



Cromarty and District Community Council

Approved minutes of meeting held on

Tuesday 26th June 2024, 730pm

Virtually via Microsoft Teams and in person at The Victoria Hall

Present

Community Councillors: Paige Shepherd (PS) - Chairwoman, Alan Plampton (AP) – Treasurer, Andy Thurgood (AT) – Vice Chair and Nigel Shapcott (NS).

Youth Member: Allan Munro (AM)

Highland Councillor(s): Sarah Atkin (SA).

Member(s) of the public: Matt Hall (Chair - CCDT) (MH), Angus Watson (Deputy Lord Lieutenant) (AW), Louise Alexander (Watch Manager - Cromarty Fire Service) (LA).

Minute Secretary: Claire Fraser (CF)

1. Chair's Welcome & Apologies

PS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies from Alan Rycroft (Member) and Dominic Scott-Lodge (Youth Member)

AT, PS, NS, AM, MH, LA, AW and AP were all present from The Victoria Hall.

CF & SA attended online via Microsoft Teams (although CF was unable to attend until 815pm).

Minute secretary note – meeting was recorded by PS due to CF absence (some of these notes are prepared from the recording as opposed to live meeting).

2. Declarations of Interest

No changes to declarations since meeting of 26th October 2020

3. Approval of previous minutes, 25th May 2024

The minutes were approved by AT and seconded by NS (subject to one change advised by AP prior to the meeting (adding the word 'NOT' to his report)).

4. Matters Arising from previous minutes, 25th May 2024

1. (4.1 – On hold – little movement with THC on TMP and 20mph in urban areas until 2025.) **On hold.**
2. (4.2 – To speak to Wanda re. redesign of Cromarty Sign). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
3. (4.3 – To resubmit photos of fly tipping at Whitedykes to THC (more recent reports)). Ongoing. **Action – KM.**
4. (4.4 – Potential to involve the Primary School with Links Shrubbery continuous maintenance). **On hold.**
5. (4.5 – To confirm when funding from Stagecoach has been received). Still chasing. **Action – AP.**

6. (4.6 – Mgmt. of the HMI has been transferred to Library Services (still waiting reports re. major maintenance issue)). Discharge for now as to chase could cause problematic for library. **Discharged.**
7. (4.7 – SSE refused funding so additional source required for emergency resilience training). Ongoing. **Action – AP.**
8. (4.8 – To follow up the youth mentoring programme with Dom post exams). **Action – KM**
9. (4.9 – To contact Lyndsey at THC to clarify some points regarding housing qualifications for social housing poster). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
- 10.(4.10 – To speak to THC re. replacing equipment in Victoria Park). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
- 11.(4.11 – To catch up with Kari re. the email to J Nightingale about Pirates Graveyard). **Action – PS.**
- 12.(4.12 – PS to follow up with SA re. Cromarty sign at bus shelter (who’s responsible?)). **Action – PS.**
- 13.(4.13 - To speak to Denis (resident) re. hedge options to see if he can offer advice on what we should order for the park). Ongoing. **Action – KM**
- 14.(4.14 – To discuss with AP where shouldn’t be mowed at The Hugh Miller Monument so stakes can go in, and posters put up to stop THC). Ongoing. **Action – KM**
- 15.(4.15 – To speak to Ingrid and John at THC re. use of weed killer in the town & maintenance of the graveyards). **Action – PS**
- 16.(4.16 – To discuss at a later date the idea of a composting toilet at The South Sutor Car Park). **Action - ALL.**
- 17.(4.17 – Public meeting to be held re. parking byelaws around Cromarty). **Action – ALL.**
- 18.(4.18 – To seek a volunteer to lead dog-fouling portfolio via social media). **Action – PS.**
- 19.(4.19 – To see if Kari is willing to be involved in tourism portfolio). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
- 20.(4.20 – To go back to Sheila re. our comments on the positions of CCDC vs CCDT). Ongoing. **Action - AP.**
- 21.(4.21 – To arrange a meeting re. Townlands Park with Ingrid @ THC). Awaiting response. **Action – PS.**
- 22.(4.22 – Rector of Academy to be asked to keep record of Stagecoach). **On hold.**
- 23.(4.23 – Awaiting a reply from Ian Moncrieffe at HTC re. Farness Road). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
- 24.(4.24 – To follow up with Highland School Transport contact at THC re. the continuous difficulties with timings of the Cromarty to Fortrose bus). **Action – SA.**
- 25.(4.25 – To discuss recruitment for TVH committee). Ongoing. **Action – CF.**
- 26.(4.26 – Potential sub-committee to be created re. Freeport etc (long-term project)). **Action - AT.**
- 27.(4.27 – Awaiting response re. Community Payback Scheme to utilise it for street cleaning around the town). **Action – PS.**
- 28.(4.28 – To look into funding for Dougie to extend ferry service). Update at meeting. **Discharged.**

