



CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of meeting held
on Tuesday 16th August 2022 at 7.30pm
in Rosehall Village Hall**

Present: Keith Williams, Chair (KW), Mary Goulder, Secretary (MG), Donna Gilchrist, Treasurer, (DG), John White (JW), Norman MacDonald (NM), Rikki Veters (RV)

Apologies: Marcus Munro, Vice Chair (MM), Russell Smith (RS), Brian Coghil (BC), Highland Councillor Marianne Hutchison (MH)

Guest speaker: Kate Kenmure, NHS Highland (KK)

Also present: Highland Councillor Michael Baird (MB), David Watson, Trust Manager, KoSDT (DW), Kay Smart (KS), Shona Paterson (SP), Doris Calder (DC), Colin MacCallum (MC)

Item 1. Welcome/apologies (as above). Police report. Chair welcomed everyone; pleased to see members of the public present. The Police report was received by email. It showed one road traffic collision, one road traffic matter (minor), three assist members of the public, one assault, three concerns for person, one vandalism, three animals/straying, eight neighbour disputes, and one abandoned 999 call.

Item 2. Kate Kenmure, NHS District Manager. The promised return visit following attending in April. KK is seeking public views on NHS Health and Social Care needs in Sutherland. Consultation will lead to how best to utilise Migdale Hospital in the future. In October it is anticipated that the hospital will become the vaccination centre for the area for the next rollout of Covid vaccinations. GPs will no longer administer any vaccinations. The Covid vaccination rollout will be the priority. Community Nurses will visit housebound patients with the vaccine, and they will take an active part in the administration of the vaccine at the centre. KK is keen to find out if there is demand for outreach clinics from Raigmore, e.g. outpatient consultations, physio, occupational therapy, audiology, etc. it is not possible currently to use the Strathy Ward as originally intended for mental health care owing to difficulty in recruiting staff. There is a Scotland wide gap in the availability of nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, and other branches of medicine caused by lack of training, future planning, and early retirement. An Advanced Physio Practitioner continues to be based at the Bonar Bridge GP practice. The Kylesku Ward is open with four beds at present. The facility is well used. Questions were asked regarding transport for patients to the vaccination centre which is expected to be open full time during the coming Covid vaccine rollout. The NHS is not in a position to help with this but it was proposed that the transport available at the Bradbury Centre could be utilised. DW suggested the KOSDT could help with coordination of teams. An article should be placed in the next edition of the Kyle Chronicle advising the Over 65s of what services will be available. **DW/KW/MG Action.** With thanks from all present, KK left the meeting at 8.05pm.

Item 3. Kay Smart. Bonar Bridge Playpark. KS reported that the playpark in Bonar Bridge in in a disgusting state and therefore unfit for use. She called on the CC for help and advice in what to do next to effect the necessary improvements. DW advised that KOSDT has extensive experience in this regard and offered to meet KS as soon as possible to discuss possibilities. The first step would be to form a small committee. The Trust can assist with set up and discuss next steps. The Edderton Hall Committee has recently gone through this process. They made a deal with THC to cover the basic site needs. The equipment and maintenance of it would be the responsibility of the new group and appropriate training would need to be undergone. The land would remain the property of THC and agreement for the project would be needed. THC does not have the money to equip and operate the playpark and is expected to look favourably on any local initiative. It will be an expensive project, perhaps £25k-£40k, but fundraising can be undertaken from the outset. Various funding

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sources can be approached, match funding options explored, as well as local fundraising efforts organised. The playpark is an important part of community life and regeneration is needed after the pandemic. There is a surge in community spirit at present and involvement should be encouraged. DW and KS will meet in the coming week. Cllr Baird was urged to check any possible THC financial help and to urge the reconsideration of the Village Officer post to help with basic local ground works/duties, e.g. grass cutting for the elderly, maintenance of ditches/foot paths, etc. **MB Action.** KS was invited to re-join the CC as an Associate Member. She accepted. Phil Tomalin, THC Ward Manager, will be advised. **MG Action.**

Item 4 Minutes of June meeting/matters arising. The minutes of the June meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by John White, seconded by Norman MacDonald. Matters arising; Mid Fearn Distillery. The concerns about discharge of effluent into the Kyle have been addressed meantime. This factor was not included in the Planning Application. It is understood that the waste will be tankered off site with no plans submitted to discharge into the Firth. Concerns raised previously about levels of 'chlorine' in the drinking water in Bonar Bridge should be passed immediately to Scottish Water via the Customer Service number on the website. Cllr Baird advised that THC is aware of the issue.

Item 5. Speed indicator signs Bonar Bridge. Cllr Baird advised that Cllr McGillivray has raised the matter with THC engineers. No update available from MM tonight.

