

Minutes of Meeting held on 26 January 2016 at The Harbour Offices

Present: Gary Sutherland (Chair), Christine Mackenzie (Treasurer), Murdo MacPherson (Secretary), Mairi Eastcroft, Kirsty Holland, Margaret Meek (Minutes)

Also present: Hugh Morrison (Highland Councillor), Graham Wild (Kinlochbervie Community Company), George Silcock (Local Policeman)

1.0 Minutes of 24 November 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2015 were proposed for approval by Christine and seconded by Kirsty. The minutes were approved.

2.0 Matters arising from Minutes of 24 November 2015

2.1 Proposed Health Care Provision Changes

Gary has not yet been in touch with a NHS representative.

2.2 17 Manse Road

Graham reported that once a deed plan is drawn up, the lease can be signed. Barry Pearson is preparing the deed plan. Highland Council has indicated that money can be made available through a vacant properties fund towards the cost of repairs.

2.3 Geopark

Murdo reported the following:

- The Geopark is recruiting a new Business Manager to replace Pete Harrison and Mike Goodwin. Mike is willing to work as needed on a consultant basis.
- Laura Hamlet will continue as Information Officer.
- There are two new Board members: one from Tongue Community Council and one from Loch Broom Community Council. The Tongue area is now in the Geopark and part of the Loch Broom catchment area is in the Geopark.
- The Rockstop is closed for the winter. Operational problems include the logistics of one person working in the café and providing interpretative services at the same time, the difficulty of recruiting staff because there is no accommodation and the lack of dedicated parking. Angled parking might be an idea but has not been considered.
- Geopark members must decide whether to run the Rockstop themselves or whether to tender for an operator. A previous attempt to find an operator was not successful.

- Financially, the Rockstop is breaking even and serves items like tea, coffee, soup and cakes. Hugh suggested that they consider traybakes as these have a longer shelf life.
- Plans for the Geocentre in Scourie are progressing well. The Geopark Board is looking for an expression of support from the Community Council.

Actions:

	Action	Who?
1	Write a letter of support to the Geopark for the Scourie Geocentre	Murdo

2.4 Core Paths

One sign is in place. The other core path signs are on hold. There are also signs in storage at the high school that need to be repainted as the lettering is faded. This can be repainted by students at the high school.

Actions:

	Action	Who?
1	Clarify when the posts can be repainted	Murdo

2.5 Football Pitch and Play Park

Christine reported that a funding application for the play park has been submitted to the Big Lottery Fund. She was unsure of the current status of the football pitch. However, the whole project is being managed by Alan Jones & Associates and the local group involved is very satisfied with his work.

2.6 Loch Clash Project

Graham reported that the last “loose end” before demolition can proceed is approval from Scottish Water. Apparently the records have been lost; this may cause a delay of several months. Alan Jones is trying to hasten the project.

2.7 Benches at Droman

The benches are ready. As soon as the weather is better, they will be transported to Droman and fastened down. The benches are stored at Norman Elrick’s yard.

2.8 Storm Damage at Loch Clash

Any work will wait for better weather and will not happen before March/April.

2.9 Droman Pier

Hugh Morrison reported that he is waiting to hear from Tony Usher. Mairi said that lime used to be applied in the past to clean the pier.

2.10 Community Broadband

Margaret reported that the Stage 1 surveys will be going out shortly.

2.11 Garage Notice Board

Gary has found a company that supplies weatherproofed, lockable boards - £79 for A1 and £105 for A0. This seemed very inexpensive and several people wondered whether they would be sturdy enough. Murdo mentioned that Donald Mitchell might have an extra sign.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Contact Donald Mitchell regarding a sign	Hugh

2.12 Data Protection

Murdo has registered the group. The cost was £35.

2.13 Tourist Traffic

The 8 road signs are still at the costing stage; money for these signs is coming from the Ward Discretionary Fund.

