

APPROVED Minutes of the AKCC Meeting held in Avoch Pavilion at 7.30 pm on Monday 16th December 2024.

Present:

Members: Fraser Brunton, Vice-Chair & Minutes (FB), Tim Phillips, Treasurer (TP), Rosie Brunton, Secretary (RB)

In Attendance: David Brims (DB), Alistair Adie (AA)

Apologies: Derek MacIver, Chair (DM), Jenni Carmichael (JC), Cllr Morven-May MacCallum (MMM)

- | 1. | Welcome and apologies | Action |
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| | FB welcomed everyone and chaired the meeting in DM's absence. Apologies were as noted above. | |
| 2. | Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th November 2024 | |
| | The draft minutes of the AKCC meeting held on 4 th November 2024 were proposed by AA and seconded by RB as an accurate record. | |
| 3. | Matters Arising from the Minutes of 4th November 2024 | |
| | FB thanked everyone for providing updates on their individual matters arising in advance of the meeting. He referred to the Matters Arising Register and reported the following progress by exception: | |
| | 3.1 Item 3c(ii)/290424: Brae Steps. DB had visited the steps to assess the work required. He circulated photographs showing the need for some concrete patching work and that the steps needed to be swept and cleaned. Previous discussions indicated that Highland Council was unlikely to accept liability for the steps. It was agreed that the local community group that had cleared the bank above the Lazy Corner may be willing to help with the steps. It was agreed to discuss the matter further at AKCC's March meeting. | RB to add 'Brae Steps' to the March Agenda. |
| | DB said that there was some rubble present at the side of the path that remained after the Highland Broadband (HB) works. It was suggested that DM could approach his contact in HB to ask for the rubble to be removed. | FB to contact DM |
| | 3.2 Item 5c(i)/05/0824: TP had discussed AKCC's concerns with the Black Isle Community Councils about the process for transferring the funds raised for a Black Isle swimming pool to the Dingwall Puffin Pool. Although the funds had been transferred according to financial process, it was recognised that the associated communication with fundraisers and other stakeholders had been unsatisfactory. | |
| | 3.3 Item 9/050824: SB had said he planned to restart work on the AKCC Asset Register/Maintenance records when time permitted. | SB to update in Feb 2025 |
| | 3.4 Item 5c(iii)/020924: Safety of the Bridge linking the Pavilion area to Long Road - DM was discussing with Lizzie Campbell (Rosehaugh Estates). | DM in contact with LC |
| | 3.5 Item 11/020924: Christmas Lights Testing – RB was undertaking a risk assessment and documenting the various issues. | RB to update |