Item 6. Inveran bridge/road update. MB advised that the person dealing with this has left THC. He will discuss with the Legal Department. **Inveran road** MB understands that this is the next job scheduled after the current road chipping programme is completed. **MB Action.**

Item 7. Regular updates:

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust. (DW) (1) DW encouraged the Chair to submit a piece to the Kyle Chronicle outlining his recent appointment as Chair and the wish to bring in more members of the public to the meetings and to use the CC as it should be – a link to the local and national authorities and various bodies to promote the area and help rebuild the community post-pandemic. Attending the meetings puts no obligation on anyone to 'join' the CC but it can lead to involvement and active participation in local improvements. **KW Action.** In his report from the Trust DW stated that all projects continue as before, and full details are available to anyone calling at The Barn. The Scottish Government is to send an officer to investigate the issues raised by SEPA regarding the proposals for the South Bonar Campervan site. The public toilets would remain open to all with the campervan site accessed through a barrier on payment of the appropriate fee. The funding which the Trust had secured is now insufficient due to the lengthy delay and rising prices. THC still owns the site. Falls of Shin. No new proposals have been received since the recent public meeting. A Lottery meeting is due this week to consider the best options for the site, the use of its investment in it, and the benefits to the community. The best option is thought to be to sell the facility into the private market, but this cannot be done without Lottery approval. At present it costs the Trust £38,000 per year even when closed. Until the start of August the chemical waste facility at Falls of Shin was working well but the greatly increased volume of traffic has caused problems. The positioning of two portaloos is being considered and could be manageable if costs can be covered. An application to the Beinn Tharsuinn fund was suggested by the CC. Cllr Baird is in discussion with THC. **MB Action.** Fuel poverty in Sutherland is reaching critical proportions. The Trust continues its Helping Hands project and to assist where possible. The suggestion of starting a community garden on the land opposite the Bonar Bridge Post office could be discussed at a later date.

Planning & Licensing. (RS) RS had forwarded all relevant Planning applications.

TECS. Rosehall cemetery walls need repair. This has been passed to THC but there is also a local interest in taking on the work under the guidance of a qualified Master Craftsman. RV

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requested THC clear chippings at east end of Altas road as excess is a danger to traffic. **MB Action.**

Treasurer's report. (DG) The No 1 Account has a balance of £1903.88 with the No 2 Account standing at £33,365.61. DG was thanked for her report and breakdown of expenditure.

Rosehall. (JW) (1) It is hoped to erect the new noticeboard at the village hall asap. (2) Glencassley Road was severely damaged in the recent storm and is currently closed. THC aware and work has been started. (3) Achness bridge. THC works starting earlier than expected. Cllr Baird to keep CC appraised of progress with both items. **MB Action.**

Invershin. (KW) See Item 6 above.

Bonar Bridge. Speeding on Lairg Road increasing. Residents urging action. Police to be asked to instigate a concerted effort with speed guns/camera van. **Police Action/MG Action.**

Highland Councillor's report. (MB) Discussions at THC regarding action over the Bonar Bridge-Ardgay straight. The introduction of speed bumps suggested at huge cost. The community will be satisfied with the extension of the 30mph limit and introduction of a 50mph limit across the straight. This would incur considerably less cost and can be implemented quickly. **MB Action.**

Item 8. Windfarm updates. (1) Preliminary Community benefit discussions with regard to the proposed Strathoykel development. The CC continues to view each proposal on merit and to represent the views of the community. It must also aim to maximise the financial benefit should any development progress to operation. The CC Chair will take on the role of CC representative in discussions with developers. The Trust must have a CC rep from each of the two local CCs. The Strathoykel development will be decided by Scottish Government. Strong local objections to the proposal and the manner the application have been presented. The process was flawed. DW confirmed that the Trust has also submitted an objection. MB stated that the Energy Consents Unit should advise the developer to walk away from the project or agree to the Public Enquiry. The Developers are not keen but wish to submit additional information. The danger of a precedent was highlighted. The CC has agreed to object to any developments proposed on the south side of the Kyle. Developments should be in the right place with energy price benefits to the local areas where the electricity is generated. This is a political matter and maybe taken along a Human Rights Legal Route.

Item 9. Correspondence. Any relevant correspondence had been forwarded to CCs. Nothing specific picked up tonight.

Item10. AOCB. NM agreed to attend the next meeting of the Community Action Planning Group on 25th August. Concerns raised about the duplication of work. DW advised that the three local CCs and five large local organisations are involved, and outcomes could prove beneficial to the area.

Item 11. Date, time and place of next meeting. The next meeting will be held in Invershin Village Hall on Tuesday 18th October at 7.30pm.

Item 12. Private session. Beinn Tharsuinn/Rock by Sea fund applications. Coire na Cloiche. Application by KOSDT for £5, 000 per year over three years to maintain the Helping Hands Fund was approved. **MG/DG Action.**

Achany Panel. KW will join JW as the CC representatives.

Meeting closed 10pm.