

Minutes for Stromeferry and Achmore CC Meeting – 28th July 2021 @ 7.30pm

1 Present. Microsoft Teams Meeting all connected at 7.30pm

Present: Mary MacBeth, Dawn Lupton, Gill Harrington, Kath Smith, Neil MacRae, Mhairi Macrae, Biz Campbell HC Councillor

Members of the public: Marion Howat

Apologies: Helen Robertson

2 Approve and adopt previous Minutes

The minutes from the 28th May 2021 meeting were approved by Kath and seconded by Dawn.

3 Matters Arising

New Minister

Fred Vincent the new minister for our area has been in touch and is very happy for us to publish his contact details.

Fred's email address is :-fvincent@churchofscotland.org.uk

And his mobile number is 0797 150 7952.

The CC unanimously voted for Mhairi Macrae to be co-opted on to Stromeferry and Achmore CC. The process is now completed. So a big welcome to Mhairi.

4 Communications received

If anyone would like a to receive a copy of any correspondence then please contact the secretary @ mary.macbeth1@btinternet.com

5 Communications received

On Agenda – means it is on the agenda; NNTD – no need to discuss

Email - Weekly - Maureen MacKenzie - Planning Information – checked - NNTD.

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

Email – Ad Hoc – Emails between CC members on agenda items, verifying minutes etc. -NNTD

Email – Weekly – Policy HC - Community Resilience Group Update June/July 2021- distributed -NNTD

Email – 1/6/2021 – Biz Campbell – Invite to name new hospital – Distributed – NNTD

Email - 1/6/2021 – FCT – Request to stop dogs' pooing on path – Distributed – NNTD

Email – 3/6/2021 – Strome residents – Strome viewpoint being used as a camper van waste disposal area – **on agenda**

Email - 7/6/2021 –G Harrington – Ardrnaff barriers – **on agenda**

Emails – 10 – 11/6/2021 – CC members confirming Mhairi Macrae's co-option onto CC - complete

Emails – 14/6/21 – Police Scotland - David Mocket is our CC representative - complete

Email - 14/6/2021 – Dot Ferguson – Consultation on Traffic regulations – distributed – NNTD

Email - 17/06/2021 – L Bird - Website query - complete

Email - - 24/6/2021 – S Vitonen – Tourism Support – introduction Destination Management Planning Officer – **on agenda**

Email - 24/6/2021 – D Ferguson - Public service delivery: meeting the challenges ahead - NNTD

Email – 3/7/2021 – Kath – Our new minister made contact via Facebook – complete - NNTD

Email – 5/7/2021 – S Vitonen – Wishes to attend a CC meeting – **on agenda**

Email – 5/7/2021 – Dot Ferguson – confirming personal changes to our CC – complete - NNTD

Email – 6/7/2021 _ Morven – Housing Trust – enquiry - **on agenda**

Email – 8/7/2021 – Zurich Insurance – Confirming and paying insurance for CC – Treasurer Report - NNTD

Email – 8/7/2021 _ C Arthur – Agreeing to picnic table on shore – NNTD

Email – 9-- 10/7/2021 – CC members - location and sizes of bench – NNTD

Email - 9 / 7/2021 – I Howat - Agreeing to picnic table on shore - NNTD

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Email – 13/7/2021 – D Ferguson - FW: Fireworks Consultation Launch and The Fireworks (Scotland) Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations 2021 – distributed – NNTD

Email – 15/7/2021 – D Ferguson - Next interim Community Council elections –NNTD

Email – 19/7/2021 – Gavin Steel Scottish Water – Not able to attend our CC meeting – **on agenda**

Email - 20/7/2021 – M Arscott – To be removed from our CC distribution list – complete.

Email – 21/7/2021 – Morven CH Trust – enquiry - **on agenda**

Email – 22 – 27/7/2021 – CC Members – Siting of Stromeferry bench & Size of Achmore bench & location for Fernaig Shore picnic table – **on agenda**

Email - 26/7/2021 – Marion Howat – Strome Woods fires and camper van waste – **on agenda**

Email - 26/7/2021 – Rennie Gibson – Achmore junction and verge cutting – **on agenda**

Email – 27/7/2021 – Gill Harrington - Introduction from HC ranger – **on agenda**

Email – 27/7/2021 –C McAndrew – FCT update - complete

Email – June/July 2021 – Various – This folder contains 36 emails re the water supply issues at Stromeferry – **on agenda**.

