

KINLOCHBERVIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on 01.06.10 at The Village Hall

Present: Graham Wild (Chairman), John Mann (Vice-Chairman), Christine Mackenzie (Treasurer), Mairi Eastcroft, Joan Mackay, Sylvia Mackay, Stuart McHugh, Angus Ross

Members of the public present: Andrew Marshall (part)

Also present: Robbie Rowantree (Highland Councillor), Elaine McHugh (Secretary)

Agenda Items

(1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Michael Otter, Murdo MacPherson, PC Ian Sutherland. A point was raised by Graham as to whether only apologies received either verbally or written should be recorded. Following a brief discussion it was agreed that only communicated apologies will be recorded.

(2) Minutes (04.05.10)

The Minutes of the last meeting were proposed for approval by Mairi and seconded by John and duly approved.

(3) Matters Arising from the Minutes (04.05.10)

(a) PR/Goodwill work by Army – Item (3)(a)

The MoD has agreed to carry out the projects as outlined in the Minutes of 04.05.10. We now need to clarify the materials needed and costs involved. Graham is to ring Sango Bay Trading for prices of timber materials to replace the stone path, which is the more important part of the project and Graham will also ask Robert if he is willing to donate the infill material. Highland Council owns the path from the first gate to the second and therefore comes under their maintenance programme. Cllr Rowantree mentioned the correspondence the Community Council received in respect of Core Path network funding and suggested we put in a bid. All agreed this was a good idea. The steps are another matter and could be expensive but again we could include this in the bid for Core Path funding. **GW to action.**

(b) Loch Clash – Item (3)(d)

Graham asked if Cllr Rowantree was aware of the proposal for a new fuel jetty on the Loch Inchard side of the harbour. He then proceeded to outline the proposal to him concluding that if this goes ahead then Highland Council would no longer have any use for Loch Clash and would be happy for us to utilise it. We are in contact with our solicitors, Ewan Harris, to arrange a meeting to discuss the various land transfers and prospective legal costs involved, which would also include other parties' costs. Graham confirmed that he had been advised to put in bid to the Ward Forum Discretionary Budget. **GW to action.**

(c) Helicopter Emergencies & Ceilidh House Lights - Items (6)(a)&(b)

Both these problems have been rectified.

(d) Patient Transport – Item (6)(c)

Michael Otter had, via the Secretary, previously circulated to members two emails to Jamie Stone. These were in connection with the forthcoming follow up meeting with the SAS on Friday that he and Sylvia will attend. This meeting will cover the report issued by Linda Kennedy on the car trial. Sylvia outlined to the meeting the contents of the report. Cllr Rowantree said it was important to stress that KLB had priority over the other areas covered. The meeting felt strongly that if the car is going to Inverness with only one patient who fitted the criteria, it should be able to take others with an appointment that did not necessarily fit the conditions, which would make it more cost-effective and green. Cllr Rowantree said that until recently SAS had not been capturing how many requests were made but declined. They are now doing this, which was seen as a good thing. He added that he had asked Andy Mackay to investigate any other funding stream that might be available, as it was imperative we utilise the vehicle to its full potential, which could mean additional money. Furthermore, patients are still being refused use of the car to transport them home following release as an in-patient when the KLB car happens to be at Raigmore,. There was confusion over how many passengers the car was licensed to carry, some thought three, others four. **Graham will check.**

The question was raised as to why eligible patients were only contacted about transport the day before an appointment. This was because the car is not only used for clinical appointments, but other uses, e.g. taking patients for dialysis. However, a member voiced concern that such short notice could create patient uncertainty and worry, which was not a good thing. All agreed this was a work in progress and that we need to push on. Cllr Rowantree advised that financial pressure would always be a factor, especially in current climate. We could again go down the route of recruiting volunteers, however, the feeling is that the SAS want to move away from official volunteer drivers, relying more on people's goodwill to transport family and neighbours.

(e) Car Wrecks & Specsavers – Items (6)(f)&(h)

Henry has not yet been back about the ownership of the land the cars are occupying.
A letter to Specsavers was sent on 11 May, to date no response has been received.

(4) Treasurer's Report

Christine reported there is £1577.73 in the Bank Account, which includes the deduction of £250.00 given as a donation to the Youth Café.

(5) Correspondence

The following items of correspondence had been received and those of a public nature are available for inspection at the North and West Sutherland Advice and Information Service at the harbour.

Highland Council:

- Ward Forum Notes from 24 April Meeting
- Andy Mackay attaching letter from Bob Edwards regarding North Coast Replacement Bus
- Letter re *Highland Core Path Improvement Scheme* – Invitation to apply for funding for improvements to Core Paths
- Andy Mackay, attaching flyer for *Reshaping Care for Older People National Engagement event* – 17 May
- Andy Mackay forwarding a news article on changes to disposal of Local Authority land for less than 'best value' without prior consent from Scottish Government

Fran Loots – John Muir Trust:

- Email re. *Grants for Renewables – Financial Update*
- Promotion of *Wet and Wild Weekend* in Kinlochbervie

NHS Scotland – April/May Team Update

Consumer Focus Scotland – Poster giving step-by-step guide to Common Repairs

N&WS LHP – Notes of meeting held on 6 May 2010 at Bettyhill. Agenda for 3 June meeting at Rhiconich Hotel

SNH – Letter and copies of Review Documents of Loch Stack and River Laxford, Southern Parphe SSSIs.

