



CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of meeting held
on Tuesday 18th March 2014 at 7.30pm
in the Rosehall Village Hall**

Present: Russell Taylor, Treasurer & Acting Chair (RT), Russell Smith (RS), Norman MacDonald (NM), John White (JW), Ron Boothroyd (RB), Lily Byron (LB)

Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Apologies: Pete Campbell, Chair (PC), Sandy Chalmers (SC), Brian Coghill (BC)

Also present: Highland Councillor George Farlow (GF), Hayley Bangs (HB) and Pauline Smith (PS), KOSYDG, Jim McCourt, Citizen's Advice Bureau (JM), and PC Katy Hunter (KH)

Item 1. Welcome/Apologies (as above) /Police report. Acting Chair Russell Taylor opened the meeting and after welcoming everyone he invited PC Hunter to give her report. 22 incidents have been reported in the last calendar month. Two were quickly detected and dealt with, one of vandalism at the Bonar Bridge toilets remains undetected so far. Three speeding offences and one vehicle defect incident were also included in the list of twenty-two. Comments were recorded covering the lack of local knowledge of Police Scotland officers at the central control point in Inverness and fears that 'Postcode Policing' will be the norm before long. At present many officers live within Sutherland and due to the incredibly law-abiding population and its willingness to work with the police force, this a two-way co-operation works well. PC Hunter apologised for the lack of police attendance in the last couple of months and she will try to gather statistics for those months ahead of the next CC meeting.

Item 2. Hayley Bangs, KOSYDG. Hayley and fellow member of the KOSYDG management committee Pauline Smith then presented copies of the plans for the proposed Youth Centre and café at their site at the South Bonar Industrial Estate. These plans are currently before the Planning Committee at THC. Good use of the full site will be made and the premises will include a youth space with table tennis, pool table, etc which will be exclusively for use by the youth members. A multi-purpose area can be utilised for many activities including training, classes, toddlers' activities and existing clubs. The café area will be available for parents and children. The committee has ensured there is no clash of interests with the existing café in the village. It is hoped that a gym and fitness centre will be incorporated on the upper level and that this facility will help to bring in funds to be used towards the ongoing operation of the centre. The group is working closely with the Glasgow Science Centre and hopes to establish a 'Discovery Centre' as an educational asset. Overall costs for the project come in around £1.25m. The group has been invited to apply to Stage 2 of The Big Lottery once they receive Planning approval. HB and PS left the meeting with thanks for taking time to appraise the CC of the plans. The CC will send a letter in support of the project to THC Planning. **MG Action.**

Item 3. Jim McCourt, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Golspie. Mr McCourt gave a brief presentation on the work of the CAB, detailing the wide range of advice offered by the service. The main issues are about benefits, finances, employment and consumer issues, relationship problems and housing. Volunteer advisers are trained to interview clients, explain information and advice, search for information and provide practical help. The CAB has been in Bonar Bridge every Thursday though it is currently seeking a replacement volunteer to run this session. Volunteers often use CAB work as a stepping stone to finding full time employment and the training received is valued by future employers. The service is advertised every week on the back page of the Northern Times and a publicity awareness initiative is presently underway through posters and flyers. Anyone wishing to

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become a volunteer should contact the Golspie office on 01408 633000 or email on advice@esvas.org.uk JM was thanked for his input and left the meeting at 8.15pm.

Item 4. Minutes of February meeting/matters arising (if not on agenda). The Minutes of the February meeting were approved as a true and accurate record, proposed by Russell Smith, seconded by Norman MacDonald. **(1) Service Points closures.** GF apologised that the announcement of the Service Point closures had been badly handled and the lack of consultation was lamentable. He confirmed that the proposed closures will be staged over a fifteen month period. Each Service Point will be considered individually or within the Ward in which it is situated. THC is seeking to find the best modern methods of reaching the public utilising internet and phone connections where possible. Face to face meetings can be arranged when required, CAB offices can be used more than they are already. All births are now registered in Raigmore Hospital at the time. THC is facing a required saving of £60m - £80m over the coming years; changing the way they liaise with the public should account for savings of around £½m per year. **(2)** GF advised that there is no single policy in effect within THC with regard to the approval or rejection of planning applications for windfarm developments. Each case is different and considered on its own merits.

