

Minutes for Stromeferry and Achmore CC Meeting – 28th October 2020 @ 7.30pm

1 Present. Microsoft Teams Meeting all connected at 7.43pm

Present: Mary MacBeth, Neil MacRae, Kath Smith, Gill Harrington, Helen Robertson
Apologises: Ann Gillespie, Dawn Lupton, Biz Campbell

2 Approve and adopt previous Minutes

The minutes of the 22nd July 2020 were approved by Kath and seconded by Neil.

3 Matters Arising

A household have withdrawn their consent to receive communications to their email address. Gill will formalise the GDP process and write to them to confirm that the CC has removed their contact details from the CC mailing list.

Action: Gill to formalise GDP process

4 Communications received

Email - Weekly - Maureen Mackenzie - Planning Information.

Email – Ad Hoc – K MacLean – CC minutes from other Ward 5 Councils

Email – 7 Sep – Kate Forbes’ office – update on our broken Bridges

Email - 13 Sep – D Ferguson - Police Scotland: ‘Your Police 2020-2021’ survey - Highlands & Islands – distributed

Email – 16 Sep – Local - Verbal abuse in the Co-op car park - Kyle of Lochalsh

Email – 15 Sep – E McIntosh - Highland Community Conversations- about COVID – sent to CC members

Email – 22 Sep – Dot Ferguson - Remembrance Day - Poppy Wreaths – completed

Email - 23 Sep – Dot Ferguson - Funding - Community and Third Sector Recovery Programme

Email – 25 Sep – Policy 6 - Community Resilience Briefing - September 2020 - feedback on COVID conversation

Email – 28 Sep – Policy 6 - Ward Discretionary Budget Grant Fund Scheme – for Wreath

Email – 28 Sep – D Ferguson - FW: Highland Council: Second phase of Consultation on BT’s 2020 proposal to remove 107 public payphones from across Highland

Email – 30 Sep – D Ferguson - FW: Guidance on Community Council Meetings

Email – 1 Oct - Community Council Support - Ward Discretionary Grant - Stromeferry and Achmore Community Council (SG16369)

Email – 8 Oct - Policy 6 - SG Campaign Launch Updates: New Restrictions and Compliance around COVID

Email – 15 Oct - Murray MacDonald - Winter Resilience Programme 2020-2021- volunteers

Email – 19 Oct - Policy 6 - Highland Council Community Group - News Release October 2020 – update on COVID

Email – 27 Oct - D Ferguson - Highland Council: Business Hardship Fund grant applications sought

Email – 24 Oct- L Bird – Deteriorating state of Auchtertyre brae & the Achmore /glen bend on A890

Email – 26 Oct - K Inman – Gritting of Stromeferry road to railway station

Email – 27 Oct - K Biss – Issues with Cattle grids

Email – 21 Oct - Kath Smith – Updates for CC from Kath plus other Strome Residents

Emails – Sep/Oct – Minutes from Lochalsh Collaboration etc.

5 Treasurer’s Report

Opening Balance 22/07/2020 £4,062.87

Expenditure

Caroline MacRae £25

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Battery	£240
R Bain donation	£25
Insurance	£84
Total Expenditure	£374
Income	
Wreath	£35
Interest	0.48
Total Income	£35.48
Closing Balance 28.10/2020	£3,724.35

6 Ongoing Local Items and Progress update

6.1 Defibrillator

Kath set up a 'weekly & monthly rota' to check of the defibrillator based at the Achmore Hall. The process is working well and no problems have been reported. Whilst it is not possible to have more training at the moment there is relevant information on the British Heart Foundation website about how to use a defibrillator.

Gill is going to contact BT to find out if we can adopt the Stromeferry telephone box as the 'home' for a defibrillator for Stromeferry residents and visitors alike. This phone box is not a working phone box and it does not appear on the BT telephone lists nor on the list which BT pass to the Highland Council. We all agreed that the phone box should be put to good use and other communities have housed their defibrillators in non working Phone boxes.

Mary has the old defibrillator box and batteries and will return them to Lucky2BHere.

Action: Gill to organise the upcycling of the Phone box to create a home for the Stromeferry defibrillator.

6.2 Planning

There was one application for our area in the period.