- 29.(4.31 – To be the communicator for the residents with CGU/Highland Broadband). Ongoing. **Action – AT.**
- 30.(4.32 – To find a regular bus-taker from Fortrose Academy to keep note of delays). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
- 31.(4.33 – To contact waste management re. the oil spill kit that was dropped off to TVH). Ongoing. **Action – SA.**
- 32.(4.34 – Response awaited from SEPA re. noise monitoring). Discussion with SEPA held 17th June 2024 – see report. **Discharged.**
- 33.(4.35 – To arrange a separate meeting re. noise monitoring). **Action – ALL.**
- 34.(4.36 – To present application to CCDT re. 100 steps funding). **Discharged.**
- 35.(4.37 – To look into how C&DCC can apply for funding to enable our own contactors to do work required around the town!). **Action – SA.**
- 36.(4.40 – To recruit litter picker volunteers ASAP). Ongoing. **Action – ALL.**
- 37.(4.42 – To speak to other community councils and think about ideas for a celebration to be held in 2027 re. 50 years of community councils)! **Action – ALL.**
- 38.(6.1 – To contact Lucky 2 Be Here re. additional defibrillator for Townlands, further discussion then required re. finance/installation). Quote received (£1k) – some funding secured but further source may fund whole cost. The supplier is also assisting in liasing with THC over potential site with power supply, (outside wall of sheltered homes). Discussions ongoing. **Action – AP.**
39. (8.1 – To re-write the letter of support to The Harbour Trust on behalf of C&DCC). **Discharged.**
- 40.(8.2 – To do back to CD @ THT with feedback from discussions at May’s meeting re. communication of gate closure). **Discharged.**
41. (8.3 – To decide who’s to email THC re. maintenance of town (or lack of) – enabling us to see the areas they’re contracted to clear and then decide on our involvement). **Action – ALL.**
42. (8.4 – To go back to THC re. bin emptying in the town). **Discharged.**
- 43.(8.5 – Rota to be prepared for dog-bin emptying in town). Being prepared by resident. **Action – AP.**
44. (8.6 – To arrange meeting at PoCF to review site and operations). Has been arranged and undertaken, **discharged.**
45. (9.1 – To send info to Sheila re. webinar on 28th May 2024). **Discharged.**

5. Youth Issues

PS introduced AM to the meeting and explained this section allows him the opportunity to speak on behalf of the youth of Cromarty with any issues he’s aware of, or items he’d like to bring to members attention.

AM confirmed that Wanda has asked that we request the long grass is cut as drivers can’t see the children and it’s become a hazard. PS asked SA to look into this - all members agreed this is important. **Action – SA.**

SA also mentioned that there are now a couple of youth members in F&RCC and also A&KCC. Suggests maybe the youth members could have a Black Isle group meeting. All members agree this is a great idea!

There were no further comments.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report and accompanying notes (**Appendix A & B**) were prepared by AP and circulated prior to the meeting.

AT confirmed that Open Gardens raised £8.5k in total, £750 of which has been donated to towards defibrillator costs. All members expressed thanks – PS to write to them. **Action – PS.**

There were no further comments.

9. Any Other Business (brought forward by Chairwoman)

Louise @ Cromarty Fire Service

Scottish Fire Service are running a consultation to see where the public's interests lie and changes that should be made/are required to be made due to budget cuts etc. Asked C&DCC to publicise the consultation and also urged us to respond. Deadline for completion is the end of this month.

Discussion continued around the role of Cromarty Fire Service and the services across Scotland as a whole. Wildfires are up about 47% and housefires are down 5%, but this year has been the quietest year so far for Cromarty Fire Service, largely due to the weather being so poor.

LA explained that as they are a voluntary group they don't have training to use Breathing Apparatus as the cost and length of time this training would take wouldn't be worthwhile (this means they can't attend house/building or vehicle fires). The nearest retained firefighters are Fortrose. Is aware they were struggling to recruit for a while, meaning they couldn't attend certain recent fires (such as the Cromarty Caravan Fire that happened last year). Is aware that they now have the numbers required so this shouldn't happen again.

In addition to wildfires, LA suggested they may take on the role of 'first responders' in the local area (since these no longer exist), carrying out first aid responsibilities, including the use of defibrillators etc as required.

LA concluded her discussion advising their need for recruitment, particularly as 2 longstanding members are retiring soon. They currently have 6 in their team, with the maximum available being 12. Has asked C&DCC to share their recruitment poster to encourage people to join the service! All members agreed. Louise to send information to C&DCC email. **Action – LA/ALL.**

Minute secretary note – Louise left meeting after her presentation which concluded about 8pm.

