



## Cromarty and District Community Council

Approved minutes of meeting held on

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2024, 730pm**

Virtually via Microsoft Teams and in person at The Victoria Hall

### Present

**Community Councillors:** Paige Shepherd (PS) - Chairwoman, Alan Plampton (AP) – Treasurer, Andy Thurgood (AT) – Vice Chair, Alan Rycroft (AR) and Nigel Shapcott (NS).

**Youth Member:** Dominic Scott-Lodge (DSL)

**Highland Councillor(s):** Sarah Atkin (SA)

**Member(s) of the public:** Jane Clunas, Andy Dorin, John Keillor, Bryony & Rick Moses and Dougie from Highland Ferries.

**Minute Secretary:** Claire Fraser (CF)

#### 1. Chair's Welcome & Apologies

PS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

AT, AP, NS, JC, AD, JM, B&N M, SA and AP were all present from The Victoria Hall.

CF, DSL, Dougie (Highland Ferries) and AR attended online via Microsoft Teams.

#### 9. Any Other Business (brought forward by the Chair)

##### **CROMARTY 2 NIGG FERRY (HIGHLAND FERRIES)**

Had a 6 year contract to run the Cromarty 2 Nigg ferry, has been extended for 2024 but will need to go to tender for the 2025/26 season (sponsorship).

From past experience, running the ferry during the month of May (in addition to the entire summer season) results in a financial loss so it won't work without a sponsor. June to September works well.

Has had no discussion with anyone re. a year round ferry. He'd be open to it if there was funding & suggested passenger only (as there will be days where vehicles won't be able to board due to weather restrictions). Also mentioned that a back up (smaller boat) could be stored in the harbour and used for those worse weather days.

AP suggested we send Dougie the IMFDP plans so he's more aware of what's going on and all members agree that once the plans have progressed from just 'development' then funding will likely be discussed. **Action – AP.**

As an aside Dougie mentioned he's had plans drawn up to expand the service (build a 4 car ferry). He would like to see the ferry run for the next 20 years! It won't happen over night and could take 6 months to 1 year to build. In place for summer 2025/26.

Members asked if we could source additional funding would he be up for running the service in May? (aware that contact at THC has said there are no funds for this however). D advised £15k monthly budget would be needed so this need to be sourced before he agrees.

C&DCC to look into funding! D left the meeting at 1948pm

2. Declarations of Interest

No changes to declarations since meeting of 26th October 2020

3. Approval of previous minutes, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024

The minutes were approved by AT and seconded by AP

4. Matters Arising from previous minutes, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024

1. (4.1 – On hold – little movement with THC on TMP and 20mph in urban areas until 2025.) **On hold.**
2. (4.2 – Paige to attend youth café and speak to Wanda re. redesign of the Welcome to Cromarty Sign). Going to Youth Café very soon! **Action – PS.**
3. (4.3 – To resubmit photos of fly tipping at Whitedykes to THC (more recent reports)). Ongoing. **Action – KM.**
4. (4.5 – Potential to involve the Primary School with Links Shrubbery continuous maintenance). **On hold.**
5. (4.6 – AP to confirm when funding from Stagecoach has been received). Ongoing. **Action – AP.**
6. (4.7 – Mgmt. of the HMI has been transferred to Library Services (still waiting reports re. major maintenance issue)). Ongoing. **Action - AP.**
7. (4.8 – Funding requested from SSE re. emergency refresher resilience training for TVH). SSE refused funding so additional source required. **Action – AP.**
8. (4.9 – KM to follow up the youth mentoring programme with Dom post exams). **Action – KM**
9. (4.10 – Paige to contact Lyndsey at THC to clarify some points regarding housing qualification for social housing poster). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
10. (4.11 – PS taking on the discussion re. replacing equipment in The Victoria Park). **Action – PS.**
11. (4.12 – Final discussions re. the website taking place with AP & AT). Agreed plan with proposed launch of new CL website – Easter (29<sup>th</sup> March). **Action – AP/CF.**
12. (4.13 – Ask Kari re. the email to John Nightingale about the hole at Pirates Graveyard (was to be sent to PS to approve)). **Action – PS.**
13. (4.13 – Chase response from new ward manager at THC re. who is responsible for sign at the bus shelter). **Action – PS.**
14. (4.15 – Dougie @ Highland Ferries should be attending next meeting). **Action – PS.**
15. (4.16 - To speak to Denis (resident) re. hedge options to see if he can offer advice on what we should order for the park). Ongoing. **Action – KM**