6.3 Lochalsh Collaboration Group

The Lochalsh Group has been meeting regularly with a sub group formed to develop the questionnaire that will be posted online and physically to every household in Lochalsh. The purpose of the questionnaire is to collect data from as many households as possible in the Lochalsh area and the data will be used to develop community projects/plans.

Stromeferry and Achmore CC area have been asked if they will pilot the 1st virtual road show as COVID advice restrictions us from having physical road shows in local halls. We discussed this at our meeting and Mary will report back to the next Lochalsh Collaboration meeting.

Action: Mary to get more details on how and when the virtual road shows will happen and what apps will be used to aid discussion and record suggestions and give our feed back to the next LC meeting.

6.4 Path Access at Stromeferry

Biz sent us the contacts for the new path access officer based in Portree and Kath has written to him to him so that he can focus on getting the pedestrian access to the beach open up. Claudia reported that the area is generally neglected and the gorse etc is taking over, so some path clearance will be required.

Action: Kath will follow up on this topic with the new Officer.

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6.5 The Safety concrete block fence at Ardnarff. Ref Number FS130640243 – no progress.

In August 2019 Gill had a meeting with Kate Forbes MSP re the safety barriers. These barriers were put up as a temporary measure some years ago as the safety fence behind the barriers is damaged. On the 25th Feb 2020, Kate Forbes' office received the following response from Highland Council, quoted below.

We have no current plans for this road such as widening or resurfacing. The road network programme which would consider whether to resurface this road is reviewed annually and roads are assessed for their strategic importance. There are too many roads that need resurfacing, and too small a budget.

The concrete barriers are there to protect drivers and prevent them from leaving the road and entering the railway. They are temporary whilst the safety fence is being repaired.

The roads team are aware of the condition of this road and carry out maintenance as necessary. Potholes can be reported on the Highland Council website under the "Report a Problem" tab.

Biz our councillor has been diligently pursuing this issue with the Highland Council and she told us that provision has been made in the 2020/2021 Highland Council barriers budget for work to be undertaken to remove the barriers.

Action: As Biz was not at our meeting we have no progress to report on this topic.

The CC has received many new reports of huge pot holes and craters appearing in our roads, in addition to the bridge problems already reported. Mary will have a discussion with MacKenzie and establish how we report these problems which will allow the Community Council to priority and monitor progress. We will find out from Mac what procedure is used by other CCs, & if the Highland Council online reporting systems can still be used.

Action: Mary to contact MacKenzie and discuss the reporting and monitoring of infrastructure problems & to organise with Mac to join our next CC meeting.

6.6 Fernaig and Portachuillin Rail Bridge works.

Network Railway's contractor AMCO will be completing the scour works at the Fernaig bridge this week, they have successfully filled the 'mattresses' with concrete which are encasing the foundation wall of the bridge on the loch side and the Fernaig bay side. The concrete mattresses have been covered over with gravel and rock armour, so are no longer visible. As AMCO were onsite and established in the compound Network Rail has given AMCO the contract to refurbish the steel girder stone walled bridge between Stromeferry and Portachuillin. Work started on this last week around the 20th October with the laying of ground mats to prevent ground churn when crossing the common grazing and going through one of the crofter's fields. This bridge work is scheduled to take about 1 month, mostly consisting of normal day shift working with about 3 night shifts. AMCO is doing a very professional job and are minimise disruption as much as possible.

Action: Mary to keep CC informed of the work and completion dates.

6.7 Dog Output bins & Bench

Completed bins are in place. We all agreed that the bench should be sited in the Spring.

6.8 Recycling Bins

There are no recycling facilities near our CC area so we decided that this is a service we urgently need and we will make it part of the services we will ask for via the Lochalsh Collaboration questionnaire.

6.9 The Strome Salmon Fish farm.

The CC have written to Scottish Salmon and requested a meeting; which they declined, so we email again inviting them to meet with us when COVID procedures allow us to meet. In the meantime we agreed that we would create a list of the questions and forward to Scottish Salmon. When we are collecting questions we will provide the link to the Highland

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Council planning details that were submitted by Scottish Salmon between 2014 & 2019 and the other regulating bodies that approved this farm, so that our questions focus on actual breaches or non compliance of the plans that have been approved.

