



CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of meeting held
on Tuesday 18th February 2014 at 7.30pm
in the Bonar Bridge Hall**

Present: Pete Campbell, Chair (PC), Russell Taylor, Treasurer (RT), Russell Smith (RS), Norman MacDonald (NM), Sandy Chalmers (SC), John White (JW), Brian Coghill (BC), Ron Boothroyd (RB)

Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Apologies: Lily Byron (LB), Highland Councillor George Farlow (GF)

Item 1/3. Welcome/Apologies (as above) /Police report. Chair, Pete Campbell welcomed the CC members and there being no police present moved to Item 2.

Item 2. Minutes of January meeting/matters arising (if not on agenda). The Minutes of the January meeting were approved as a true and accurate record, proposed by Russell Smith, seconded by Norman MacDonald. In his absence, a request was put to Cllr Farlow for THC to produce a 'policy statement' with regard to planning applications for windfarm developments. There appear to be no clear guidelines available to which CCs can refer when considering their own reactions to planning concerns. Is there criteria to follow for example with regard to the required distances for turbines from residencies, limits on size, etc? Boundaries of recent applications seem to be much closer to residences than were previously acceptable. Some guidelines were available in the early days of windfarm development but if they still exist they would need to be updated. The situation regarding 'Wild Land' should be clarified also. This will be an agenda item next month at which it is hoped that Cllr Farlow will be able to discuss guidelines/criteria. **GF Attention./Agenda item.**

Item 3. Regular updates:

- (i) **Planning & licensing.** (RS). Nothing relevant this month.
- (ii) **TEC Services.** (SC) THC engineers are due to assess the condition of the Glen Cassley road. The condition of the B9176 Struie road is giving cause for concern mainly due to the huge volume of heavy vehicles making constant use of the road. Fully laden log lorries often drive in convoy making overtaking impossible, bridges are constantly in a state of repair and often drivers of lighter vehicles are forced to pull off the road to allow oncoming lorries enough room to proceed. The bridges are old and worthy of respect, completely unfit to deal with heavy traffic which now uses this route. Cllr Graham Phillips, Head of TECS, will be invited to attend a CC meeting, to which Ardgay and Edderton CCs will be invited, to hear concerns and discuss the future of the road. **MG Action.**
- (iii) **Financial report.** (RT) Russell passed round the current bank statement showing a balance in the Treasurer's account of £6,759.19. The No2 Rock by Sea account has £8,858.00. RT commended LB for her handling of the Rosehall Community Transport scheme but will discuss with her the procedure for authorising each journey/transaction to ensure transparency. **RT/LB Action.**
- (iv) **Police Matters.** (NM) It is understood that speed checks were being carried out in Bonar Bridge today.
- (v) **KOSDT.** (PC) The Trust's bid to secure funding towards the buy-out of the Bonar Bridge Post Office is going ahead successfully. Other recent successful applications have secured funding for an energy saving project which will result in two and a half jobs in the Trust office. Interviews for these should take place this week. The plan to run the Coast to Coast race this year has been postponed to next year to

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allow for more research and preparation. This releases the £2,000 award from Beinn Tharsuinn which had been approved in principal last month.

- (vi) **Rosehall.** (JW/LB) Nil of note.
- (vii) **Invershin.** (SC) Achany Glen bus route. It is understood that Macleod's will alter the timetable in April; two services will go through the glen and three will bypass it going straight down the main road. Residents in the glen who wish to comment should contact Macleods and THC as soon as possible.
Invershin Cycle ramp. A meeting will be held this week with Matt Dent who has been appointed as THC contact for this project. It is hoped that further progress will be made after this meeting towards a satisfactory outcome. Report will be available at next month's meeting. **Agenda item.**
- (viii) **Highland Councillor's report.** Cllr Farlow had sent out three emails with regard to issues for tonight's meeting. They covered the Invershin ramp (see above) a link with regard to the CASPLAN (see below) and another regarding THC webcast which discussed Broadband (see below).
- (ix) **Broadband in Rosehall.** (RB) Still awaiting a reply from Ruth Liddicoat SSE. Discussions with Tara Morrison who has had long talks with Stuart Robinson HIE (presenter of information on THC webcast). A further announcement on developments is expected in April. His advice is to await further developments in the coming six months. RB will try to arrange a meeting with Stuart Robinson to discuss local issues directly. **RB Action.**