2.14 Signage at Kinlochbervie Turnoff

Gary distributed a revised mock-up of the proposed sign. It was suggested that the icons of available services be added as a separate sign below the main sign. It was suggested that the design be turned over to Barry Pearson in order to create a more dramatic main image.

Christine had obtained a price of £39 + VAT. Again there was worry it would not be sturdy enough. The sign must be affixed to something.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Ask Barry Pearson to add "drama" to the image.	

2.15 Leader Funding

Gary has resigned from the panel as it was proving too difficult to attend the meetings.

2.16 Planning for Your Future

Margaret mentioned that comments could still be made on-line until the end of January. The web link is <http://www.consult.highland.gov.uk>.

2.17 Oldshoremore Car Park

The Council won't do any work until after the winter. The dog waste bin has come away from the post and is lying on the ground.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Request that the dog waste bin be replaced	Hugh

2.18 Patient Transport

Hugh has attended a meeting about patient transport. The biggest issue is booking. Whether a patient is able to book transport successfully very much depends on who answers the telephone. Many staff are not aware of the transport difficulties in this area.

2.19 Minute Secretary

Christine has put up a notice for a new minute secretary.

2.20 Minutes on Community Web Site

The approved minutes should go on the community web site.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Send the minutes to Gary once they have been approved	Margaret

2.21 Bus Shelter

Christine will accept the offer of a bus shelter from Highland Council and find a place for it at the garage.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Send Christine the dimensions of the shelter	Hugh

2.22 Youth Funds

There is money remaining in the account of a defunct group - the North West Youth Initiative. The youth worker, Cara Cameron, had asked whether this money could be transferred to the Community Council and made available to her for youth work. Margaret brought a copy of the constitution of the North West Youth Initiative – it was not a charity and upon dissolution any funds may be given to support similar aims. It should be possible to find out the signatories of the account and start the process of transferring the funds to the Community Council.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Inform Cara Cameron about what can be done with the funds	Gary

3.0 Treasurer's Report

£35 has been sent for the Data Protection fee leaving £3,787 in the Bank. The War Memorial fund has £144.45. The Christmas light fund has £3,600; £500 was made at Santa's Grotto for Christmas lights.

The Community Council has received a £200 donation from the Endeavour fishing boat. Christine will put £100 to the War Memoria Fund and £100 to the cost of the Seniors' Christmas Dinner.

4.0 Correspondence

4.1 Proposed Caithness and Sutherland Development Plan

Murdo has the copy if anyone wants to read it.

5.0 A.O.C.B.

5.1 Proposed Closure of Achfary Primary School

Ian Jackson of Highland Council met with Gary to discuss the proposed closure of Achfary Primary School. It has already been "mothballed" for several years. The only child currently living in the catchment area attends Kinlochbervie Primary School and had already left Achfary School before it was "mothballed". The Community Council had no objection to closing the school.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Write a letter to Ian Jackson	Murdo

5.2 Reduction in Highland Council Ranger Service

George stated that Highland Council is considering reducing or abolishing the Ranger Service. Currently there are 2 rangers covering Assynt and North West Sutherland. There is a proposal to have reduce the provision to 1 ranger for both areas. There has also been discussion that the entire Ranger Service be eliminated. Hugh reported that there will be a Budget meeting on 21 February 2016. The Community Council felt strongly that the Ranger Service in North West Sutherland should remain at current levels.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Write a letter in support of keeping the Ranger service at present levels	Murdo

5.3 Rats in Manse Road

Rats have been sighted in Manse Road and there is concern that they will come into the houses.

Action:

	Action	Who?
1	Contact Highland Council re pest control	Hugh

5.4 Bus Timetable

All Community Council members received a copy of the new bus timetables via email. However, it would be good to have local timetables that could be posted and made available locally.

5.5 Ambulance Service

The most recently hired employee has transferred out of the area so the service is currently short staffed.

6.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 23 February 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Harbour Offices.