Action: Kath and Mary to pull together an email and distribution so that we capture resident's concerns.

6.10 Wreath for Remembrance Day service

There will be no gathering at this year's Remembrance Sunday so we all agreed to Gill laying a wreath on behalf of the Stromeferry and Achmore community.

Action: Gill to collect and lay wreath.

7 Updates from Regional & National Organisations (As and when issues arise)

7.1 NHS

- Nothing to report.

7.2 Tilhill

- Nothing to report

7.3 Highland Council

The Council's annual winter resilience program of providing those who volunteer with grit and kit is being organised at the moment. The people who have forwarded their names and addresses to Mary will be forwarded to Highland Council for insurance purposes.

Action: Mary to complete HC form

7.4 Police & Fire

- Nothing to report

7.5 Utilities - Scottish Water

- Nothing to report

8 Update from our Councillor

- Nothing to report

9 Updates from Local Groups

9.1 CMNet CIC Broadband

Our last update for the CC was back in March a lot has happened since then here is a brief summary:-

Kath Smith has been appointed as finance director and has taken over production of the monthly finance summary.

After weeks of frustration we finally gave up on Zen for the new line in Achmore hall, we placed a new order with Plusnet and the installation went through on schedule and was installed at the end of July. This is a very good connection with download speeds of 78 Mbps and upload speeds of 20 Mbps. The new "ac" dishes that link Achmore Hall to Creag Mhaol have been tested and can cope with these throughputs.

The new Achmore line arrived just in time as the radio connection between Creag Mhaol and Plockton school was deteriorating. At first we thought this was the additional volumes and the warm damp air but a visit to the school revealed that a tree had grown to the extent it was blocking the signal. The connection between the school and Creag Mhaol has been upgraded to new "ac" dishes and both ends of the link have been moved to clear the tree. This new connection has recently been put into service and it's performance will be monitored.

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We have set up test sites in Ardaneaskan East, North Strome, Ardnarff and Strome Ferry. These will be used as "targets" to allow us to align the new radios on Creag Mhaol to get the best signal and throughput.

The software that will automate the configuration of subscriber's equipment is now being used for all new installations and is being enhanced as required.

COVID 19 - If we stay on the current tier we will be able to continue with installations. Ardaneaskan East will be the next group to be connected.

Although usage of the system is still increasing the new Achmore line is able to cope and we have removed the temporary restrictions on bandwidth.

If you are a subscriber to CMNet you can see the usage of the system here:-

Plockton - <http://192.168.200.134/graphs/iface/ether3>

Achmore - <http://192.168.253.254/graphs/iface/ether1>

After several enquiries from subscribers we have prepared several options for "whole house Wi-Fi".

There are more details on the website:-www.stromeferry-and-achmore.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=433827

Phil Game

9.2 Fernaig Trust

No meetings of the Trust have taken place since March. Repairs to the drystone dyke on the Plockton road were carried out, and a new Information Board installed along with dog waste bins (with CC help). Two new picnic benches at the orchard below the hayfield are in place. The footpaths have proved to be a valuable community asset for many folk, providing safe areas for exercise and enjoyment.

Colin MacAndrew

9.3 Stromeferry and Achmore Hall

The 100 club winners in are:-

April

No 32 Kate Biss £25

No 85 Andrea Matheson £15

No 34 Terry Heavyside £10

May

No 61 Grace Gray £25

No 45 Anne Gillespie £15

No 28 Sanders Gibson £10

June

No 56 Cathleen Inman £25

No 41 Joe Grimson £15

No 29 Duncan Gibson £10

July

No 85 Andrea Matheson £25

No 41 Joe Grimson £15

No 7 Alan Cairns £10

August

No 31 Dave Biss £25

No 14 Dawn Lupton £15

No 24 Annie Coomber £10

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Cheques have / are being distributed.

Rennie has stepped down from the caretaker position after many years of service. Many thanks go to her for her tireless efforts in this position. I hope Rennie will stay on the committee as a much valued committee member.

The hall is still closed until we have a little more clarity on what the future holds.

Martin Irving

10 AOB

- None

11 Calendar

12 Next Meetings

By Microsoft Teams – last Wed November.

13 Formal close of meeting @ 9.00pm

Approved