

Shieldaig Community Council



DRAFT

Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 6 June 2024 in the Shieldaig Hall

Present Community councillors - Jim Alexander, Hugh Gosling, Ian Livingstone, Laura Mackenzie, Richard Munday, Daniel Sharp Julia Boger.

Apologies Highland Councillor Christopher Birt

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2024 - approved and signed

Matters arising – Ian reported that there had been no significant improvement in the pothole situation on the Coast Road. On the woodland front, Richard said that the contract for upgrading Kinloch Woodlands' back fence had now been let with the work expected to be carried out over the next few months. The AGM would be in the Hall on Saturday 26 October.

Chair's report – Richard reported orally and the Community Council expressed itself content with the points made, which were –

1. Shieldaig had almost certainly missed out during the time it had been without a community council.. He was sure that the community appreciated the way that the 7 community councillors had stepped into the breach. He hoped that the way it worked and what it managed to achieve would persuade more people to put their names forward next time.
2. So far the work had largely been reactive but with some progress made on improving safety round the school, lobbying for retention of the mobile public library, developing good working relationships with the Woodland Trust and looking to improve mobile phone coverage for the community in an environmentally acceptable way.
3. However, the most far reaching initiative (more details below) was the survey which had just been carried out to try to establish the priorities for the Community Council's future programme of work. Securing strong community support for what it said and what the Community Council aimed to do would be crucially important.
4. The Community Council much appreciated the close and helpful interest which Chris Birt had taken in its activities. While the Community Council's interests certainly went wider, its working relationship with the Highland Council would be a key determinant of its effectiveness.

Financial Report – Jim presented the financial statement for the year ending 31 March 2024. The statement had been subject to independent examination by Alastair Taylor who had identified no issues which the Community Council needed to address. The end year balance in the account was £15,086. The statement was approved unanimously by the Community Council and Jim and Alastair were thanked for their work. The certified statement would now be submitted to the Highland Council – **action Jim**
Following the decisions taken at the last meeting, £10,000 had now been transferred to the Community Association and the current balance in the Community Council's account was £5,086.

Progress with IT related plans

Web-site – The Shieldaig Community website is now being used to publish Community Council related information (agendas, minutes, consultations) – <https://www.shieldaig.info/communitycouncil.asp> The CC member details on the site have been updated. There is a need to consider upgrading the hosting software as this has limited functionality and is unsupported. This will be discussed with the Community Association.

Facebook – The Community Association page is being used as a distribution channel for Community Council information (meetings, agendas and minutes).

E mail- a new e-mail has been set up for the Community Council

ShieldaigCC@gmail.com

Highland Council. The Community Council Support Team at Highland Council has been contacted and informed of our new contact details.

Daniel and Ann Barton were thanked for their work in providing the Community Council with much needed IT support.

Issues from the Shieldaig Community Association and Shieldaig Parents Council

Nothing to report.

Responses to questionnaire about community priorities – Following the last meeting the sub group of Richard, Ian, Daniel and Hugh had prepared a questionnaire which had been circulated as widely as possible within the community. Given the need for speed, advance publicity had been limited, so to receive 42 well considered responses from local residents was tremendous.

Richard outlined a summary of the priority markings, the comments, the sub-group's analysis and the proposed actions, the key features of which were

- a. The top 2 community priorities for early action were to tackle the shortage of affordable housing and to improve the very poor condition of the roads, particularly along the coast.
- b. While accepting the economic importance of local tourism, there was a clear view that the community was at capacity and that action was needed to tackle a range of negative impacts. The sheer number of vehicles generated by NC500 was a real problem.
- c. In the main, community resilience and well being were very good. But action was needed in some areas and the case for more and a wider range of social and recreational activities for local people in the winter was highlighted.

- d. While the school was of central importance to the community, it was currently in a well - managed and healthy state with an active parent council. The Community Council's role should therefore be to continue to support the good work of others.
- e. Work to improve the natural environment, particularly the woodlands was important in its own right, for local residents and for visitors. Although the benefits were long term, the general impression was that people were happy with what was being done on land. But there were problems in the marine environment which were being overlooked.

The Community Council supported the analysis and proposed actions with the qualifications that –

- a. A top priority should be given to improving road safety on the top road and in the village, before and not after an accident. The 40 mph speed limit had to be readdressed together with tackling the gaps and weaknesses in the “safer route to school”.
- b. An early drop in session should be arranged in the Hall to present the results of the questionnaire returns and check with the community whether the Community Council's analysis and priorities were sound. (This links with the discussion below on the area local plan.) – **Action Daniel and Richard**

Area and local place plans – Richard reported on the Highland Council webinar on local place plans he had attended on 28 May. It was clear that the timetable for preparing and submitting a local place plan for the Shieldaig area before the end of September was impossibly tight. It was also clear that the ambit of the plan was restricted to the development and use of land and buildings which covered only a small number of the issues raised in the community priorities survey. The Highland Council had also explained that communities which hadn't been able to prepare a local place plan would have other ways of influencing the forthcoming Highland wide local development plan. Against this background the Community Council decided not to attempt to prepare a local place plan but to put its effort into ensuring that Shieldaig's priorities were properly reflected in the area place plan currently being prepared by Louise Pearson. She would be sent a copy of the analysis of the results of the questionnaire (above) and invited to participate in the proposed drop in session. - **action Daniel**

Any other business – Laura spoke to the 2 planning applications which had been received.

- a. Rebuilding of the 2 Albyn houses which had been burnt down at Baile Shuas. It was surprising that this application had taken so long. But the designs and detailed proposals seemed acceptable and the solar PV panels on the roofs were particularly welcome.
The Community Council strongly supported the application and expressed its hope that the work would now proceed expeditiously.
- b. The large new shed at Camusaidh. This would not be visible from the village and there were no new issues of highway access. The Community Council therefore had no objections. Julia drew attention to the unsightly wreckage from the mobile home which had still not been cleared from the shore-line on the Ob. It was agreed to contact the Highland Council to establish where

responsibility for this lay – action Richard

Demit of current office bearers; election of new officer bearers

All the current office bearers stood down and the following were re-elected

- a. Chair – Richard
- b. Treasurer - Jim
- c. Secretary - Daniel
- d. Minutes - Laura

Dates of future meetings - The following provisional timetable was agreed for the next 12 months, with the aim of securing some continuity between meetings, good breaks in the summer and winter periods and with the understanding that ad hoc less formal meeting would be arranged as necessary to keep work moving. All meeting would be in the Hall with a 7.00 pm start.

2024 - Thursday 19 September, Thursday 10 October, Thursday 21 November

2025 - Thursday 6 February, Thursday 13 March, Thursday 10 April
Thursday 5 June AGM.