6 Treasurer's Report

The Balance at the bank at 28 June 2021 is £3,506.77. June's interest was 0.44p. Cheque 195 payment for CC account auditing for £25.00 was cleared. The CC's annual insurance of £84.00 was paid by Mary and will be reclaimed. So that will leave £3422.77 in the bank prior to money being spent on benches. Dawn told the meeting that she has been told that our CC will receive our annual grant of approx. £400.

Action: Dawn & Mary to sort out insurance payment. Gill to forward an email to Mary to circulate to all CC members and get feedback on whether to give some money to assist with Hard of Hearing training.

7 Local Items and Progress update

7.1 Defibrillator

Mary now has the old pads, defibrillator box and batteries to return to Lucky2BHere. Helen has been doing the defibrillator checks in July and Mary is on the rota for August.

Action: Post COVID Mary to return old equipment to Lucky2BeHere

A potential home for a Stromeferry Defibrillator is the phone box. Gill had an interesting call from a pleasant man from BT who will confirm whether BT wants to continue to use this phone box or whether the CC can have it.

Action: Gill is still waiting for BT phone box person to tell her what their plan for the box is.

Kath is walking the St Cuthbert's Way from Melrose to Lindisfarne – all 62 miles of it and has set up a Fund Raising page with all monies received going towards the Achmore defibrillator. So far we have raised £715.00 with another £260 being pledged to Kath's efforts so we are getting closer to our target of at least £1,200.

Action: All to contribute to the next funding raising event for the defibrillator located at Achmore Hall.

Gill emailed Mary with the following update - I have now tracked down a man to do the defibrillator training. He lives in Balmacara and has worked with Lucky2BeHere before and says we just need to get in touch with Drew Millar and tell him Mike Shucksmith will do our training and we will get it for free. Mary will contact Lucky2BeHere and discuss this training

Action: Mary to contact Lucky2BeHere to discuss this training.

7.2 Planning

- Nothing to report

7.3 Lochalsh Collaboration Group

The team are working on the analysis of the Survey data and getting it ready to present to us in Lochalsh. Mary has the Lochalsh Collaboration A frame/poster board but will discuss with hall about storing it in the hall; so it is readily available for all.

Action: Mary to discuss with the Hall committee if room can be found in one of the hall cupboards to store the Poster Board.

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7.4 The Safety concrete block fence at Ardnarff. Ref Number FS130640243

On the 7th June 2021 Gill received the following communication from Kate Forbes' office and it is quoted here:-

'Once again I do apologise for the delay in getting back to you on this.

We've actually been repeatedly asking the Chief Executive's office at Highland Council for an update on when the safety fence is due to be repaired as per their previous response.

We received a response last week which I've copied below for your information:

Dear Ms Forbes MSP

Response from Iain Moncrieff, Roads Operations Manager, to your enquiry FS-Case-330379778

I refer to your enquiry received on 28 April, KF5729, regarding the safety fence at Ardnarff.

Unfortunately the Council is currently waiting for Network Rail to arrange a meeting with us to discuss how to repair the fencing safely. We are unable to take any further action until Network Rail contact us.

Yours sincerely, The Highland Council

Had we known that Highland Council were simply sitting on their hands waiting for Network Rail to contact them to arrange a meeting, Kate would have, many months ago, written to senior officials in Network Rail asking for an urgent update. Kate has now done this and we'll keep you posted on the response. Kind regards, Philip

Action: Biz took an action to talk to Iain Moncrieff to get this work done.

7.5 Stromeferry and Achmore Community website.

More of the Community council minutes for 2021 need to be prepared for loading onto the Website. The question and answer documents which we exchanged with the Kyle Surgery in early 2020 will be loaded into the 'Other' section on the website plus the COVID update that we produced for April 2020 instead of meeting minutes. There has been a request for a local business and accommodation to be added. The CC members need to have a discussion about what to post in the CC section. Lizzie Bird has been set up as Fernaig Trust website administrator and Kath as second CC administrator.

Action: Mary to get the 2021 minutes ready for loading plus other documents.

Action: Mary to contact chair of Hall to ask who will administer their section of the website.

