



CREICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of meeting held
on Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 7.30pm
in Rosehall Village Hall**

Present: Keith Williams, Chair (KW), Mary Goulder, Secretary (MG), Donna Gilchrist. Treasurer (DG), Norman MacDonald (NM), Russell Smith, John White, Kay Smart (KS), Tracey Smith

Apologies: Vice Chair Marcus Munro (MM)

Also present: Cllr Michael Baird (MB)

A list of members of the public who gave their names appears at the end of the Minutes.

Item 1. Welcome/apologies (as above). Chair Keith Williams opened the meeting, thanking those in attendance.

Item 2. Co-option of Donna Gilchrist. In accordance with procedure and after due advertising the co-option was approved by all. Proposed by Russell Smith; seconded by Kay Smart. THC Ward Manager will be advised. **MG Action.**

Item 3. SSEN proposed power line update. KW read the CC letter to SSEN's Mr Martin Godwin. Concerns raised in the letter covered the inadequacy of the consultation process, the strategic need for the upgrade, the failure to provide details of alternative options to the overhead line and the lack of information as to the criteria and weighting utilised when the routes and options were assessed. The strong public opposition to the proposals was passed to SSEN with the various reasons for it. The letter ended with an invitation to an SSEN representative to attend a meeting of the CC in the near future to discuss all matters raised. Mr Godwin acknowledged receipt of the letter. Ardgay CC held a meeting on the 15th May, attended by a representative from Creich CC but no SSEN representative was present. Another meeting is scheduled for the 12th June.

KW was thanked from the floor for his excellent letter. KW confirmed that the CC has joined the forum of CCs affected by the proposals. RS pointed out that if SSEN is willing to discuss community benefit funds from this development it will be the first time, which would be a positive move. Previously recorded views were reiterated regarding subsea or undergrounding of the power line as well as criticism of the lack of strategy displayed by SSEN in all the relevant developments locally, examples of which are the recently completed sub stations which are already unable to handle the capacity requirements. There are not enough safeguards within the Planning process especially regarding the correct balancing of development requirements and ecological concerns. This discussion ended at 8.20pm when the majority of the public left.

Item 4. Minutes of February meeting/matters arising. The minutes of the February meeting were approved as a true and accurate record, proposed by Norman MacDonald; seconded by Kay Smart.

Item 5. Regular updates:

- 1. Chair's report.** (KW) The Achany Panel is reviewing the distribution arrangements of the community benefit funds in the three local CC areas. Otherwise most of the Chair's activities have revolved around the SSEN situation.
- 2. Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust.** (1) The Trust is reluctantly increasing the charge to use their electric points, up to 64p. This is still below other local points at 70p. The increase is to cover costs and will be reduced if energy prices should fall. (2) Two new members of staff are on board in the office. (3) Falls of Shin. The Lottery paperwork is finally in place to allow the sale of the visitor centre site. Prior to receiving the correct paperwork which set out the parameters of the revised grant obligations to the National Lottery on the 2nd May the Trust was unable to sell the premises due to the underlying risk. Selling agents will now proceed to selling to the highest bidder. TNLCF staff have worked hard to ensure that the sale will not result in any financial penalties to KoSDT, however

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TNLCF will recover any outstanding capital costs possible from the sale. This process has been completely out with the control of the Trust. The remainder of the site will be owned by the Trust for community use with no charge for this community asset. The waste disposal facility is charged for and is well used with little signs of inconsiderate dumping of waste elsewhere around the site. Discussion as to whether the portable toilets should be reinstated for the summer months was debated. The Trust will be invited to make an application to the CC for the appropriate short term funding. (4) Kyle Chronicle. Since it began the magazine has been funded in the main by the SSE Beatrice Fund and the SSE Achany Community Benefit Fund, but latterly KoSDT has been using community reserves to fund publication costs; this cannot continue. As the publication has become a community asset KoSDT will make applications for an ongoing contribution from each Community Council. Although advertising revenue continues to build if funding is not secured KoSDT will not be in a position to continue to fund the publication and the likelihood is that it will have to stop.

3. **Resilience Plan update.** Nothing to update this month.
4. **Planning & Licensing.** (RS) RS had forwarded all relevant Planning applications. The first ever application for change of use into short-term letting was noted.
5. **TECS.** (1) See section 7 of this item.
6. **Treasurer's report.** (DG) No. 1 account balance stands at £1,237.68 reflecting two outgoing payments for Treasurer and Secretarial work. The No 2 account balance is £36,064.73. The End of Year accounts have been audited and are ready for adoption at next month's AGM. Reports and bank statements are available to CCs on request. Thanks expressed to DG.
7. **Rosehall.** (JW) (1) Once again the condition of two local roads, Glencassley and Altas were reported for severe surface issues with potholes and reduced lines of sight due to overgrown whin bushes and self-seeded trees. **MB Action.** (2) It was noted that the Invercassley Stores and Tearoom now holds a full drinks licence.
8. **Invershin/Bonar Bridge.** (KW) Nil of note
9. **Highland Councillor's report.** (MB) Pavements on Lairg Road, Bonar Bridge are listed for repair by the Roads Department. The issue of water across the A836 at Drumliath will be addressed on delivery of new pipes. The suggestion of a traffic mirror at Invernauld, Rosehall, has been investigated. Any such installation would be the responsibility of the landowner.
10. **Police report.** A brief police report was received by email. It included calls for two assists member of the public, one domestic incident, one banking protocol, one abandoned 999, one lost dog and one road traffic collision/failure to stop report. There was no timeframe for the period covered by this report.

Item 6. Windfarm updates. (1) KW advised a three day enquiry into the Strathoykel proposal will be held on 24th October in Rosehall Hall. CC representation was urged to support the majority local views against the development. (2) No further information from the Reporter regarding Meall Buidhe. (3) The National Planning Framework 4 is now fully approved by THC.

Item 7. Correspondence. Any relevant correspondence had been circulated.

Item 8. Any other competent business. (1) CC rep to KoSDT. DW reported that the CC rep to the Trust has not been available to attend several meetings. Without such attendance the Trust cannot operate constitutionally. The CC was encouraged to appoint a deputy representative to ensure that one will be available. **KW/volunteer Action.** Deputy Lieutenant Christine Mackay highlighted the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Bonar Bridge bridge on 14th December. The CC was asked to consider a public commemoration event. Discuss at next meeting. **Agenda item.** (2) It has been reported to the Chair that following the non-quate meeting of the CC in April criticism and an incident of unacceptable behaviour took place in the village. The place of work of one elected member was visited to demand a reason for non-attendance from that member. Such behaviour is completely out of order and cannot be condoned. Actions of this nature will lead to there being no CC in place if members fear such attacks. It should be noted that the April meeting was calmly conducted with most of the public accepting the non-quate situation.

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Item 8. Date, time and place of next meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for 20th June 2023 in Bonar Bridge Hall at 7.30pm. This will also be AGM.

Item 9. Private session. Beinn Tharsuinn/Rock by Sea/Coire na Cloiche fund applications. No applications to be discussed.

Members of the public who attended the SSEN discussion and who gave their names were;
D Ross, David Baker, Samantha Kane, Christine Mackay, Ali Sutherland, Marcus Sutherland. Kelly Raven, Katie Wilson, Lynne Henzler, Chris Henzler, Nigel Baird, Charlie Brooke, Gail Cassap-Brown, Doris Calder, Shona Paterson.

Meeting closed 9.50pm.