16. (4.17 – To discuss with AP where shouldn't be mowed at The Hugh Miller Monument so stakes can go in, and posters put up to stop THC). Ongoing. **Action – KM**
17. (4.18 – To continue to discuss with all three councilors re. The use of weed killer in the town, plus the 'maintenance' of the graveyards). Ongoing. **Action – PS**
18. (4.20 – To discuss at a later date the idea of a composting toilet at The South Sutor Car Park). **Action - ALL.**
19. (4.23 – Public meeting to be held re. parking byelaws around Cromarty). **Action – ALL.**
20. (4.24 – Dog fouling portfolio needs actioned). **Action – ALL.**
21. (4.25 – To see if Kari is willing to be involved in tourism portfolio (potentially alongside other resident)). **Action – PS.**
22. (4.31 – To bring up issues re. BIPP and BICC meeting in February 2024). **DISCHARGED (see AP's portfolio report).**
23. (4.34 – To go back to Sheila re. our comments on the positions of CCDC vs CCDT). Ongoing. **Action - ALL.**
24. (4.36 – To meet with Ingrid in the New Year and discuss plans for Townlands Park). **Action – PS/SA**
25. (5.1 – Rector of Academy to be asked to keep record of Stagecoach). **Action – PS.**
26. (6.1 – Teams to be tested for use prior to sharing with BICC). **DISCHARGED.**
27. (8.1.1 – AT to ask re. light pollution with THC (Gregor McCormack)). **DISCHARGED.**
28. (8.1.2 – To send holding email to resident who enquired re. light pollution). **DISCHARGED.**
29. (8.1.3 – Send government structure idea to AP re. BIPP). **DISCHARGED.**
30. (8.1.4 – To draft proposal re. BIPP to bring to BICC meeting). Ongoing. **Action – AP.**
31. (8.1.5 – Attending HITRANS meeting – to ensure emergency flooding is included in C&DCC action plan going forward). **DISCHARGED.**
32. (8.2 – To speak to teachers re. meals at CPS after complaint from Avoch parents). **Action – SA.**
33. (8.3.1 – To go back to resident re. complaints @ Farness Road and suggest resubmit to THC). **Action – PS.**
34. (8.3.2 – To forward pictures re. Farness Road to Ian Moncrieffe @ THC). **Action – PS.**
35. (9.1.1 – To publicise our discussion with Lothian Broadband). **Action – ALL.**
36. (9.1.1 – To pass on details of Police Scotland contact to AR so can be picked up as part of his portfolio). **Action – PS.**
37. (9.1.3 – To look into and follow up on the Black Isle Swimming Pool). **Action – NS/AR/SA.**

5. **Youth Issues**

Dominic provided an update in relation to any relevant youth issues

School bus service continues to be inconsistent, particularly now that there are roadworks in Fortrose (causing diversions and pupils are having to walk the rest of the way to school). Stagecoach continues to be the underlying issue! SA to email Highland School Transport contact at THC and Dom will forward timetable of events to PS. **Action – SA/DSL.**

Wanda and Dom are working together on the inter-generational activities. These are going to be rolled out very soon!

No further comments.

Dom left at 8pm.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report and accompanying notes (**Appendix A & B**) were prepared by AP and circulated prior to the meeting.

Opened to AP for discussion but there were no further comments or questions.

7. **Victoria Hall (VH) Report including Youth Café**

The Victoria Hall Report (**Appendix C**) that was prepared by AP, and the Youth Café Powerpoint presentation prepared by Fraser Thompson (**available on Cromarty Live**) were circulated prior to the meeting.

PS handed over to AP for comments/discussion.

We need to recruit more volunteers for the hall committee – to discuss with AP after the meeting. **Action – CF.**

There were no further comments or questions.