7.6 Bench

Dawn has ordered a replacement picnic table/seating for the Fernaig shore which will arrive in the next 5-6 weeks. Mary has sorted out the approval for the bench to be sited on the land at Fernaig Shore. The land is owned by Mary and Phil but it may be part of the Common Grazings so Mary obtained the siting permission from the Crofters – C & A Arthur and I Howat. The CC members have decided that a 5 ft wooden bench will be sited at the Achmore Cattle Grid. The Strome team have been canvassing opinion for the siting of a bench in Stromeferry and many ideas have been forth coming but more work needs to be done to get the ideal location and landowners' permission to site it.

Action: Dawn to locate picnic table on the Fernaig Shore.

Action: Mary to obtain another two benches - one by the Achmore cattle grid and one at a yet to be determined location in Stromeferry.

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

8.1 NHS

Biz is awaiting an update from Hamish Fraser on the progress that has been made with the campaign to get a CT scanner for the new Hospital, which is now officially named Bradford Hospital at a ceremony held in Portree.

Actions: Biz and Hamish will continue to work on behalf of all the CC in obtaining a CT scanner for the new hospital.

The feedback received about the food could be best described as 'it may contain the necessary nutrients, but it is mostly inedible'. Biz will convey this response to Louise Bussell and ask what she is going to do about improving the food.

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Action: Biz will follow up on the situation about the hospital food with Louise Bussell.

8.2 Tilhill / Forestry and Land Scotland

There was nothing to report from Tilhil. Marion Howat has been emailing Forestry and Land Scotland (FCT) to inform them that many visitors are not adhering to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Visitors are parking wherever they want and many are disposing of their waste over the bank at the Strome View point. Marion said the mess left by visitors is ever increasing and a lot more fires are being lit in the Strome Woods. Laura Turtle is the Forestry and Land (FLS) Visitor Services manager who has now been in touch with Marion. Laura is ordering visitor behaviour signage for Strome Woods (no fires, and no overnight parking). Marion told the meeting that more signs have been put up at the entrance to Strome Woods by the cattle grid. Marion has also asked the FCT to consider putting some sort of gate/access blockage across the Strome Wood entrance with access for Forestry workers being provided. Biz told the meeting that Michael Beveridge is the Forestry and Land manager for this area and we should get him involved. And this links in with the new Council Ranger employed by Highland Council which is discussed below.

Action: Marion to continue her dialogue with Laura and keep the CC informed. Mary will obtain contact details for Michael Beveridge and pass to Marion. Marion will ask for more notices and say that we are willing to put them up in our area.

8.3 Highland Council

The HC have appointed a new Countryside Ranger - Roz Birch. Here is a quote describing Roz's role which she sent to Gill. 'My role is seasonal and will run until the end of October, and I prioritise engaging with and educating visitors on the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, sharing local information with campers, campervan owners and other visitors. This includes awareness of visitor environmental impact, appropriate and responsible behaviour in the outdoors, fire safety and preventing fires in high risk areas. I additionally monitor litter, car parking issues, toileting issues and liaise with the Highland Council waste team, environmental health team, roads team and site management teams.'

We decided that Mary will contact Roz and give her a brief summary of the issues we are having with visitors not adhering to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Mary will introduce Mhairi and Marion to Roz so that they can follow up on the detail of the issues and show Roz around the area when she visits. Marion will continue to liaise with Laura from Land and Forestry Scotland to make sure that we get solutions to the issues of non compliance with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Action: Mary to contact Roz and summarise our issues with visitors not adhering to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and introduce Marion and Mhairi who will follow up with Roz and invite her to visit our area.

We did not discuss Saara at the meeting but this information was distributed to all CC members prior to the meeting. Saara Vitanen has recently started as a destination Management Planning Officer with the Wester Ross Biosphere for our area. Saara's role is :- 'My role is to support communities in South Wester Ross with projects that help to manage tourism and implementing the Destination Management Plan for Wester Ross, published by Wester Ross Biosphere last year. I will be working closely with the Wester Ross Tourism Partnership which you or someone else from your organisation is very welcome to join as a community representative, if you have not already done so.'

I would be happy to help to discuss possible solutions to any local issues arising from tourism, or discuss any projects/ideas related to local tourism. I would also be interested in attending any of your meetings, where possible'.

Action: Mary to acknowledge Saara's email and update her on our issues.

