

KINLOCHBERVIE COMMUNITY COMPANY

Inaugural meeting held on 8 July 2009 at Kinlochbervie Village Hall

Board Present: Graham Wild, Alun Owen, Christine MacKenzie

Also Present: Subscribers & Supporters

Observing: Cllr Robbie Rowantree (The Highland Council)

Graham welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from John Mann (Director), David Forbes (Director), Peter Paterson, Lynne Twigger, John Wood, Alison Wood, Janice Mcleod, Joan Mackay.

2. Status of Company

Graham gave a brief overview of how the Community Company came into being at the time of the Fishermen's Mission sell-off.

An initial public meeting was held on 19 March 2008 to discuss the sell-off of the Mission building and the possibility of a Community purchase. This meeting was well attended and following presentations and questions from the floor a proposal was put forward for a Community purchase and following a show of hands for and against, which came out in favour of a purchase, the decision was taken to proceed. In order for the Community to be able to bid for the Mission building it was important to have in place a properly registered company. However, because of the sudden notification of the sell-off by the RNMDSF there was not enough time to officially set up a Company. Therefore, a bid by the Community was not possible and the site was eventually put on the open market and purchased by a local person.

It was decided to continue with the establishment of a registered Community Company and following further meetings preparations progressed with the election of an Interim Board of Directors and invitations for subscribers, who paid £1, and supporters. Once all the necessary paperwork was completed it was sent to Companies House and duly registered (number 347082). Copies of the voting papers for the Interim Board of Directors are available to view.

The position now is that a Chairman and formal Board of Directors will need to be elected although the Interim Board members can continue until they decide to stand down. The Memorandum & Articles of Association will be made available to all those attending this meeting of 8 July including subscribers. It was confirmed by Graham that there are currently 25 subscribers, although this will reduce slightly as some have relocated way. The number of supporters total submitted to Companies House totalled 69, however this has increased to over 70. Subscribers/supporters must be over 18, and resident in the Community boundary and be registered to vote in local and national elections.

DRAFT COPY OF MINUTES

3. Informal Open Forum - questions and ideas from the floor

Graham invited questions from the floor including ideas or projects that could come under the auspices of the Community Company.

A question from the floor was raised as to whether holiday homeowners, who were not resident in the Community, could be members. From the Memorandum & Articles of Association, these people could become Associate Members, however, they would not be eligible for election or have voting powers. It was also pointed out that there is a category for Junior Members (individuals between 12 and 17 who support the purposes).

Cllr Rowantree brought attention to the fact that many communities have companies or similar. They were originally established in order to address the Land Reform Act but stressed they were a vehicle for use whenever the need arose. It will give the community a priority interest and the ability to move quickly when the right task or project came up.

Graham outlined to the meeting the type of initiative that could benefit. The Orcadian Stone Company has a large exhibition in Golspie that largely relates to the Assynt area. Orcadian are looking at the possibility of selling the exhibition and although it could be split over various parts of the Geopark, ideally it would be better to keep it together for cohesion and maximum impact added to this is the fact that Kinlochbervie sits midway in the Geopark boundary. The exhibition is very large and a substantial building would be needed to house it and the Old Market at the Harbour has been suggested as a contender although it would need improving. The benefits to the community could be enormous as the exhibition would potentially be a large draw for visitors.

Cllr Rowantree said that the Highland Council would look sympathetically to the improvement and use of the Old Market. Over £1m is available for spend on such projects.

Another great asset to the Community would be a swimming pool. And a member from the floor mentioned a dedicated fitness/leisure complex, which could be used out with school hours.

Loch Clash - could be a base for a Heritage Centre and with/or hard standing for caravans.

A question from the floor raised the issue of the condition of the football pitch. Graham advised that the parent body was the Kinlochbervie Playing Field Association who is responsible for seeking funding to drain the pitch, but that day-to-day maintenance of the pitch was down to the Club.

Cllr Rowantree advised that the Ward held a Discretionary Budget, which was money available each year, and suggested that the Club speak to Andy Mackay. Graham said he would mention this to the club members. He concurred that the costs to a local football club were high with money to the Scottish Football League, referees etc.

Graham suggested that once people have read the Memorandum and Articles of Association they would have a better feel for how and what the Company can be used for and be better prepared for future meetings.

DRAFT COPY OF MINUTES

4. Any Other Business

Graham call for a Vote of Thanks on behalf of the Community to the new Village Hall Committee for their work in redecorating the hall.

He reiterated that as a Community we need to look ahead and use the Company to provide a solid and sustainable future for our young people.

The date of the next meeting is to be arranged.

If anyone wishes to comment further or make contact your can email Elaine McHugh on bemchugh@tiscali.co.uk.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm