



13 November 2023  
7:00 PM | Microsoft Teams

## MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING FOLLOWING INAUGURAL MEETING

**In attendance:** Silvia Muras (SM), Anna McInnes (AM), Sabrina Ross (SR), Samantha Kane (SK), Cllr Michael Baird (MB), Cllr Marianne Hutchison (MH), David Watson (DW), Buster Crabb (BC), Anna Patfield (AP), Caroline McMorran (CM), Arthur Duncan (AD), Sheila Lall (SL), Anne Henderson (AH), Louise Worthy (LW), Graham Charge (GC), Kerry Hawthorne (KH), Andy Turner (AT)

### 1. Welcome & Apologies

- a. Incoming Chair Silvia Muras welcomed attendees and noted apologies from Christine Mackay.

### 2. Updates to Members Register of Interests

- a. SK declared interest in agenda item 3(d).

### 3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

- a. **Traffic issues around Gledfield Primary School:** previous CC had requested THC to review decision to make all of Church St 20mph, especially near Gledfield Primary School. MB agreed to take forward to Roads Committee and noted that the 20mph pilot project is being reviewed.
- b. **Speed limit changes 20/30mph around Hub.** SM noted that the speed limit signage is finally in place after order approved in August.
- c. **Cycling on pavement:** MB inquired and was told this is pursuant to highway code, he suggested ask Balnagown if they are willing to put in cycling path on their land from Ardgay to the Hub. SM suggested incorporating into the forthcoming Sutherland Community transport plan. SK offered to make inquiries of Balnagown. **ACTION SK**
- d. **Carbisdale Castle third proposal:** SM acknowledged that CC has received by email a third proposal. She explained CC needs 4 members to be quorate, however if a member has a conflict of interest they cannot vote. We will discuss co-option of BC later in agenda and he can be formally co-opted at next meeting. SK proposed to hold extraordinary meeting in one weeks' time to discuss the proposal of a much smaller land area than previously proposed, taking on suggestions from the last meeting and previous objections from community. CC members agreed to hold extraordinary meeting on 21st November to discuss only the Carbisdale proposal and co-option of BC. The meeting format will include a presentation by SK and Q&A from the community, followed by deliberation by CC members from which SK will be required to recuse herself. The CC will subsequently inform FLS of its decision on this proposal. SM confirmed the agenda will be published one week in advance of the meeting.

### 4. CC Member Reports

- a. **Chair's Report:** SM explained this will be a standing agenda item for CC members to report on regular items such as accounts, correspondence, etc.
- b. **Co-option of Dr Buster Crabb:** All agreed to put formal co-option of BC on agenda for next meeting to be voted on by CC.

## 5. Planning & Development

- a. **Local Place Plans:** SM noted this will be a priority for CC over the next year, the deadline to submit is June 2024 and the CC will invite a speaker to a future meeting to give guidance on how to produce plan. DW gave overview of aims of the planning, and suggested Scott MacDonald from KoSDT can give a presentation.
- b. **Area developments:** SM noted that the CC would like to hear about all area developments in this agenda item, not just planning applications. AM will flag planning applications to CC going forward.

## 6. Highland Council

- a. **Updates from other area CCs:** Creich CC is not formed but hopefully to reform in January. MB noted Tain, Balintore, Nigg also need to be reformed. MH noted Melvich, Armadale, Strathy, Bettyhill CCs are all reforming.
- b. MB noted the 20mph pilot will be discussed at next committee, also mentioned the traffic light system at the **Struie** Bridge may change to something more permanent.
- c. MH advised that Sutherland area Cllrs have set up community transport company and is in initial consultation. Sutherland Regeneration partnership is being formed.

## 7. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (DW)

- a. AGM was held 2 weeks ago with the most notable item that the Falls of Shin sale is nearing completion to Pure Leisure Group. The site is expected to be run as-is by a young local couple and the rest of site will remain the same.
- b. The Christmas fund has opened and all £18k was committed in 1.5 days. Contacting other agencies to look at additional funding, and will work with Cash for Kids. Keep Active Together will ramp up over winter. Mental Health awareness training to be held this week. SK offered congratulations on community help with mental health particularly difficult in isolated areas. DW noted the area Resilience Plan is held up as model because it also considers mental health and wellbeing.

## 8. Local Updates

- a. **Windfarms:** MB noted preliminary meeting for Garvary windfarm, the public consultation will be held on 25 March at Lairg Community Centre.
- b. **SSEN:** SM no updates yet from SSEN on preferred route for pylons, A&DCC is a member of Forum of 22 CCs. MB informed that last week the planning cttee recommended objecting to Skye to Ft Augustus route, to go to SG for public inquiry. SM reminded that the SSEN Spittal to Beaulie line (section 36) will be decided at SG or Westminster level, not at a regional level.
- c. **Community Halls**
  - i. Culrain: GC provided update on Culrain AGM, the new committee has 10 volunteers and 3 trustees. In September surveyed community to gain confirmation of continued need for hall and events. Hall is currently closed for refurbishment. Outdoor event to be held on 1st December to turn on Xmas lights with music, stalls, refreshments.
  - ii. Ardgay Hall: AP provided update on Xmas Fayre to be held on 25th November; community markets for 2024 being scheduled, and community development strategy; big struggle is price of electricity.
- d. **Gledfield Primary School:** SM will approach head teacher or parent council member for updates for future meetings. **ACTION SM**

- e. **Planet Sutherland:** AP updated on the ongoing work to raise awareness in community for climate action, community and individual growing. Act of Hope: looking at how to deal with anxiety over climate change and find new ideas.
- f. **Crofting & Land:** SR confirmed she will be happy to update going forward on all things related to crofting in the community.
- g. **Police Report:** the CC will continue to try to engage with Police Scotland to get a regular report. MB informed only 5 police officers covering the whole of Sutherland.

## 9. AOB

- a. AM noted email from Matt Dent at THC re: **Local Access Forum vacancies** for community group representatives. Anyone wishing to apply must have the support of a recognised body whose interest they would represent and submit application before Monday 18 December. To be discussed at the next meeting.
- b. SM informed that a **live Xmas tree** has been planted in the village square, thanks to Andy Mackenzie for putting up the tree, also thanks to Jamie Macrae and Andy Wright who will put up the lights.
- c. DW raised concerns that the Trust was not involved in the Kyle Action Group plans for the **50th anniversary bridge celebrations**. He has written to the chair of the group to ask for explanation on why the Trust was not contacted and to encourage collaboration and inclusion for future events.
- d. MH offered to pass on information about **Crofting Commission roadshow** and Scottish land matching service. Also asking CCs to signpost to **Empty Homes Officer** whose role is to check out long-term empty houses in region and reach out to owners to look at options of providing homes within community.

## 10. Date of Next Meeting

- a. **21st November at Ardgay Hall:** Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss Carbisdale 3rd proposal and co-option of BC

## 11. Private Session: Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Applications

- a. No applications were received

*Business Meeting closed at 20:37*