Item 4. Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CASPLAN). The Plan has now reached Stage 2 with consultation process due to begin in May. GF advised that public interactive presentation will take place in or around Bonar probably in the form of a Ward Forum. KOSDT has had good input from Highland Small Communities Housing Trust (HSCHT) which is conducting an audit locally seeking suitable housing sites. PC will ask for a synopsis of that report. RS will prepare information/feedback for the Ward Forum/ possible local public meeting. **PC/RS Action./Agenda item.**

Item 5. Carbisdale Castle/ Falls of Shin update. Carbisdale. An email received recently from Historic Scotland intimated that the listing is not making repairs impossibly expensive. Historic Scotland met with SYHA recently and discussed with them the repairs needed, and some options for addressing these. SYHA explained that it had been misinterpreted in the public domain that because the building was listed, it meant repair costs would be prohibitively high and that the building would therefore have to close. SYHA and Historic Scotland were both clear this was not the case and that a misunderstanding had arisen. The point is that each case is assessed on its own merits and individual circumstances, and this includes factoring in to the discussions what is considered achievable, relevant costs, etc. No application has been submitted concerning Carbisdale. Carbisdale's continued usage rests less with Historic Scotland than with the owners and what they want. SYHA has its own priorities and challenges to address. The owners have to decide what their future vision is for Carbisdale; and whether or not they see themselves as being a part of that future.

Falls of Shin. A public meeting is to be held on 19th March at 7.30pm in Invershin Hall to discuss possible plans for future use of the site. Balnagown Estate is keen to work with HIE and KOSDT towards providing a community owned facility which would support local producers, from market gardeners to arts and crafts, etc. There is strong potential for such a venture which would provide employment and would require serious skills management.

Item 6. Beinn Tharsuinn community benefit/Rock by Sea Fund applications. NM reported that all award recipients are up to date in compliance with the requirement to submit receipts/reports, etc. An award of £1,080 was approved to the Creich, Croick & Kincardine District Day Care Association (Bradbury Centre) to help with design and architect fees for a proposed extension. It was suggested that for future applications the Centre could cast its net a little wider to take in other areas besides Creich and Ardgay as many of its clients come from further afield. This could open up

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a larger source of funding. The decision regarding an application by the Dornoch Firth Group was held over until next month pending further information about the youth café project. NM will liaise with Ardgay CC who also had questions to put to the DFG. A list of all previous successful applicants to BTWF is to be sought in time for further discussion next month. **NM/MG Action.**

Item 7. Windfarms updates. RT suggested that the services of Foundation Scotland to the Achany Panel might no longer be required owing to the splitting of the fund. PC advised that neither E.ON nor SSE would countenance not using Foundation Scotland as the administrator for their funds. As other benefit schemes come into force knowledgeable management skills will be required even more; CCs do not have the skills or facilities to do this.

Item 8. Pensioner energy/heating support plan. No longer relevant. Remove from agenda.

Item 9. Community Council notice board. NM has been advised that the board will be in place this week.

Item 10. Correspondence. Nil of note.

Item 11. Any other competent business. (1) SC advised that the windows in the Bonar Bridge Library are not being maintained and in danger of falling out due to lack of care. He will liaise with John Clark, TECS. Letter could be sent to THC. SC to advise MG. **SC/MG Action.** (2) **Service Point closures.** All members very angry at lack of consultation on this issue and expressed strong opposition to closures. Major issues will arise for many without the face-to-face contact facility; many people are not able/do not choose to conduct their business with THC by phone or internet. Fears expressed for the future of the Library building and its services. THC to be advised of CC concerns. **MG Action.** (3) **Burger van.** Opinions expressed that the burger van operating outside the Bridge Hotel is unsightly and in an inappropriate place, albeit on hotel ground. Traffic issues are arising due to parking difficulties; also safety issues due to the placement of the van. Not wishing to deter a local business opportunity, the CC will continue to monitor this situation. (4) **CC website.** It has been brought to the CC's attention that the contact information for direct link to the CC from the website is no longer appropriate. Updating of the site has fallen behind since the closure of Key Commercial Services. KOSDT to be asked to take on website maintenance. **PC Action.**

Item 11. Date, time and place of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 18th March 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Rosehall Village Hall. MG to book the room **MG Action.** PC submitted his apologies in advance; SC will chair the March meeting.

Meeting closed 9.15pm.