

Minutes approved 16/02/2016



CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 19th January 2016 at 7.30pm in the Invershin Village Hall

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

Also present: PC Dave Thompson, PC Steven MacKenzie, Steven Scott (SS), Michael Baird (MB) (at 8.05pm)

Apologies: Brian Coghill (BC)

Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Item 1. Welcome/Apologies (as above)/Police report. Chair Pete Campbell welcomed everyone to the first meeting after the Christmas/New Year break. PCs Thompson and MacKenzie had attended ahead of the start of the meeting but owing to pressure of duties they had to leave. They presented a brief written report which was read to the meeting. In the Invershin/Rosehall area in the last month were seven incidents reported made up of two road traffic incidents, one medical matter, one alarm activation, two neighbour disputes and one false call of good intent. There was nothing to report to the police from the CC.

Item 2. CHESS presentation. Rhionna Mackay had apologised that she was unable to attend tonight. It was agreed to invite her to the February meeting. **MG Action.**

Item 3. Minutes November meeting/matters arising (if not on agenda). The minutes of the November meeting were approved as a true and accurate record; proposed: Russell Smith, seconded: John White. PC passed round a picture of the cycle ramp now installed at the Invershin viaduct. PC will chase up TA regarding the commemorative plaque. **PC/TA Action.** RS wrote to Bank of Scotland regarding the reduction of hours. Nothing further heard. Local campaign continues, if for no other reason than to fight against any further reductions.

Item 4. Regular updates:

- (i) Planning & licensing.** (RS). Nothing relevant.
- (ii) TEC Services.** (1) Road Closed signs not being taken down promptly after flood risk reduced. (2) Verge cutting. Why is this done now when it will have no effect on spring growth? (3) Tapachy. Direction signpost points in the wrong direction. (4) Clashmore to Whiteface road. Spinningdale resident highlighted the lack of white lines or cats eyes on this section of road giving no guide to drivers. All issues will be passed to THC. **MG Action.**
- (iii) Financial report.** (RT) RT passed round copies of the report which shows a balance of £2586.38 in the Treasurer's account and £8,566.00 in the Rock-by-Sea account. RT highlighted that the reduced opening hours at the Bank may well slow down processing of business. It was agreed that he should set up Internet banking facilities to alleviate delays when possible, even though this was felt to be encouraging the Bank of Scotland's attitude to lack of footfall in the branch. RT was also given the go-ahead to start negotiating for the care and maintenance of the floral tubs in Bonar Bridge in the coming season. **RT Action.** NM agreed to contact Mrs Margaret Ross regarding the taking down of the Christmas lights and also to discuss an appropriate gesture of thanks to this

year's volunteers. NM will liaise with RT/MG as appropriate.

NM/RT/MG Action.

- (iii) Police Matters.** (NM) Nil to add to report at Item 1 above.
- (v) KOSDT.** (PC) Trust meeting last night. Discussions with Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) progressing well. Shin Falls project still awaits Lottery decision, due in February. Nothing to report regarding Ardgay Regeneration project. The energy projects which have been running are coming to the end of their funding. These were income sources for the Trust; new ideas are being followed up in hope of replacing them. The graduate placement is also due to finish in March. Calum Couston has been an enormous asset to the many projects ongoing in the office and will be a hard act to follow.
- (vi) Rosehall.** (JW) Nil of note.
- (vii) Invershin.** (PC) Nothing to add beyond the cycle ramp picture.
- (viii) Highland Councillor's report.** (GF) None available in Cllr Farlow's absence.
- (ix) Broadband in Rosehall.** (RB) As stated at 4(v) above there are positive signs following the results of the recent community survey carried out by KOSDT. 400 questionnaires were hand delivered by Calum and colleagues with a return of 138, 59 of which were from the Rosehall exchange area. BT has indicated a recent change in its post code policy and it will now be asked to analyse the relevant post codes and report back; this is expected to take around six weeks. CBS will then undertake a scoping exercise which could start in March with a result available by the end of June. At that stage a public meeting can be called to discuss where and how the scheme could operate, costs involved, etc. RB was commended for his work so far in taking this project forward.
- (x) SSE Loch Buidhe update.** (RS) Road works are officially completed, although in fact issues such as verges, ditches and drainage, white lining will all await better weather. Barriers are being requested by the Liaison Group for the various stretches of road which now incorporate dangerous bends, steep banks, etc. It was noted that several large cracks have appeared in the road surface at various points. Patching will be carried out until the end of the project, expected October 2018, at which point resurfacing will be done. Traffic should now be less due to the completion of the timber extraction. Thanks were expressed to RS for the excellent monitoring/liaison work.

Item 5. Local bus service provision. RT raised concern over the lack of bus services on Boxing Day and 2nd January which could have inconvenienced local workers getting to work in Tain. He questioned whether the CC could instigate a scheme whereby the Bradbury bus might be used to alleviate difficulties but it was thought unlikely that a driver would be available on a Public Holiday. Overall opinion was that employers who require staff on Public Holidays should provide transport for them, or schedule workers who do not have transport issues. Supermarkets are now running delivery vans to many areas and ought to be able to arrange worker transport if required.