8. **Members' Reports**

*Portfolios*

Portfolio Reports prepared by AT, NS, and AP (**Appendix D-F**) were circulated prior to the meeting.

**Andy:**

AT addressed the members of the community attending our meeting tonight re. noise pollution and updates re. Nigg etc. Also provided a background on himself and his role so far with C&DCC and connection with Port of Cromarty Firth (PoCF) and Port of Nigg (PoN).

Discussion carried on with questions raised and AT answering with as much detail as he could. Was suggested we ask at next meeting with PoCF what water quality measures are in place just now as a few concerns were raised.

All members and residents discussed the best way to ask for information from the community, suggestions were given including speaking to the youth as whatever happens in the future is going to effect them!

- It was decided that we would form a sub-group.
- Should create a freeport whatsapp group & keep in touch there. **Action – AT/AP.**

Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at The Victoria Hall held by Global Energy Group/Port of Nigg (open to all as usual).

*Jane, Rick and Bryony left the meeting at 2045pm.*

AT went on to discuss other sections of his report:

Reminder re. drop in session for Highland Broadband (Lothian) tomorrow (between 4&6pm). Confirmed discussions was also had with Cromarty Firth Wireless Networks who offer fixed wireless to rural homes. They are not however listed as approved on the gigabit website (which he's informed them and they are looking to have this changed).

Received a response from PoN with regards to light pollution complaints, who confirmed they'd made some adjustments. AT has therefore replied to resident from last month re. light pollution.

Finally, advised that he's received complaints about the street cleaning and although he's logged it as an issue with THC is wondering if there's anything we can do? Members suggested we utilize the community payback scheme again (if still available). **Action – PS/AR.**

**Nige:**

SA suggested we apply for funds for future works from THC but then seek contractors ourselves as it will be faster and probably cheaper.

**Alan R:**

Trying to meet with former liaison officer and area deputy commander to discuss C&DCC matters. Confident they will be on board with providing regular updates to us.

**Alan P:**

Emergency resilience training sub-committee.

At the moment only contains AT and AP (need to recruit more members). AR to also join as he's an ex-cop.

There were no further comments on any of the member's portfolio's.

*The Highland Council*

Only a few things mentioned in addition to the Black Isle Place Plan discussed in more detail latterly.

- Speed on Black Isle Roads – in constant discussion about this
- Cromarty Cinema rec'd money (unexpectedly) from THC to go towards their carpark costs.
- The budget for the roads will likely be more than we are expecting

Correspondence Received

Nothing to report.

9. **Any Other Business (continued..)**

**BLACK ISLE PLACE PLAN**

Meeting at Fortrose Library tomorrow evening – NS/PS and AR to attend.  
Governance was discussed between members (and will be discussed at meeting).  
Seminar is from 7-9pm  
AP to advise Becky Richmond of attendees. **Action – AP.**

**ASSOCIATE FOR BRITISH PORTS**

Meeting to be held within the next 6 weeks (SA to arrange). AT is keen to join!

There were no further comments or questions.

10. **Date of next meeting**

Next meeting – Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 730pm  
Meeting ended at 2128pm.

## APPENDIX A

### Agenda Item 6 – Treasurer’s Report Notes

1. **AMOUNTS RECEIVABLE/PAID IN ADVANCE** reflects Internet costs paid in advance plus the £150 planning fee STILL to be repaid by Stagecoach. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
2. **AMOUNTS PAYABLE** reflects £4.50 p&p costs to be repaid from our Paypal account for a publications sales overpayment, by an overseas customer, and £200 that is to be used on a Primary School project (ex Open Gardens donation). **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
3. **COMMUNITY AMENITIES FUND** reflects HC advance funding for 2024 Reeds Loop Maintenance, Resilience costs (to be SSE funded) and public donations. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
4. **TODDLERS PLAYGROUP FUND** reflects Playgroup Hall Hire. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
5. **CROMARTY RISING FUND** reflects donations received from General Public. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Alan Plampton  
28/01/24

