

## Contin Community Council Meeting

7.30 pm on Wednesday, 19 April 2023, Contin Hall

### Minutes

Present:

Norma Ross (NR), Lisa Daines (LD), John Heathcote (JH), Selina Rennie (SR), Phil Baarda (PB), Frances Welton (FW), Liz Kraft, Councillor (EK), Simon Bates (SB).

Two members of the public.

Apologies: Laurence Gunner (LG), Gerry Lowe (GL).

#### **1. Welcome**

NR welcomed everyone, including JH, co-opted at the last meeting, and Simon Bates who would like to join us. We are delighted to have representation from Jamestown.

#### **2. Expressions of Interest**

No expressions of interest were reported.

#### **3. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

Matters arising: The community website is almost ready to go live. The information about Ability Net is to be put in the next Contin Post (**Action NR**).

PB has discussed the potential new seat on the island with Ronnie Gall. There is nowhere suitable to have a seat. RG suggested the seat might be best at the proposed new playpark.

FW proposed and SR seconded the minutes of the previous meeting.

#### **4. Co-option of New Councillor**

NR and LD have checked the Scheme of Establishment and EK confirmed we can co-opt another person. NR introduced Simon. All Councillors **agreed** to the co-option of Simon Bates.

#### **5. Treasurer's Report**

SR reported that there was £15431.17 in the bank account as at 20 March 23. A lot of money has gone out from the Corra Foundation fund for winter grants and is now almost spent. Two payments have gone out for Gaelic lessons and HC has reimbursed us. Previously approved microgrants for toddler balance bike sessions and the book club have gone out. The Contin Post cheque has gone out. We are still waiting for two Foundation Scotland windfarm grants. The HC grant for 2022-23 has now been paid. PB said the new money for history project can go with the old history project pot. SR will tidy up small sums ready for the year end.

Councillors **agreed** for the bus feasibility study left over £448.83 to go to CJT Projects for the demand response bus initiative with Garve. This has to be restricted and returned if not used.

NR reported that we have had £4k so far promised for this project. EK informed that there is a vehicle allocated to us. There is a meeting on Monday 24 April with Fairburn and Garve who have two funding applications in for this. It is looking promising. The proposed Section 19 licence means the bus doesn't have to run to a timetable, so is more flexible. We would like to link with Marybank too in the future.

JH suggested it may be a good idea to develop a method of publicising buses going to Dingwall at a particular time.

HC COVID resilience fund has £327.21 remaining. Councillors **agreed** to use this money for strimming the path around the island in late May/June. An invoice is to be raised by the contractor. NR has emailed Ronnie Gall and the Church Elder will provide an invoice.

We had previously agreed that £300 from the Allt Dearg Hydro Project could go to the Contin Post. Councillors **agreed** to increase this to £500.

Councillors **agreed** that the £2k identified for seating and trees should be put into a restricted category.

## **6. Community Police Report**

NR reported that from 6 February to 17 April there have been two motorist speeding offences, 3 motorists charged with other road traffic offences, one charge of theft from an open area, youths congregating at new and old hall and an issue with anti-social behaviour by youths. Police are patrolling. The Police advise to phone 111 for all incidents so that the Police are aware. NC500 - 25 speed related offences over this weekend, a number referred to Procurator Fiscal and others issued with fixed penalties. **Action NR** to do article for Contin Post.

## **7. Contin Forest Parking Charges**

NR reported there have been no replies from the Contin Post article about the proposed parking charges. Councillors expressed concern that charges would put off local, less mobile people who use the car park regularly because it is the only flat, accessible path in the area, the regular use by children's clubs and people potentially parking in Tor View instead, causing congestion there. **Action: NR** to gather comments and send a response.

## **8. SSEN Pylons Update**

NR reported that a large number of emails have been received by the CCC. Grateful thanks to Ali Rennie, John Heathcote, John Hanbury and Jim Ruggles-Brise for all their support in aiding the CCC in their response, Strathpeffer and Contin Better Cable Routes, and Ron McAuley of Strathpeffer Community Council. The next meeting is on Thursday 18 May at Strathpeffer Pavilion 7-9pm with Ian Blackford MP and Maree Todd MSP.

EK explained she cannot get involved as she is on the HC planning committee, but can listen and can talk about process. This is a development of national interest so HC are not the decision makers, just consultees. If HC raise an objection, then it will go to full public consultation. If people wish to object, they should go on the HC website and find what constitutes a material objection that they can then use when contacting your MSP. EK explained that this falls under National Planning 4 Framework. This recognises the need to

balance net zero with people and places. These are the kind of things to mention if you are writing to Councillors on the planning committee. Then all objections will be listed in the planning submission.

If consultations go as far as the Scottish Government, it will fall to the Planning and Energy Ministers. This is a reserved matter so our MP is the best person to contact. EK suggested searching 'North Planning applications' to see what else has been passed or amended e.g. put underground.

JH informed that the Scottish Government's Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Consultation Plan closes on the 9 May 23.

### **9. Contin's Hidden History**

PB explained that this project is based around the Church in Contin dating from 8<sup>th</sup> Century, St Maelrubha, and the suggestion that Contin is a settlement of significance. LIDAR has been done and wharf-like shapes found. Funding has been received to do more sophisticated surveys. ORCA (Orkney Research Centre for Archaeology) are coming to do 2/3 surveys around the Church and fields for georesistivity, magnetic and a self-propelled buggy surveying in September. Then there is an event planned in October looking at preliminary findings. He is keen to get schools involved with a year's worth of curriculum-based activities. Some training for people in community is also planned.

### **10. Correspondence**

NR noted that all relevant correspondence has been forwarded to Councillors, other than the bulk emails about the SSEN pylons.

### **11. AOCB**

JH reported back on the home energy project. JH is now a home energy assessor and can issue energy performance certificates. JH is proposing to do EPCs for £20 (costs £10 to register it) and have to register under GDPR and asked if the CCC can pay £10 towards that cost. SR suggested creating a budget for this, maybe using the Allt Dearg fund. The project has helped three people so far improve their living environment. **Action JH** to get back in touch with Home Energy Scotland now he is qualified. **Action: EK** to follow up with HC. No decision made, to be on next agenda.

NR thought it would be nice to provide a simple anti-slip path to the war memorial. **Action: EK** to follow up as HC has responsibility for the memorials.

### **12. Comments from Members of the Public**

PC – commented on the huge amount of work the SSEN and SSER proposals have put onto Councillors and individuals. Thank you for all the work.

JR-B urged that we press SSEN to seriously consider all options, for example new pylon designs. He also thanked all those involved. What is decided is for the future generations.

### **13. Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 7.30pm in Contin Hall (Ordinary and AGM).