



CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held
on Tuesday 4th August 2020 at 7.30pm
on Zoom

Present: Pete Campbell, Chair (PC), Marcus Munro, Vice Chair (MM), Mary Goulder, Treasurer/Secretary (MG), Russell Smith (RS), Norman MacDonald (NM)

Apologies: John White (JW), Rikki Veters (RV)

Also present: Highland Councillor Kirsteen Currie (KC)

Item 1. Welcome/apologies (as above). Police report. The meeting was hosted by Secretary Mary Goulder following set up by Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust. Help beforehand from Valerie Houston was much appreciated. Police Scotland had been advised of the Zoom meeting, albeit at short notice, hoping that a report might be available, but no reply had been received. A draft agenda was in place but used as a guide for this first meeting since lockdown.

Item 2. Minutes of January meeting/matters arising. The minutes of the January meeting, the last to be held before lockdown, were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Russell Smith, seconded by Marcus Munro. The actions noted for KC in January were not discussed but it is hoped an update can be forthcoming in due course. It was accepted that the pandemic emergency has affected adversely all such matters. In particular the work required at Creich Cemetery on the path was questioned. **KC Action.**

Item 3. Regular updates:

- (i) **Planning & Licensing.** (RS) Any relevant applications had been circulated. Nothing requiring discussion at this time.
- (ii) **TECS.** (1) MM recorded appreciation for the ditch clearing work done by THC during recent months on local single-track roads. (2) PC stated the strong level of local anger that the recycling centre in Bonar Bridge has not been re-opened. A definite increase in fly-tipping is being noticed throughout the area. Pressure must be placed on THC to re-open the facility, if only on two days a week. KC is already working on this and will report back asap. (3) In the last week three accidents have happened at the high bridge at Mid-Fearn on the B9176 Struie Road. Although outwith this CC's boundaries this road is a major access/exit route for the area and communities further north. CC has been pressing for years for action to protect the bridges on this road; they deserve protected status and should be maintained accordingly. The regular damage could be avoided by making the bridge a one-way priority or the installation of traffic lights as elsewhere on this road. KC will action this tomorrow. (4) Public toilets. KC confirmed that the local facilities are open but that there is a major problem arising from the massive influx of caravans, campervans and wild camping not making use of them. The issue of human waste being left throughout the Highland Region is creating a major health hazard, not least to outdoor workers engaging in strimming operations. Public sectors workers, along with the general public, are being placed at serious risk. She has written to Scottish Government and THC and will report back to CC as/when replies are received. (5) Bonar Bridge-Ardgay straight. Again KC is chasing action via the MP and MSP. **KC Action all points.**
- (iii) **Financial report.** (MG) Treasurer gave current balance in No 1 account - £3777.37 and details of outgoing payments since February were noted. Bank of Scotland has still failed to alter the signatories on the No 2 account, allowing no internet or paper access to the Treasurer despite appropriate forms being submitted more than once and a letter of

explanation sent. Bank of Scotland is treating that as a complaint but since April has not been capable of carrying out this simple alteration. KC offered to act through Scottish Government; MG will provide details to her. **MG/KC Action.**

Chair advised that the first payment from the new Coire na Cloiche windfarm development has been made to the No 2 account and this will be a continuing annual payment. A small percentage of this should be ring-fenced to benefit the local village halls. PC will check this out. For agenda discussion at next meeting. **PC**

Action/Agenda item.

- (iv) **Rosehall.** MM advised of a nervousness in the area concerning the influx of visitors but aware that many local businesses depend on tourism for income and have been hit hard in recent months. Related to tourism, he commented on the very poor condition of local signage, ugly and damaged or non-existent. KC indicated there are various funding opportunities available and suggested that KOSDT could be the best route to take this forward. She will send details to the Trust. HOST might also wish to consider some action. **KC Action.**
- (v) **Invershin.** During lockdown the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Board, via Keith Williams, advised of damage to the Inveran bridge with masonry in danger of falling into the River Shin. THC denies any responsibility for the bridge despite it carrying the main A837 for many years until the present bridge was put in place. KW is trying to establish ownership of the structure and the land on either side. Once again, this old bridge should be a protected structure. PC will contact KW for any update. **PC Action.**
- (vi) **Highland Councillor's report.** (KC) THC is beginning to hold meetings online which is less than satisfactory but all that can be managed at present. During lockdown the Gold Group within THC was responsible for administration but Cllrs unhappy with there being no opportunity to question policies before they were enacted. She praised the many local/volunteer groups throughout the area, in particular David Watson and the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust and the Bradbury Centre. From a standing start organisations have set up excellent supportive arrangements for the community, showing great proactive generosity of spirit, with the result that should a second, perhaps worse, wave of infections occur, everyone is already prepared and ready to act appropriately. Chair thanked KC for her involvement in all such efforts locally.

4. Windfarm updates. Sallachy. Pre-planning application expected shortly. Discussions regarding a community buy-in by local CCs have proved nigh on impossible. Other options are being considered. Lairg 2 development is at the pre-planning stage. Braelangwell developers seeking a conference/Zoom call with CC. Dates will be forwarded to them, PC and RS will take part. **MG Action.** MM discussed the need for further developments when the capacity to deal with production is not adequate at present. Proper Planning considerations should be given to building appropriate battery storage or energy harnessing before erecting yet more turbines. PC will discuss this further with KOSDT. **PC Action.**

5. Website update. Nothing to report.

6. Correspondence. Any relevant correspondence has been forwarded. Nothing picked up at this time.

7. Any other competent business. It was agreed that KW will be included in all communications and invited to attend the next meeting with a view to co-option. **MG Action.**

8. Date, time and place of next meeting. Due to the continuing restrictions it is proposed (tbc) that the next meeting will also be held using Zoom, on Tuesday 15th September at 7.30pm. This will be attended by CCs and HC only. Any matters raised by members of the public will be addressed on their behalf.

9. Private session. Beinn Tharsuinn/Rock by Sea funding applications. Regular applications were suspended at the start of lockdown with priority given to supporting any relevant to the pandemic situation. Applications already received at that time were placed on hold. It was felt that it

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is appropriate to re-open the funds. Applications in hand were discussed. Kyle of Sutherland Rainbow, Brownie and Guide Unit was awarded £250 towards new unit flags; Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust was awarded £3,000 towards the Kyle – All Lives Matter programme; application by Bonar Bridge Primary School Parent Council for funding towards a pupil and community adventure play project will be advised to reapply once this is more relevant owing to current restrictions. The transfer of £2,000 to Creich CC agreed in February by email was ratified. Enquiry from Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Board regarding possible application for funding to purchase online conferencing equipment was discussed. It was felt that the existing online platforms exist, e.g. Zoom/Microsoft Teams, fulfil most of the local requirements. KOSFT will be advised to liaise with KOSDT to perhaps establish a good local resource which could be based in the Trust offices with access available to those who can utilise it. Phil Tomalin, Company Secretary and applicants will be advised. **MG/NM/PT Action.**

Meeting closed 9pm.