



CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of meeting held
on Tuesday 15th June 2021 at 8.00pm
on Zoom**

Present: Pete Campbell, Chair (PC), Marcus Munro, Vice Chair (MM), Mary Goulder, Treasurer/Secretary (MG), Norman MacDonald (NM), John White (JW), Rikki Vettors (RV), Keith Williams (KW), Donna Gilchrist, Incoming Treasurer (DG),

Apologies: Russell Smith (RS), Brian Coghill (BC)

Also present: Highland Councillor Kirsteen Currie (KC), David Watson, KoSDT (DW), Colin Gilmour (CG), Michael Baird (MB), Sharon Martin (SM)

Police representative: No report received

Item 1. Welcome/apologies (as above). Police report. Chair opened the meeting. No police report available.

Item 2. Minutes of May meeting/matters arising. (1) With the addition of NM's comments regarding the ongoing closure of Migdale Hospital, the minutes of the May meeting, also held on Zoom, were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Norman MacDonald; seconded by Marcus Munro. (2) Stress laid once again on the poor condition of the Glencassley and Struie roads. KC advised that Struie is on the list with works expected in the next couple of weeks. She constantly pushes for work to be moved up the priority list for Glencassley and will highlight this again to the Roads Manager. PC stated that the B9176 is in disgraceful condition with potholes a foot deep in places and often unavoidable in traffic. HGVs should be banned from this road and repairs are urgently needed. KC encouraged to make THC aware of the strong feelings of the communities affected. This road is the Sutherland gateway and deserves proper maintenance. **KC Action.** (3) Rosehall Mansion House. KC has raised the issue with THC Tourism Group but with disappointing outcome. Also discussed with the Police and Fire Service. The police advise they have not received calls from the public regarding traffic/parking issues therefore no action can be taken. Concerned locals are advised to call 101 and report any difficulties/issues when they arise. The police can move people on if their parking causes danger or obstruction. Scottish Fire & Rescue hope to speak to the owner regarding the dangerous condition of the property. CG stated that the lack of any parking is the issue and reiterated that RADAG's public liability insurance does not cover those parking but not using the trails. The police had attended twice but were unable to take any action. Concerned locals are encouraged to call 101 if necessary. (4) Cemetery walls. KC is following up complaints made in May with THC officials. She is struggling to have action taken but is unable to make it happen. Shortages of money and personnel are constantly quoted to her as reasons for inaction. She has taken the matter to THC Chief Executive and will do so again. All agreed that lack of maintenance is disrespectful and insulting to the community; proper care is seen as a basic and fundamental issue. PC requested that when KC makes representations to THC on behalf of the CC, she copies in the CC Secretary to keep members abreast of such actions/outcomes.

KC Action.

Item 3. Regular updates:

- 1. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust.** (DW) (1) Bonar Bridge Post Office. The office will be closed for approximately four months for major refurbishment/renovation. The service will operate out of the Crannag Restaurant premises during the closure. (2) Bonar toilets/campervan facility. With regret KoSDT has withdrawn its planning application as THC is not prepared to take it forward due to the SEPA objection. Nothing further can be done unless resolution with SEPA can be achieved. At present the toilet facility is closed due to inappropriate use for chemical waste disposal. Notices are posted directing the public

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to the facility at Falls of Shin. (3) Visitor Centre. Covid restrictions are hampering steps to find a new operator for the centre. The Crofter's Restaurant will operate a food trailer in the car park over the season and the toilets will be open and maintained. Long term solution is still being sought.

2. **Planning & Licensing.** (RS) RS had forwarded all relevant applications. Nil of note.
3. **TECS.** (1) Rosehall glass recycling point. SM advised that THC has not approached either Balnagown or her regarding any problem. She is happy with the move of the bins, but THC should conduct a risk assessment and then make the site safe for livestock, and the public. THC's Andy Hume should speak directly to SM. Installing a concrete base with a lip to contain broken glass under/around the bins and fencing them off from the field would solve the problem. **MG Action.**
4. **Financial report.** (MG) The balance of the Treasurer's account is £2,812.98 Outgoing payment to Highland Bookkeeping Service and Faclan Word Service. The No 2 account balance is £26,430.83. Now working to effect transfer of Treasure duties to DG.
5. **Rosehall.** See Item 2 (3).
6. **Invershin.** (KW) (1) Inveran. Inveran bridge. KW awaiting update from Colin Howell, THC, re Land Register enquiries. **Agenda item.** (2) Awaiting update regarding road repairs on the access road to the houses at Inveran. Residents have heard nothing further following the inspection by THC official. **KC Action.**
7. **Bonar Bridge.** (1) Speeding issues. No progress made since last month. Several complaints received from residents on Lairg Road. KC advised that a survey by THC indicated that average speeds on the Bonar/Ardgay straight were below the limit of 60mph but on Lairg Road the average is over 30mph. Urged by the Chair as the speed of traffic appears to be increasing, KC will speak to Josie at THC Roads Department in the morning. **KC Action.** MM was instructed to effect purchase through his contact at THC of the previously agreed speed indicator signs asap with urgent installation arranged. THC should invoice CC appropriately.
8. **Highland Councillor's report.** (KC) Most points are covered throughout the meeting. (1) The proposed windfarm at Strathrory was refused by THC Planning but an appeal is expected. (2) From 2022 THC Ward One will only have two elected councillors instead of three. CC had made objection to the Boundaries Committee when the change was proposed. Such a vast area is already exceedingly difficult to be served efficiently by three councillors. Reducing to two is yet another attack on local democracy. (3) It is possible that the Dornoch Service Point in the Courthouse may be closed. Not regularly manned. (4) THC continues to follow Government guidelines and observing restrictions on social gatherings, hence this meeting on Zoom.

Item 4. Windfarm updates. (1) (PC) PC met reps from SSE regarding community benefit but with little positive to report. SSE was still offering community benefit of £3,000 over 25 years when previous agreements were for £5,000. Of this £2,000 would go to the entitled local communities with the remaining £1,000 being spread further afield by SSE. Vociferous disagreement was expressed by PC with support from A&DCC reps. SSE sent out an email today with notes from the meeting. It states that other developers who are offering £5k are reducing the payment period to 10 years while still others are promising £5k but with no intention of developing the sites. They would aim to get consent and then sell on. This is common practice. SSE develops, constructs, and operates the sites they have. PC disputed the aforementioned reduction to a 10-year period as other developers are quoting £5k over 30 years. The CC will continue to pursue the best possible agreement to benefit the community as a whole, representing the majority opinions. NoROS was encouraged to become more forceful, use the media, etc to get the community feelings wider publicity. It is understood that an extremely high percentage of locals is against further development on the south side of the Strathoykel glen, although if the developments were proposed on the other side of those hills, it would annoy practically no-one.

Item 5. Correspondence. Any relevant correspondence had been forwarded.

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Item 6. Any other competent business. (1) Nil of note.

Item 7. Date, time and place of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st September at 7.30pm. Venue tbc. Everyone was encouraged to respond promptly to emails as this will allow the recess to go ahead. Meetings, Zoom or otherwise, can be convened for any urgent business.

Item 8. Private session. Beinn Tharsuinn/Rock by Sea fund applications. None received.

Meeting closed 9.10pm.