Item 6. Windfarm updates. Braemore. Result of the Scottish Government decision is awaited.

Item 7. Beinn Tharsuinn community benefit/Rock by Sea Fund applications. BTWF.

Application by KOSDT for £1,000 to help run a Wild Food Event during which seven national and international food journalists would be invited to the area, taken to various food related enterprises, and on their return to London they would attend a cooking event and then write up their articles covering the event and the produce. The aim would be the promotion of the area and its food in significant publications. It would also be hoped that this could entice visitors to the area and off the new NC 500 route. Opinion was evenly divided on the benefits that such an event would accrue to the area. With no specific details given regarding which businesses would benefit nor what controls

there might be over the obligations of the journalists it was felt that no decision could be reached at this stage. The applicant will be asked to supply a considerably more detailed breakdown of benefits and also consider applying for funding from other windfarm funds in the wider area.

Endowment Fund. All present approved the transfer of a further £5,000 to the Endowment Fund which will then stand at £25,000. Foundation Scotland to be asked for information regarding the setting up of a trust to administer this fund with a view to it earning interest in the coming years.

MG Action. Rock by Sea. A draft poster and proposal has been submitted by KOSDT with a view to promoting and administering the Rock by Sea (Training & Development) Fund on behalf of the CC. The poster was approved. No discussion took place regarding the administration which would see KOSDT receiving the letters of application and passing them to the CC for decisions. KOSDT would then send awards to successful applicants and advise others. There was no mention in the draft proposal document of any fee this service will incur.

Item 8. Website/newsletter. (RB) Having taken time to assess the current website, RB has agreed to take on its much needed updating. No minutes have been posted since last April; copies of approved minutes from them to date will now be added. RB has investigated cost alternatives regarding various possibilities for hosting the site; it was agreed to remain with the status quo at present while the basic upgrading is done then reconsider further improvements and the cost implications. **MG/RB Action.** RB and RT have had meetings with Silvia Muras and Phil Olson with regard to the possible linking into one newsletter information from the two CCs. This would prove an expensive operation for Creich which, owing to the area it covers and population size, would probably become liable for a two thirds split of costs. A detailed breakdown of the initial set up of such a merger showed a cost to Creich of approximately £2,000. While the quality of the A&DCC newsletter is without question it was agreed that the cost to CCC would be prohibitive. Evolving the CCC website was considered a more viable avenue at this time. RB will advise Silvia Muras and Phil Olson, thanking them for taking time to consider the proposal in such detail. RB and RT were thanked for the considerable time and effort put into the research. **RB Action.**

Item 9. Correspondence. (1) Litter on Struie. Steven Scott attended the meeting following his letter highlighting the serious problem of litter and fly-tipped items along stretches of the Struie. As a cyclist he is in a better position to see the extent of the problem than vehicle drivers and he has recently been appalled by the amounts. It would appear that drivers/passengers in trades vans and lorries are the most likely culprits for the Red Bull and other plastic drinks bottles, also plastic food wrappers. SS would be willing with others to undertake a clean-up event but wondered if THC has any obligation or team to deal with this. CC will write to enquire and keep SS informed. Local 'Clean-Up Days' have been run in Lairg and Ardgay with good success and volunteer support. KOSDT to be asked if this is something it could organise in the Kyle villages and also perhaps on certain sections of the Struie if THC is unable to help. **MG Action. (2) Fountain Forestry.** JW is in touch with Fountain Forestry regarding a clearance programme which it had intimated by letter to CC. **(3) BT – Tullich.** RB has received a request from Mrs Brooker at Tullich, Altas, seeking help in her negotiations with BT to repair and restore a satisfactory telephone line and service. To date her own efforts have failed to achieve a conclusion. CC will write to MP and MSP asking that they look into the matter and try to bring about a good result. **MG/RB Action.**

Item 10. Any other competent business. (1) Bonar Bridge recycling point (skip) closure. A member of the public has advised the CC that the Bonar skip is to close at the end of May. No consultation or information has come to the CC on this issue, whether it is in fact to happen, or how the materials currently taken there should be dealt with by the public. CC will write to Ward Manager and Cllr Farlow for clarification. If manpower hours are an issue, CCTV was suggested as a possible alternative for monitoring proper usage of the facility, which would be greatly missed should it close. **MG Action. (2) Bank of Scotland reduced service in Bonar Bridge.** MB has had a reply from Fergus Ewing MP which reiterated the reasoning put out by Bank of Scotland and which led to the reduction of opening hours. Much of this information is inaccurate. MB has taken the issue to the Financial Ombudsman. Living in the same building as the branch, MB is aware of the numbers of people attempting to conduct banking business out with the one day of opening. CC thanked him for his diligence and encouraged him to keep a log of all such incidents. It is felt unlikely that the Bank can be made to restore any opening hours but at least this concerted effort might reduce the possibility of further cuts in service.

Item 12. Date, time and place of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 16th February at 7.30 pm in the Achness Hotel, Rosehall. MG to book the room. **MG Action.**