Item 5. Regular updates:

- (i) **Planning & licensing.** (RS). A screening application has been submitted to THC in respect of the Airdens turbine which has some modifications from the earlier (withdrawn) application. As this is a screening application it is not available to the public for comment at this stage. An application for a new house at the old Scottish Water reservoir on Tulloch Hill reminded CC members that this site had previously been discussed when local disquiet had been raised. The building will be on the skyline and access will be across the common grazings. RS will register an interest with Planning on behalf of the CC and will liaise with SC and others in the community to gauge opinion. **RS Action.**
- (ii) **TEC Services.** (SC) Nil of note in Sandy's absence.
- (iii) **Financial report.** (RT) Russell passed round the current bank statement showing a balance in the Treasurer's account of £5,720.74. The No2 Rock by Sea account has £9,108.00.
- (iv) **Police Matters.** (NM) Nothing to add to the police report at Item 1.
- (v) **KOSDT.** An update from the Development Officer had been circulated late today. It included amongst other items, a progress report in respect of the initial stages of plans for the Bonar Bridge Post Office, discussions with Highland Small Communities Housing Trust regarding potential development sites in the area, ongoing 40th Bridge Birthday celebrations, discussions with HIE towards help with higher level of funding support for projects, consultancies and training, Trust office improvements and training, social media training, and steps taken to revamp the Trust website to make more user friendly and suitable for a variety of projects.
- (vi) **Rosehall.** (JW/LB) The Community Transport service is working well and within budget. It is used mostly by two families. Recent trips have utilised mostly the Lairg taxi as the clients' appointments have been there. It was agreed that the taxi invoices should go first to LB for verification prior to RT for payment. Complaints registered once again regarding log lorries driving in convoy, inconsiderate driving behaviour, driving while using mobile phones, etc. A letter will be sent again to the Forestry Commission highlighting the ongoing issues. **MG Action.**
- (vii) **Invershin. Cycle ramp.** The recent meeting with Matt Dent, THC Access Officer and appointed lead, has led to THC taking control of this project. THC is satisfied with approvals and new 'as installed' drawings are being prepared by THC engineers. The main concern is with regard to corrosion but this has been addressed. It is hoped that the ramp will be in place for the start of the tourist season. On completion of the project CC will write to thank Matt Dent for his considerable input into reaching the satisfactory conclusion. **MG Action.**

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(viii) **Highland Councillor's report.** (GF) Communities Councils and their Development Companies should consider immediate scoping for projects for the forthcoming next round of LEADER 2014 -2010 funding (part of SRDP from EU). GF will attend a conference in Glasgow on 20 March 2014 to input into the structure of that funding programme from 2014 – 2015. Horizon 2020 is a fund to which Highlands should also apply.

(ix) **Broadband in Rosehall.** (RB) Nothing new this month.

Item 6. Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CASPLAN). Nothing further this month Keep as an agenda item. **RS Action. Agenda item.**

Item 7. Carbisdale Castle/ Falls of Shin update. Carbisdale. Nothing new.

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 with 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 8. Beinn Tharsuinn community benefit/Rock by Sea Fund applications. NM passed round a breakdown of Beinn Tharsuinn awards made during the period 1st January 2010 to 31st December 2013. Two current applications were discussed. The application from the Dornoch Firth Group, held over from last month for further information, was rejected owing to the perceived over provision of youth activities and the wishes of the CC to dedicate such support to KOSYDG. An application by KOSDT for £2,000 towards initial work on the Bonar Bridge Post Office/ house was approved. **MG Action.**

Item 9. Windfarms updates. Nothing new this month.

Item 10. Community Council notice board. Ongoing. LB reported the damage to the Rosehall notice board; this will be passed to KOSDT once again. **MG Action.**

Item 11. Correspondence. Nil of note.

Item 12. Any other competent business. (1) THC litter collection service from the streets has not been noted for some time. GF advised that this should be reported through the Service Point and duly logged there as a complaint. (2) LB complained of the cavalier way the THC tree/ brush cutter has hacked not only the trees and bushes on the A837 but also a far wider stretch of roadside than is necessary, including the chopping of some fence posts. The cutter is apparently set at a specific distance which the driver is unable to alter. It is hoped that the unsightly damage will be less obvious as spring growth sets in. (3) Members approved the taking of September as the mid-season break.

Item 13. Date, time and place of next meeting. Owing to the number of members indicating their unavailability in April there will be no meeting that month. The next meeting therefore will be held on Tuesday, 20th May 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Invershin Village Hall. SC to book the room. **SC Action.**

Meeting closed 9.30pm.