APPENDIX B

Agenda Item 6 – Treasurer’s Report

<b>Statement of Financial Position at 28th January 2024</b>				
		£	£	£
<b>Net Assets</b>			<u>Movement</u>	<u>at 30/11/23</u>
Bank & Cash in hand balances as at 28th January 2024		12,496.63	263.89	12,232.74
Paypal Balance as at 28th January 2024		4.50	0.00	4.50
Amounts Receivable/Paid in Advance		193.20	0.00	193.20
Amounts Payable		-204.50	0.00	-204.50
<b>Total Net Assets at 28th January 2024</b>		<b>£12,489.83</b>	263.89	<b>£12,225.94</b>
		£	£	£
<b>Represented by:</b>				
C&DCC Accumulated Fund Reserves at 1st April 2023		2,093.28	0.00	2,093.28
Surplus/Deficit for the year to date		-297.09	-47.52	-249.57
		1,796.19	-47.52	1,843.71
Provision for Guidebook reprinting at 1st April 2023		211.75	0.00	211.75
<b>C&amp;DCC Amenity &amp; Event Funds</b>		£		
Community Amenities Fund	1,504.46		285.40	1,219.06
Community Fund ex Bonfire	2,302.14		0.00	2,302.14
Community Fund ex Gala	2,645.70		0.00	2,645.70
Community Fund ex S&D	126.00	6,578.30	0.00	126.00
Community Gritting Fund		561.33	-12.99	574.32
Cromarty Live Fund		4.01	-42.00	46.01
Community Defibrillator Fund		1,014.98	0.00	1,014.98
<b>Net C&amp;DCC Reserves</b>		10,166.56	182.89	9,983.67
<b>Designated Community Funds</b>				
Primary School Fund ex Open Gardens		0.00	0.00	0.00
Gluren bij de Buren Fund		202.06	0.00	202.06
Toddler Playgroup Fund (prev West Church)		1,357.79	-99.00	1,456.79
Cromarty Rising Fund		763.42	180.00	583.42
		<b>£12,489.83</b>	263.89	<b>£12,225.94</b>
Alan Plampton 28th January 2024				



## APPENDIX C

### Agenda Item 7 – Victoria Hall Report

1. **Bookings** No problems as we continue with a fairly busy diary. The NHS Baby Immunisation Clinics have now continued in 2024 and we hope soon to be hosting monthly Citizen Advice Bureau sessions in the near future (sponsored by the CCP). The fees review results will now be completed for action from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
2. **Repairs & Maintenance** Kishorn Insulations Ltd completed their survey and a report with quotation is now being finalised. This is the second part of completing our feasibility study of the Hall's energy performance and sustainability. The final part is a repairs schedule of work to be completed as soon as possible with volunteer help from a local professional. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
3. **Sheddie Trikes** have now gone to winter quarters and the winter resilience (gritting) team is now in action with improved washing facilities, under its new management. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
4. **Youth Cafe** The monthly report is attached. New THC pay grade scales have now been confirmed and implemented with backdating to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. Our staff contracts have been revised and agreed with the staff. Further sponsorship has been received from PoCF to help fund our future budget needs. We have now guaranteed Youth Worker employment until at least 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. We continue to supply Cost of Living help to Cromarty families in need with financial support, energy vouchers and well-being bags. Funding and donations from a number of sources has exceeded £5k in 2024 already. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**

Alan Plampton - VHMC  
28/01/24

**APPENDIX D**  
**AGENDA ITEM 8**  
**PORTFOLIO REPORT – Andy Thurgood**

**Meetings attended**

8<sup>th</sup> January – I attended the Black Isle Ward Management Meeting and presented to Sarah Atkin, Morven-May MacCullum and Lyndsey Johnston on the subject of Low Frequency Noise.

**Nigg – Cable Plant Application 23/04662/FUL**

I wrote to the Northern Planning Applications Committee (NPAC) councillors and their substitutes on two occasions, prior to their planning meeting on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January.

The first correspondence, 11<sup>th</sup> January, was to comment on submissions made by other parties since our original submission. Two of these, including one from Chris Ratter, THC EHO, stated that there had not been any previous complaints for noise related to a cabling vessels berthed at Nigg; I provided evidence to the contrary. I reiterated CDCCs broad support for economic development in the Firth, under controlled conditions, allowing residents a period for sleep undisturbed by nuisance. The second correspondence was on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January and was specifically on educating NPAC on low frequency noise.