<p>3.6 Item 5c(iii)/071024: Railway Footpath – MMM was discussing support for the required works with Highland Council’s Access Committee.</p>	<p>MMM to discuss with Committee</p>
<p>3.7 Item 5a/041124: Reduction of Bank Charges – TP was investigating ways to reduce AKCC’s bank charges, including changing banks. RB suggested that NatWest and the Coop may offer free community accounts that may be suitable.</p>	<p>TP to update</p>
<p>3.8 Item 5b/041124: FB was awaiting a reply from Sarah Atkin regarding Highland Council’s response to concerns raised by AKCC about the potentially unstable bank between the houses in Henrietta Street and the proposed house site on Cemetery Brae in Avoch.</p>	<p>See Item 5b below</p>
<p>3.9 Highland Council Remembrance Day Wreath: It was agreed that FB would contact MMM to thank her for arranging and delivering the Remembrance Day wreath provided by Highland Council. FB and RB had laid the wreath at the Avoch War Memorial.</p>	<p>FB to contact MMM</p>
<p>4. AKCC Action Plan Update</p>	
<p>FB highlighted the active workstreams summarised in v13 of the AKCC Action Plan. These were: Reopening the Avoch Public Toilets, Asset Management, the Avoch Sharing Shed, Road Safety Concerns in Avoch, and the new AKCC Website, including the Local Business Register. FB said that an updated version of the Plan would be included with the papers for AKCC’s February meeting.</p>	<p>FB to circulate v14 of the Action Plan</p>
<p>5. Recurring Community Council Matters</p>	
<p>5a Finance Update – TP said there had been little change in AKCC’s position. The account balance was approximately £3296. Renewal of the Public Liability insurance was due in January/February 2025. TP said he would routinely email his finance report to the secretary (RB) so that it could be circulated with the papers for each AKCC meeting.</p>	<p>TP to email finance report to RB every month</p>
<p>5b Planning and Related Issues</p>	
<p>FB said that no relevant planning applications had been highlighted by RB since the last meeting. He referred to previous concerns about the proposal to build a house above Henrietta Street on Cemetery Brae, including those by residents about the stability of the steep slope between Henrietta Street and Cemetery Brae.</p>	
<p>FB referred to concerns about the development raised by AKCC with Highland Council in February 2024, in response to the statutory consultation on the planning application. As Highland Council had not replied, FB had contacted Cllr. Sarah Atkin (SA) and was awaiting clarification as to whether statutory consultees were entitled to a reply to their submission.</p>	<p>Reply awaited from SA</p>
<p>AKCC had received a copy of the letter dated 10th December 2024 from Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager, Highland Council, to the applicants granting planning permission. The associated conditions including appointment of an arboricultural consultant and need for a prior Drainage Impact Assessment, provided reassurance that comments about the steep bank, by the Forestry Commission, Flood Risk Management Team, residents and AKCC had been considered.</p>	<p>FB to contact Mr Jones about AKCC’s comments</p>

5c Community Concerns Arising

- 5c(i) Killen Phone Box and Noticeboard** – Sarah MacDonald-Taylor (SMT) reported that the Killen Phone Box was mouldy/damp and needed attention. FB said that it was difficult to read papers on the Killen Noticeboard, due to the condition of the glass. RB said she would visit the Phone Box/Noticeboard to see what could be done and had forwarded SMT’s email to SB requesting that the Phone Box be added to the AKCC maintenance log. Hamish MacLean (former AKCC secretary) had suggested that it was easier to access AKCC papers online than visit the Killen Noticeboard. It was agreed that future use of the Noticeboard would be deferred until a new Killen representative was found for AKCC. **RB to visit Killen Phone Box and Noticeboard**
- 5c(ii) Community Grit Bin (Ormonde Terrace)** – TP said he had been approached about the need for a community grit bin. As the application required users to be designated, he had sought help from Cllr. Sarah Atkin. **TP arranging grit bin**
- 5c(iii) Donation to Sharing Shed** – TP said that a Braehead resident Karen McWilliam (WRI) had donated goods for the Sharing Shed. TP said that he was writing on behalf of AKCC to thank her. **TP to write letter of thanks**
- 5c(iv) Clearing of Roadside Ditches on the A832 South of Avoch** – The work carried out by the Highland Council Roads Department removing the hogweed and clearing the roadside ditches was much appreciated by AKCC. FB to ask MMM to pass on AKCC’s thanks. **FB to contact MMM**
- 5d Police Report** – RB said that there had not been a Police Scotland Report since the previous meeting.
- 5e Correspondence – Secretary’s Report (RB)**
- 5e(i)** RB said that an email had been received from Jenni Carmichael, thanking AKCC for the rhododendron and card expressing the Community Council’s sympathies and best wishes following her recent sad bereavement.
- 5e(ii)** Email from Highland Council Road Safety Team, dated 3rd December 2024 about the proposal to introduce a permanent 20mph speed limit order in various locations in Highland Region; intimating that the consultation was commencing (see www.highland.gov.uk/20mph). Any comments to avochandkillencommunitycouncil@gmail.com.
- 5e(iii)** Highland Council reported that the road crossing assessment undertaken in Avoch on 30th September 2024 at the Toll Road/Bridge Street junction had fallen well short of conditions required for a School Crossing Patroller. However, the Road Safety Team had agreed to undertake an additional survey of road traffic speed on School Brae.
- 5e(iv)** Email from Jane Lendrum (JL), dated 13th November 2024, highlighting the retiral of Arthur and Mikey after 52 years at Burnside Garage, which was closing after 75 years. Arthur’s tremendous contribution to the community was being widely acknowledged. RB had forwarded JL’s email to DM/TP requesting that AKCC should also acknowledge Arthur’s contribution. An excellent article about Arthur and Burnside Garage had been published in Chatterbox. **DM/TP to acknowledge Arthur’s contribution**

