

Minutes of the Meeting Held at 7.30 pm on 1st April 2024 in Avoch Pavilion

Present:

Members: Derek MacIver, Chair (DM), Tim Phillips (TP), Hamish MacLean (HM), Stuart Bruce (SB), Rosie Brunton (RB), Fraser Brunton, Minutes (FB)

In attendance: Drew Mann (DMn), Caroline Lindsay (CL), Nicolaas du Preez (NdP)

Apologies: Steve Baker (SBak), Jenni Carmichael (No.19) (JC), Lesley Patience (LP)

1. Welcome and apologies

Action

DM welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Caroline Lindsay (CL), who had expressed interest following the leaflet campaign; and Drew Mann (DMn) and Nicolaas du Preez (NdP), who were also members of Avoch Amenities Association. Cllr. Sarah Atkin (SA) was unable to attend.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th March 2024

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by TP and seconded by SB, as an accurate record.

2.1 Matters arising from the previous Minutes

It was agreed that reviewing progress with actions arising from previous meetings was important; and would be a standing agenda item.

Item 2: RB said that there were approximately a dozen Associated Members, who wished to participate in AKCC. Some others had retired. RB was preparing a list of Associated Members that would be submitted for consideration.

RB to submit a list of Associate Members

Item 3b(iii): SA had confirmed that AKCC's comments on planning application PLN/007/22 had been received by the Planning Department and would be taken into consideration. FB to confirm that AKCC's comments had been posted on the Highland Council Planning Portal.

FB to confirm comments posted on Planning Portal

Items 3c(ii), 3c(iii): As SA had not yet provided an update, FB said that he would follow up these actions with her.

FB to follow up with SA

Item 3d: TP had contacted Highland Broadband (HB) whose installation and marketing were now well advanced in the Black Isle. There was no longer a need for HB to attend an AKCC meeting.

Item 5: RB said that information on community council support had been received from Highland Council and would be circulated to members.

RB to circulate information

Item 6: DM had attended a very positive meeting of Avoch Amenities Association (AAA) where he had reported on AKCC's recent activities. He said that AAA had been very supportive. DM welcomed DMn's and NdP's interest in participating in AKCC and it was hoped they would become co-opted Members. It was agreed that AKCC would send a representative to AAA meetings and invite AAA to reciprocate. It was agreed that an 'AAA Report' would be a standing item on the AKCC agenda

DM/DMn to finalise reciprocal arrangements. TP to add 'AAA Report' to AKCC Agenda

Item 7.1: A list of farmers and contact details was being provided by DM, which was to be added to the list of local businesses in the IV9 area.

DM providing list of farmers

Item 7.2: RB had distributed leaflets to businesses in Avoch and was in contact with voluntary organisations to explore potential links with AKCC.

Item 8.1: FB had circulated a proposed AKCC Action Plan, incorporating

priorities for 2024/25. This was discussed as a separate agenda item.

Item 8.2: RB had made considerable progress streamlining the AKCC inbox and files. She was also reviewing the AKCC distribution lists and would present an update at the next meeting. It was agreed that the autoreply message on the inbox would remain active until further notice.

**RB to give
Distribution
List update**

Item 8.3: Roles and Responsibilities – TP and RB had met Caroline Lindsay (CL), who had offered to help develop a new AKCC website. It was hoped that CL would become a co-opted member of AKCC.

Item 9: SA had not yet provided any advice on the provision of a regular Police Report. FB said that he would raise the matter with her. As other CCs were not receiving Police Reports, further enquiries may be required.

**FB to contact
SA**

3. Recurring Community Council Matters

3a. Finance Update

TP presented the Finance Update. Recent expenditure had included £160 for renewal of public liability insurance provided by Zurich Insurance Co., Fairshare subscription for the Sharing Shed; and leaflet printing by Speedprint (Inverness). He reported that there was £3,058 in the Bank of Scotland current account on 31st March 2024; and that there was a small (provisional) deficit of £347 for 2023/24, whose confirmation was subject to receipt of the March 2024 bank statement. TP said that he would arrange for formal auditing of the 2023/24 accounts.

**TP to arrange
for accounts to
be audited**

TP highlighted the principal expenditure headings, which included an allowance for a village officer and was understood to provide for some related ad hoc expenditure arising from general duties. A copy of the receipts and payments to 31st March is attached to these minutes.

TP said that he was the only current signatory on the AKCC bank account and recommended that two additional signatories be added. It was agreed that Derek MacIver (proposed by FB and seconded by SB) and Rosie Brunton (proposed by DM and seconded by SB) were to be appointed as second and third signatories. Signatories who were no longer AKCC members were to be removed from the list.

**TP to add DM
and RB to the
list of account
signatories &
delete previous
members.**

3b. Planning Issues

(i) **Notification of Recent Planning Applications:** RB was reviewing the weekly list of planning applications published by Highland Council and forwarding applications to relevant AKCC members for further consideration as appropriate. She said that the most recent list contained one application from our area that was unlikely to be contentious.

(ii) **Standard Procedure for Managing Planning Applications:** TP had drafted a procedure for AKCC's review and level of involvement in the local planning applications published by Highland Council. TP and FB to finalise these proposals for consideration at the next meeting and adoption as a standard procedure.

**TP and FB to
finalise draft
procedure for
discussion at
next meeting**

3c. Community concerns arising

(i) TP reported concerns raised by a Ladyhill resident about the lack of dog waste bins. The provision of additional bins was discussed. It was agreed that the responsibility for emptying bins needed to be clarified.

