



## CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of meeting held  
on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 7.30pm  
on Zoom**

**Present:** Marcus Munro, Acting Chair (MM), Mary Goulder, Secretary (MG), Norman MacDonald (NM), John White (JW), Rikki Veters (RV)

**Apologies:** Pete Campbell, Chair (PC), Keith Williams (KW), Brian Coghill (BC), Donna Gilchrist, Treasurer (DG)

**Also present:** Highland Councillor Kirsteen Currie (KC), David Watson, KOSDT (DW), Christine Mackay (CM), Michael Baird (MB),

**Police representative:** None received

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

**Item 2. Minutes of September meeting/matters arising.** The minutes of the September meeting, also held on Zoom, were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Rikki Veters seconded by Russell Smith. (1) Creich cemetery wall. Awaiting update pending information from THC. (2) Land clearing/planting opposite Bonar Bridge Post Office. MB reported that he understood KW hopes to arrange a further work party. (3) Queen's Canopy. CM reminded the meeting that registration on the project is open until March 2021 via the website. DW stated several local plans are being considered. The Trust is in discussions with Forestry Lan Scotland (FLS) and Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust (KOSFT), the Woodland Trust and other community groups. A first meeting held in November aims to develop a long-term action plan but initially for the next five to ten years. Indigenous trees will be mixed with some commercial planting which will be on a smaller scale than in the past.

**Item 3. Speed indicator signs/Bonar – Ardgay straight.** MM reported that he still has received no communication from Ross Bartlett at THC in response to his requests to proceed with the purchase of the approved speed indicator equipment and subsequent installation by THC on the appropriate streetlight. MM sent several emails and left telephone messages. The CC cannot go ahead without THC permission and is aware of the growing anger of residents on Lairg Road, where they state the problem is becoming intolerable. KC sent email to Roads and Transport Department during the meeting to urge response. She will update the CC when response received. **KC Action.**

**Item 4. Inveran bridge update.** MB stated that the Registers of Scotland office has told him the Norton Fraser Solicitors are looking into the ownership question. He has passed this to Colin Howell, THC. The question of who would be responsible for solicitor's' fees was raised. KC stated that THC Asset Register is inaccurate, and she has requested more information. **KC Action.**

**Item 5. Inveran road update.** Residents report there has been no action. KC was told in August that the work was being done. Chasing information tonight. Residents should be updated asap. **KC Action.**

**Item 6. Regular updates:**

- 1. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust.** (DW) (1) Falls of Shin is now out to tender for a new operator for the coming season, seeking a long-term commitment from the successful bidder. The Trust is revisiting its business model for the attraction. Expressions of interest have been received. The aires facility was well used through the season with no issues encountered. Funding is in place to establish and outdoor gym on site. Asked about footfall in the past year, DW stated that no figures are available as yet. Footpath tracker in the past indicated 180,000-200,000 historically. This year the park has been very busy and the Crofters' Kitchen food van was very successful. Congratulations were expressed for the

