent letter to SSEN in April with comments from community, expressing concerns over option C1, the area where the pylons cross the Carron at Dounie and poor consultation process. Information was shared on community notice board, CC's Facebook page, and sent to residents who had contacted CC. Martin Godwin (SSEN Community Liaison) and SSEN reps will attend 12th June CC meeting for residents to ask questions directly; possible joint meeting with Creich CC. BW encouraged residents to flag specific questions in advance for SSEN to know which experts to bring. BW mentioned meeting Thursday in Strathpeffer Pavilion with Forum of Community Councils to discuss this issue. CC sent letter to SSEN citing preferred route and request for better map but has had no engagement on this yet. BW then opened floor to attendees. Discussion was held over the impact on the community of the proposed routes with several points raised by residents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concerns that this development is not necessary and SSEN should be pressed on this point. ● The energy being generated in Scotland is leaving residents with no benefit. ● Area conservation is critical and needs to be considered, including important landmarks such as Carbisdale Castle. ● Lack of engagement and response from THC and MPs when contacted by residents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion for CCs to join together to negotiate and/or block the plans. • Opportunity for community members to raise questions directly with SSEN at June meeting, <p>BW remarked that CC must remain engaged with developments to ensure the best outcome for the community. CC can take forward community views but cannot stop the project and would be failing in its duty if it refused to engage. BW has suggested to Martin Godwin to setup community forums to which he agreed. KW advised Creich will discuss its position at its next meeting, and he will propose meeting jointly with A&DCC in June. BW closed the agenda item with request to email questions in advance of June meeting with SSEN.</p>
7.	<p>Chairperson’s Report (BW):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highland Council has published a Guide to the planning system for Community Councils which MT has shared with CC members by email.
8.	<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"> • Yearly funding reports received from Ladybird Club and Bonar Football Club. • UK Government consultation on Community benefits for electricity transmission network infrastructure closes 25th May. This is different to windfarm community benefit funds. Guidelines being produced in 2023, any project not in construction at that time will be eligible. Comments can be sent to BW or MT to collate CC response on what community benefit could be used for.
9.	<p>Treasurer’s Report (MT): As of 30 April 2023, balance at the bank was: £55576.82. This notionally comprises: Restricted funds: £55,099.75; CC Admin fund: £477.07; Windfarm Admin fund: (£19.60). The balances of the restricted funds are: BnO: £27,349.37; CnC: £26,246.14; BTWF Community Projects: £1,431.04; RWE Path: £73.20. Expenditure since 27 March 2023: CC insurance (Zurich) £86. Income since 27 March 2023: Nil. Expenditure not in statement yet: Nil.</p> <p>CC members all agreed to top-up Windfarm admin fund from Beinn Tharsuinn fund for £1000. MT advised the accounts are ready for EOY meeting the list of requirements sent from Phil Tomalin.</p>
10.	<p>Green Freeport: AM gave update on Green Freeport status awarded January 2023 to Inverness and Cromarty Firth. Joint endeavor between UK and Scottish Government, up to £52million funding to attract investment in the region by providing tax incentives to businesses and create “green” jobs. Sites include the Ports of Inverness, Cromarty Firth and Nigg and Inverness Airport. ICF is currently developing their business case and recently held a community engagement webinar, the recording of which can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/bSPjpv2tUHE.</p>
11.	<p>Regular Updates:</p> <p>Planning issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gledfield Estate Development plans: CC submitted comments to the updated planning application and raised no objection to listed building application. <p>Climate Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anna Patfield provided update by email: Planet Sutherland Garden swap event went very well (Sunday 14th May), included kids seed planting. Ardgay Public Hall - Community Markets pilot in planning for 2nd Saturdays Jul to Oct (apart from Aug - 5th instead). School growing groups going well with Gledfield meeting on Weds 17th May. KoSDT recently employed part time gardeners to become more involved too. Climate Cafes in planning, Dornoch 8th Jun, Lairg being run in conjunction with LDLC, more local soon. <p>Windfarms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MB noted Strathoykel windfarm inquiry set for October; awaiting feedback from Meall

	<p>Buidhe which was rejected by local council and going to Scottish Government review.</p> <p>Kyle of Sutherland Resilience Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No updates since last meeting. <p>Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (DW):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DW expressed thanks to CC for work in the community, and thanked CM for working at café which served 108 people after very successful coronation event Falls of Shin: Received paperwork from the Lottery on 2nd of May to progress to sale. The sale will be handled by business agent and will go on the market this summer. Sale is for the restaurant/carpark only; rest of the site is to be retained for community, however, offers for whole site will be considered if for the best benefit of the community. The site will never get permission for residential development due to environmental protections on the site. EV charging points: cost will increase but still cheaper by 6p. New staff: new community gardener Lucy Williams will work on the polytunnel and conversion of garden next to Bonar Bridge PO. New SCPP appointee Scott MacDonald, former volunteer. Kyle Chronicle: this is a valued community asset but incurs high printing costs and has no real sponsorship needed to continue. Trust will be approaching CCs for contribution to keep as asset for community. <p>Highland Council (MB):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bonar Straight Speed Limit: MT circulated email response from THC on 20mph speed limit which designates only certain areas as 20mph and others to remain at 30mph. This includes parts of Church St; BW will write to 20mph team at THC to take forward. ACTION BW
12.	<p>AOCB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SH reported school flood lights are still not going off regularly due to a fault. BW will write to THC. ACTION BW CM wrote to THC re: interior wall in Kincardine that has been down for months; will let CC know if no response/assistance needed.
13.	<p>Date of next meeting and AGM: 12 June 2023 in Ardgay Hall to include open meeting with SSEN and possibly joint meeting with Creich CC.</p>
14.	<p>Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Applications (private session):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application to the Beinn Tharsuinn Wind Farm fund from Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust were approved for the following projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Resilience Day for the amount of £325 Kyle Feeds for the amount of £2,000

Meeting ended at 21:23