8.4 Police & Fire

- David Mockett is our Stromeferry and Achmore Police Scotland representative.

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8.5 Utilities - Scottish Water

The residents of Stromeferry have been having numerous and lengthy interruptions to their water supplies and recently it has become nearly a daily occurrence. A TEAMS meeting is being set up with Gavin Steel - Corporate Affairs Manager (North) for Scottish Water, covering: Perth and Kinross, Dundee, Angus, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Highlands & Islands, Moray, Western Isles, Orkney, Shetland and general media enquiries. Prior to the meeting Kath, Marion and Mhairi will gather information from all the Strome households so that when we meet with Gavin he really understands how awful it is to have no water to shower, flush toilets, make tea, cook etc. Scottish Water has to deliver a permanent solution to end the Stromeferry water interruptions.

The reporting of problems to Scottish Water Customer Services Unit is the initial step in the complaints process and this we have done and logged. The second level is the meeting with Gavin Steel and if that does not produce a permanent solution than we are immediately taking this issue to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

Action: We agreed that Mary will contact Gavin and organise the meeting for the 10th August @ 6.30pm or later. Gill will chair the meeting; Mary will produce an agenda and forward the current log of water interruptions.

8.6 Other

Mary received an email from the Communities Housing Trust (CHT) who works with communities to offer a wide range of housing solutions, mainly in rural areas. CHT work with local groups to get an understanding of need in a community and if CHT have any enquiries for potential affordable housing developments, CHT gauge their initial views at an early stage. CHT have been in touch with the Community Council and the Fernaig Community Trust. Mary explained to Morven from CHT that with the Lochalsh Collaboration Group our CC area, along with all the CCs in Lochalsh, have undertaken a comprehensive survey of what services and facilities we wish to have in Lochalsh and once the analysis has been completed then we will know what our communities want and need. So no more action is required at this time.

9 Update from our Councillor

Biz told the meeting that 2 of the prime parking spaces in Kyle's main car park are now dedicated to the Car Club Team. The Highland Council did not consult on this exclusive use of parking spaces.

10 Updates from Local Groups

10.1 CMNet CIC Broadband

COVID 19 - The removal of government restrictions has allowed us to restart installations, two of the three trial sites have now had their installations completed and a further eight new subscribers have been connected. There is one trial site installation to complete and three new subscribers installations are scheduled. We owe Ken Hopper a huge vote of thanks for all the work he has done preparing sites and then helping us install equipment.

Although the Achmore gateway is still showing erratic performance Plusnet offered us a renewal deal that was too good to refuse and so we have decided to stay with them.

We have completed work on our budget forecast:-

We will buy some examples of the latest Ubiquiti kit so we can test their performance.

We will refund £36 of the new joiner's premium to all eligible subscribers which means new joiners will pay £60 rather than £96.

From 1st September 2021 the variable portion of the tariff will be altered to make the rate 75 GB per £1 rather than 50 GB per £1.

We will continue to try and ensure CMNet offers unbeatable value for subscribers.

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See our website for more details:- www.stromeferry-and-achmore.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=433827

Phil Game

10.2 Fernaig Trust

Nothing to report this month.

Colin MacAndrew

10.3 Stromeferry and Achmore Hall

The hall is starting to be used again by the Tai Chi group following the government guidance of risk assessments etc.

Martin Irving

11 AOB

This was not discussed at the meeting but it was brought to the CC's attention by email prior to the meeting. The growth on the trees at the Achmore Junction, ie., if you are coming from the Strome side and turning off into Achmore, is quite scary with the speed of traffic and the lack of visibility. The trees need to be cut or removed to make it safe for road users.

The standard of the verge cutting is not adequate and it is not seen to be value for money. A huge tractor with an inadequate mower is being used to do this work.

Action: Mary to bring to Mackenzie's attention and get it sorted.

12 Calendar

12.1 Monthly Gate Check - The gate to the beach is open at Stromeferry

12.2 Weekly defibrillator rota – All in order – Mary on rota for August.

12.3 Post COVID – Relationship building with the Scottish Salmon Fish farm.

13 Next Meetings

By Microsoft Teams or maybe in Achmore Hall the next meeting is scheduled for 29th September 21 @ 7.30pm. We are not having a CC meeting in August.

14 Formal close of meeting @ 8.42pm