- 5e(v)** Email from Jenni Carmichael, dated 9th November 2024, asking if a Christmas Tree could be provided for the Community Gardens. RB had contacted Avoch Amenities Association, who said they would see what could be done.
- 5e(vi)** Email from Joe Peshall, dated 26th November 2024, seeking information about the location of public bench seats in the area. RB said that she would forward the enquiry to Sarah MacDonald-Taylor. **RB to forward email to SMT**
- 5e(vii)** Email from Caroline Eccles to Joe Perry (Highland Council), dated 25th November 2024 and copied to AKCC, confirming that she is preparing a Green Plan on behalf AKCC and seeking his assistance.
- 5e(viii)** Email from Alan Plampton, dated 6th December 2024, confirming Cromarty & District Community Council's new email address is cromartydcc@cromartylive.co.uk **RB to update distribution & contacts lists**
- 5e(ix)** Email from Cameron Kemp, dated 9th December 2024, advising that the Highland Council was considering the UK Government Consultation on Electricity Consenting in Scotland at a meeting on 12th December. Key points included retention of automatic right to public enquiries when authorities object to development proposals.
- 5e(xi)** Email from Highland Council, dated 10th December 2024, providing feedback on its budget engagement exercise. Further information was available at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/budget>
- 5e(xii)** Email from Gerard Kelly, BEAR Scotland, dated 11th December 2024, confirming that proposed path widening and safety barrier works on the A9 at North Kessock had been delayed until 2025 due to cold temperatures.
- 5e(xiii)** Email from Mike Armitage, dated 3rd December 2024, asking if AKCC would consider purchasing biodegradable dog waste bags instead of the current plastic ones. As costs were similar this had been agreed.
- 5e(xiv)** Email from Highland Council, dated November 2024, advising of the public consultation on the proposed Visitor Levy Scheme. The link to the consultation form is: www.highland.gov.uk/visitorlevyconsultation
- 6. Avoch Amenities Association (AAA) Update**
Nothing to report.
- 7. Black Isle Community Councils (BICC) & Black Isle Place Plan (BIPP) Update**
Nothing significant to report since the last meeting.
- 8. AKCC Website Working Group Update**
TP confirmed that the Working Group (CL, DM, TP and FB) had made further progress. It had been agreed that the current platform would be migrated to the Plexus System. FB had undertaken further work on the Business Register. Approximately 100 local businesses had been invited to provide information that could be posted on the new website. TP had circulated initial proposals for a menu structure that were being considered by the Working Group. RB said that she would make enquiries about sourcing suitable local photographs. It was agreed that minutes of future Working Group meetings would be prepared and circulated. **RB to make enquiries about photos**
Working Group Meetings to be minuted

9. Avoch Public Toilets Working Group Update

RB said that good progress was being made. The next step was to proceed with the agreed Public Engagement Survey, which would use a fixed set of questions.

10. Avoch Sharing Shed Update

TP and FB had met with representatives of Black Isle Cares who had been very supportive. TP said that Jo Graham (Sharing Shed) had said that the main issue was the need for suitable secure storage next to the Shed. TP and FB had been exploring how this could be achieved. TP said that he would contact a joiner regarding the specification and costs.

**TP to contact
joiner re
storage**

11. Assets owned and managed by AKCC

Nothing to report at present.

12. AOCB

None.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 3rd February 2025 at 7.30 pm in Avoch Pavilion.