## Minutes approved 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

- work the Trust has carried out during the pandemic and for the ongoing projects. (2) Aires proposal for Bonar Bridge site. The Planning application has been resubmitted. Owing to the SEPA objection THC cannot support the plans but can offer a sympathetic objection due to the perceived benefits to the local area and community. The end route would be to go to Scottish Government to challenge the current legislation. (3) Bonar Bridge Post Office. The refurbished premises opened on 11<sup>th</sup> November. Some snagging is still to be completed. The posties will continue to operate from temporary accommodation in The Barn till January. A great job has been done and an official opening ceremony is in the planning stage. (4) Polytunnel. Well used facility and produce available at the community larder. (5) Community Event for the wider community is planned for 17<sup>th</sup> December in Drovers' Square, 5 – 8pm outdoors, but with the Ardgay Hall available if the weather is bad. The area will be pedestrian only; a community bus is being organised to transport attendees. Open to everyone; full details will be in the upcoming edition of the Kyle Chronicle along with a voucher for a free mince pie for everyone. (6) KALM project has been extended for six months with hopes for twelve months. (7) Kitchen garden. Beside the hall; lessons will be given about growing and cooking produce. (8) A volunteer awards event is scheduled to recognise and show appreciation to local organisations and individuals who worked hard to alleviate difficulties during the pandemic. (9) Sutherland Fuel Poverty Event attracted national coverage and was well received.
2. **Planning & Licensing.** (RS) RS had forwarded all relevant applications. Many applications for camping pods around the north. Locally the outline plans for a new distillery at Mid Fearn have been available.
  3. **TECS.** (1) Struie Road, B9176. Regular updates are available as repair works continue. (2) Road surface subsiding on Lairg Road beside the Dunroamin pub. HGV drivers concerned. Owing to the parked vehicles on one side they are forced to go onto the one remaining carriageway. NM stated that the CC cannot get involved in this issue as the householder is entitled to park his vehicles on the road. However an engineering issue will arise as HGV's are prompted to cross to the only carriageway available. This in turn will lead to extra ongoing costs for the already overstretched Roads Department. Although the traffic calming effect of the parked vehicles is welcomed by some, the prospective costs due to road damage are considerable. Informally the owner may be asked if another parking solution can be found for all his vehicles. **MM Action.** (3) Cattle grid at Craigton Road was filled in during a recent road repair which allows livestock easy access to the roadway. Danger to traffic and animals alike. This actively affects crofters/farmers use of the adjoining land. Same issue also at the cattle grid at Inveroykel. (4) Cassley Glen road once again is plagued with deep potholes as well as shallower ones. (5) A slippery road warning sign is urgently required at Minister's Bridge on the A839 Rosehall before severe winter weather sets in. The gorge beside the bridge is deep and any mishap could lead to a serious accident. **KC Action.**
  4. **Treasurer's report.** (DG) Owing to illness DG was unable to attend. A basic report was read by MG. Treasurer's account balance stands at £2,475.20 with the No 2 account at £45,357.61. Best wishes for a speedy recovery were sent to DG. **MG Action.**
  5. **Rosehall.** (MM) Rosehall House has apparently been boarded up and fencing erected though a break in since has been rumoured. KC advised that the owner appears to be engaging with the Derelict Buildings department in THC and she is pleased with the steps taken so far. Visitor numbers have been less recently.
  6. **Invershin.** (KW) See Items 4 and 5.
  7. **Bonar Bridge.** (1) See Item 3. (2)
  8. **Highland Councillor's report.** (KC) KC struggles to get responses from the various THC departments she approaches with local issues. Cllrs and departments are stressed and overworked. (1) Funding is expected for upgrades to playparks. Tough decisions must be made on balancing use of this with urgent calls for funding to ease fuel poverty and road conditions. (2) The proposed cut in councillor numbers for this Ward will not take place

## Minutes approved 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

with the number of councillors remaining at three in this area. KC confirmed that she is not standing at the upcoming election. (3) Meetings continue to be held remotely as the local virus case numbers are still sobering with transmission figures in Highland currently the worst in Scotland. KC urged the CC not to consider meeting in person until the situation is greatly resolved. The repercussions and legal implications should any incident arise as a result are not worth the risks. A vote was taken as to whether CC members wished to continue to meet via Zoom or in person. The result was unanimously in favour of staying with Zoom although this is somewhat damaging to public participation. The public are reminded that questions/issues can be easily raised by contacting any councillor, via the Secretary or by using the contact form on the website. Contact details are given on the CC website.

**Item 7. Windfarm updates.** (1) PC had advised that a community benefit meeting with the Garvary developers is scheduled in the coming week. MB stated that developer is looking again at noise issues.

**Item 8. Correspondence.** Any relevant correspondence had been forwarded.

**Item 9. Any other competent business.** (1) Nil of note.

**Item 10. Date, time and place of next meeting.** Due to the festive period and rescheduling, the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.30pm on Zoom.

**Item 11. Private session. Beinn Tharsuinn/Rock by Sea fund applications.** Beinn Tharsuinn. In private discussion, application from the Bonar Bridge Children's Christmas Party was awarded £750 as requested. The group had refunded the unused funds from last year.

Meeting closed 9.20pm.