CSER Licensing Committee & Licensing Board Agendas for 8th June 2010 meetings

Graham highlighted the Core Path Improvement Scheme correspondence and confirmed that the bid would include the Peat Road, Oldshoremore Beach path and Loch Innis.

(6) AOCB

(a) Football Pitch/Grass Cutting

Following a meeting, the Village Hall committee approached the Community Council for funding towards the cutting and maintenance of the football pitch in readiness for the forthcoming Gala. It was felt by some that the football club was responsible for the pitch and that the club and players ought to show more commitment and arrange for it to be mown every two weeks or so. However, it was suggested that all who use the pitch should help to keep it maintained. Graham confirmed that contact had been made with John Macdonald, the Highland Council person responsible for grass cutting to see if his department could undertake this (see Item (3)(b) of 04.05.10 Minutes). To date no reply had been received but a follow up email has been sent. It was stressed that the Gala was an important event for the community and that the pitch needed attention as races, shinty and other activities would take place on it on the day. Graham said he was happy to support the work at this time and the suggestion of placing a set amount on account at the garage was considered along with a debate over how much. Finally, Graham put it to the meeting and a majority voted for the opening of an account and setting the amount at £100. Whatever is not used would be reimbursed to the Community Council. Christine would arrange for the money to be available. **CM to action.**

Sylvia asked for it to be recorded that Anne Mackay has done and is doing a huge amount of work to raise funds for the drainage and other work.

(b) HIE Community Development Officers

This was initially brought up at the Community Council meeting of 06.04.10. Concern was again raised that both Melness and Durness have each acquired a Development Officer. It was felt that HIE were cherry picking successful areas and overlooking smaller communities who really needed help. Cllr Rowantree raised this at a recent meeting with Roy Kirk who clarified that there was no coverage for KLB. The scheme was seen to be a good idea and other officers are to be appointed. We need to find out where these are to be placed. We require a person dedicated to KLB to assist with advice and steer us in the right direction. Cllr Rowantree suggested we write to Roy Kirk asking what the rationale was behind the appointments and if there was any truth in the rumour that they are piggybacking on already successful communities. Ask why this area has been overlooked and whilst we feel it is not discriminatory why some areas are favoured and others not. Cllr Rowantree pointed out that there are many opportunities from the existing infrastructure that could bring in money to the community; coastal renewables would be high on the list of advantages and with the impending ownership of Loch Clash we would be in a good position. He said any vision had to be community sustainable. Stuart felt it important that the whole community needed to be supportive and receptive to ideas and projects in order for KLB to move forward. Cllr Rowantree suggested we look at the various Eday Orkney websites for inspiration.

(c) School house in Manse Road

This house has been boarded up and condemned. Graham asked if Cllr Rowantree could investigate this and enquire as to how we can make it usable once again as it is an important asset to the Community. In addition, there are also two Trust houses in Mackenzie Square that have been empty for the last six months. Cllr Rowantree agreed to enquire on the future of these.

(d) Benches at Droman

The benches at Droman are in a poor state. One has had a fire lit on top of it but they are securely fixed to the ground and can be repaired. Cllr Rowantree mentioned GREAN at Golspie who produce recycled benches from black bin bags which might be more suitable considering the conditions of weather and sea salt. It was decided to look at this company first. There is also a small piece of walkway that needs replacing, and a suggestion that the army could take this on was met with approval. In addition, the Garbet has a bench that they are willing to let us have, to put on the picnic site.

(e) Picnic sites

Graham had met with Ian Smith to bring to his attention the abuse of exam study leave by high school pupils. Pupils have been seen at the picnic site leaving litter and mess. Problems have also occurred with people drinking there. Mention of these problems has been passed to PC Ian Sutherland who is aware of it. Anti-litter signs are highly visible but are obviously being ignored. It is hoped that once the Youth Café is open the young will have somewhere to go and this will help the situation. Graham will ask the Youth Officer to make it a topic for discussion with the youngsters. In the meantime, the Community Council request that pupils treat these areas with respect and take all their litter away with them and place it in the nearest bin. **GW to action.**

(f) Ullapool Swimming Pool

The pool has been closed due to structural problems. It is thought the closure will last six to nine months. However, some teachers in KLB and Scourie have voiced concern that this could be the thin end of the wedge and, given the economic climate and financial cutbacks by Highland Council, might never reopen. Cllr Rowantree outlined the Council's rationale behind closures and he felt that due to the geographical structure of where the pool is, it was highly unlikely that it would close. He suggested we write to the Educational Service expressing how critical the pool is to the local area and that closure would be detrimental to the well being of all the communities who use it.

(g) Sheep

Graham asked if it is a community wide feeling that free roaming sheep within the village was a problem, the meeting agreed that it was. Discussion took place on the route we now take. Should it be approached from a formal or informal perspective? It is an historical problem and stems from the fact that the village has much common ground most of which is unfenced. Cllr Rowantree suggested as a first step that we contact Calum Mackenzie at the Scottish Payment Office at Golspie majoring on our concern about health issues, e.g. e-coli 157, especially with the sheep being allowed to roam around the health centre.

(7) Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 7.00 pm on 6 July 2010.

The Meeting ended at 9.10 pm