BBC Scotland Radio Highlands an Islands made an approach to CDCC for comment on the planning. Representing CDCC, I was interviewed 15<sup>th</sup> January. To my knowledge, the recording wasn't used.

**Noise nuisance from the Firth**

No specific noise related incidents appear to have been identified since my last report.

I have been in email correspondence with Gregor MacCormick THC Environmental Health, following up the promise of the results of the noise monitoring that was undertaken last November/December. Their report needs finalising and will be discussed with Port of Nigg and the Complainants, prior to the information being shared with CDCC. I have a provisional 'Teams' meeting set for Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**Sale of Self-Propelled Sweeper**

I have listed the Stiga SWS 800G donated by Simon and Jenny Gunn on eBay.

Andy Thurgood  
24/01/24

**APPENDIX E**  
**AGENDA ITEM 8**  
**PORTFOLIO REPORT – Nigel Shapcott**

**CCP Notes for C&DCC Meeting Jan 24**

- Monday Lunch Club, Table Tennis, Playgroup and Cinema Club have all re-convened after the Christmas break.
- Winter fuel payments of £50 per household were made to 61 households in the second week of January. This was made with £1500 award from the Open Gardens Committee plus a donation of £100 from a Cromarty resident who specified the Winter Fuel Payments. The remainder came from our unrestricted funds. This is the largest number of grants we have given out to date. We decided at our last Trustees' Meeting that, going forward, we will be asking everyone to apply from scratch, to make sure that grants go where they are most needed and to avoid grants going to households where circumstances may have improved.
- We finally have Highland Council's permission to site a bench at the sheltered housing in Townlands and the bench has now arrived (Yay!) Hi-Co have stipulated that the bench must be fixed to a concrete/slab base and Colin Keith has volunteered to provide this. It's hoped that he and Jon Cox will be assembling the bench in the next few days.
- Nicola Campbell from Citizens Advice has been in touch about holding sessions in Cromarty and CCP have offered to sponsor these sessions at the Victoria Hall. I liaised with Alan to allow Nicola to make a 'recky'. He replied (16th Jan) but I've heard nothing back from Nicola since (plan to chase her up Monday).
- The new shed for the Larder is on order, but Fettes have pushed delivery back to mid-March.
- Gordon Adam (former Hi-Co Councillor) has been in touch about the George Craigie Urquhart Trust. This is a local trust specifically established to assist the needy in Cromarty. (CCP have received funds from them in the past as has the CC, I think?) They are in need of new trustees and Jill has proposed myself, Lindy Coutts and Rhona Garrett. The fund is very small - capital no more than £40,000 and grants made only from the interest. However, it has been managed by Highland Council and now that Gordon Adam is retiring that leaves only Terrence Burns as remaining trustee. We are all in agreement - and hope that CC agree -that the Craigie Urquhart Trust should be held closer to home. (Sorry this last one is so convoluted but wanted to be as transparent as possible!)

**APPENDIX F**  
**AGENDA ITEM 8**  
**PORTFOLIO REPORT – Alan Plampton**

- 1. BICC Meeting** scheduled for mid February. Knockbain CC hosting. Urgent discussion re Final BI Place Plan Draft and in particular its governance proposals. **ACTION – Information and discussion**
- 2. East Church Hall** As agreed at last meeting, C&DCC to step back again and allow Development Trust facilitate action. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
- 3. Housing** Still awaiting Albyn Housing proposals on CM01. IMFDP now received from Reporter for THC to adopt. CM01 confirmed to encourage DT and Albyn to agree access solution between the Barn and the Hall. After neighbour and Development Trust opposition, CM03 has been changed from Housing Use to Mixed Use. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
- 4. Community Groups & Events** Shoremill Flood Risk Group contacted over recent incident during Christmas period offering support and potential assistance from our Cromarty & District Emergency Action Plan. No reply yet received. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
- 5. Defibrillators** All Defibrillators now up to date and ready to use. Izzy Elliott has agreed to take over checking the Fishertown Inn unit. Fraser Thomson is the Victoria Hall contact and also covering the Fire Station temporarily. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**

Alan Plampton 28/01/24