**FB to ask SA
for clarification**

(ii) TP reported that safety concerns had been raised about the

observance of the 20mph speed limit on School Brae in Avoch in the vicinity of the primary school. As observance of the speed limit was a police matter, it was agreed that individual concerns should be raised with the Police in the first instance. AKCC would keep the matter under review.

- (iii) RB said that she had been asked if there were plans to create an all-weather pitch in Avoch, which would avoid large numbers of children requiring to be taken elsewhere. DMn said that Avoch Amenities Association's current main objective was to create a local all-weather pitch and that significant funds had already been raised.

3d. Police Liaison: This item was covered above under Matters Arising.

3e. Correspondence: Nil of note.

- 4. Associate Memberships:** RB referred to the list of Associate Members that was in preparation (covered above under Matters Arising). She said that holding the AKCC meeting on the first Monday of the month clashed with the School's Parent Council meeting and wondered if the AKCC meeting could be rescheduled so that she could attend the school meeting. One option was to hold AKCC meetings on the last Monday of each month. FB said that he would contact SA to establish her availability for Monday meetings of AKCC so that she could continue to attend whenever possible.

FB to find out SA's availability for AKCC meetings.

DM highlighted the need to encourage local businesses to attend AKKCC (as Associate Members) as that would help raise awareness and understanding of matters of mutual interest. He had spoken with someone from Rosehaugh Estate whom he hoped might become an Associate Member. It was noted that JC (No.19) had planned to attend the meeting.

FB referred to the register of local businesses being developed, which to date, contained 95 businesses in the IV9 area.

- 5. Assets owned and managed by AKCC – maintenance, etc:** DM, FB and RB were photographing and establishing the condition of the various assets. FB had contacted Dot Ferguson (Highland Council), seeking clarification of Highland Council's position on the holding of assets. SA had advised that community councils were advised against holding assets as members could be held financially liable in the event of an injury arising from their use. FB had discussed the matter with Kirsty Ellen (Highland Council Community Support Officer) on 18th March 2024.

Kirsty Ellen confirmed that there was no provision within Highland Council's Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils relating to the holding of assets. However, if assets were held, Highland Council would be concerned that members of community councils could be held personally liable in the event of an incident involving community council held assets.

Although there would be no risk of personal liability if the community council were a registered charity or incorporated body, community councils were not permitted to hold either status.

Kirsty Ellen recommended that if AKCC was to hold its own assets, it must have suitable public liability insurance. She said that such insurance would need to be specific to the assets held, rather than the basic cover

provided to cover community meetings, etc. She suggested that the policy's scope was checked and discussions held with the insurance company, based on the value of assets and any conditions to be met, such as having a maintenance programme and the keeping of records.

TP said that he had just renewed AKCC's public liability insurance policy, and that the wording indicated incidents involving our assets would be covered, providing that we could not be found to have been negligent.

It was noted that Avoch Amenities Association, which was a registered charity, might take on responsibility for the Avoch Christmas lights.

- 6. The Sharing Shed:** It was noted that the Sharing Shed was managed by four excellent volunteers and that Scotmid regularly provided food vouchers, which were much appreciated. It had been reported that Avoch Amenities Association may be interested in taking over the Sharing Shed, although AKCC was currently the sponsor designated by Fairtrade and was the conduit for funding.

Two current issues that required attention were the need to find secondary storage for rolling stock and the need to dispose of significant amounts of waste cardboard.

CL suggested that national funding could be available to purchase secondary lockable storage containers of the type found outside stores on the Black Isle and at Muir of Ord. Further discussion was required at the next meeting.

Further discussion required

DMn suggested that Scotmid (Avoch) may be willing to dispose of cardboard from the Sharing Shed as part of their own waste management arrangements. TP said that he would discuss with the Scotmid manager.

TP to discuss with Scotmid manager

- 7. Black Isle Plan and Black Isle Community Councils**

DM and TP had attended recent meetings of the Black Isle Community Council (BICC) and about the Black Isle Place Plan (BIPP). There was discussion about the Black Isle Partnership, the importance of accountability and the arrangements for implementing the plan.

DM said that AKCC needed to be actively involved with the BIPP to ensure that the community council was fully aware of progress made with its implementation and any potential funding opportunities that arose. He cited the reopening of the Avoch public toilets, as an example of works that would require funding. TP agreed with the importance of AKCC being aware of progress and funding opportunities, though indicated that AKCC's current capacity for active involvement was limited.

After further discussion it was agreed that the priority was to keep firmly engaged with the Black Isle Community Council and be prepared to respond to issues arising from the BIPP as they arose.

- 8. AKCC Action Plan**

FB had received favourable comments on the draft Action Plan for 2024/25, based on discussion of AKCC's priorities for the newly formed council. He circulated version 6 of the plan and summarised its four main workstreams, which comprised, 1. Key Projects, 2. Supporting the Community, 3. Improving Communication with the Community, and 4. Developing the New Council and its Members. The plan recorded progress made against the elements of each workstream and included an associated status indicating progress made with each element.

Members were asked to consider the plan and forward any comments to FB. It was hoped that a final version of the plan could be approved at the next meeting. TP said that he would amend the agenda so that discussion of the Action Plan would follow consideration of the minutes of the previous meeting.

Members to comment on the Plan. TP to amend the agenda

9. AOCB

AKCC Communications Strategy – New Website and Social Media:

Members welcomed CL's offer to help create a new AKCC website. RB and CL to meet to agree the next steps.

RB and CL to meet

DMn's offer to provide social media support was also welcomed. RB, DMn and DM to meet to agree next steps, which would include amending admin rights for the AKCC Facebook page, so that others apart from DM could edit information on the page.

RB, DMn and DM to meet

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at 7.30 pm on Monday 29th April 2024 in the Avoch Pavilion.