Cromarty Community Development Trust (CCDT)

During the Agenda Item for Matters Arising both groups discussed how we can improve communication further. Agreed attending the meetings has strengthened our relationship but still feel like we step on each others toes in certain areas (however we are limited to time constraints due to being volunteer organisations).

Everyone agreed that attending two meetings a month is not realistic and it's understood that there are still aspects of each meeting (particularly CCDTs) that must be confidential for a number of factors.

It was suggested that communication needs to be improved and as CDCC share their draft minutes with CCDT it would be appreciated if the same could be done back. MH was happy with this suggestion and was going to action this for future meetings.

MH then went on to speak on behalf of CCDT:

Royal Hotel

Not going ahead with this due to a combination of factors:

- 1) Scale of funding needed was unrealistic particularly because there is a real question-mark over funding regarding Julie's **paid** Development Officer position just now (guaranteed funding to September 2024 but should have been March 2025).
- 2) Building needs work – not as much as people might think but public funding means must be done to Historic Scotland's standard (which becomes expensive to the community vs a corporate/private buyer)
- 3) Not sufficient appetite in community consultation – impact hub are writing up a report on this consultation and results will be shared in due course.

Experience has allowed CCDT to establish strong relationships with Scottish land fund who's local representative is at HIE. Also created a huge amount of learning and has given them more of an insight into what the community are looking for – which they can use elsewhere.

Campsite

Is really successful and they are happy with how busy it is, took in about £5k in May!

Unit @ Whitedykes

Continuing to pursue the ownership of this which The Highland Council are really supportive of – will need feasibility, small community consultation etc. Likely to use it for laundry/storage for campsite or even washing facilities. Will rent the other half to another business in the community for their use. Applying for this just now - should be confirmed in July.

Housing

Feasibility study in relation to The Royal proves that the community would like to keep the hotel but also are most keen for affordable housing

David Stewart, director of CCDT (works for Scottish Land Commission) – Albyn have finally reached out and said they've had lots of internal conversations re. the site and are now reaching out to the community for a meeting with them. MH to connect AP and PS with DS and JM at CCDT to take this further.

Community regeneration fund - application

£800k fund from THC provided to rural areas – has a bit of a tight deadline (17th July 2024).

MH confirmed that JM researched this a bit more and attended a drop-in session but ended up staying for the full meeting. Seems to be split into two types: £400k revenue, £400k capital.

They suggested JM applies for two funds – all agreed there's no reason why not!

Suggests one bid is in relation to the East Church Hall as a 'capital' asset as this is now their highest priority Suggests the second bid would be to apply for funding to supply a year-round ferry service to the Black Isle (even if it means a bigger ferry).

One of the requirements of the grant is that the Community Council must fully support the application in writing. **All** members supported the CCDT applying for the fund at the meeting. PS will email JM and discuss with her how this should be worded. **Action – PS.**

AGM

Outstanding Agenda item re. the roles of CDCC and CCDT (since 2023). Would like this to be moved on if possible. MH has now written his own version and has sent it to Claire for distribution to members. PS asked if he could resend it to all members in a different format from google docs (MH to do when he gets home). AP and PS will then make it a priority to amend document (where required). **Action – AP/PS.**

Community meeting

Find us on 

www.cromartylive.co.uk

Prepared by Claire Fraser – June 2024

Was cancelled – not enough community engagement to warrant this going ahead when other commitments came up. MH suggests it still goes ahead but is done as a joint venture the next time. All members agreed they will revisit this once the BIPP has been publicised.

There were no further comments and Matt, Allan M and Nige left the meeting at 20:45pm. NS signed in at home (Via Teams) at 9pm.

7. **Victoria Hall (VH) Report including Youth Café**

The Victoria Hall Report (**Appendix C**) that was prepared by AP, and the Youth Café Powerpoint presentation prepared by Fraser Thompson (**available on Cromarty Live**) were circulated prior to the meeting.

Victoria Hall:

Received a note through the letter box (from Stagecoach/bus driver) asking residents/visitors etc to not park in the bus stop. AP to circulate to hall users (probably need to circulate wider). **Action – AP.**

NS asked re. the insulation report – AP confirmed it's still in progress (hasn't had a chance to get back to it).

There were no further comments or questions.

8. **Members' Reports**

8.1 Portfolio Reports:

Portfolio Reports prepared by AR, NS, AP and AT (**Appendix D-G**) were circulated prior to the meeting.

Andy:

Nigg/Port of Cromarty Firth (PoCF):

Believes it was a very successful meeting and is positive we can keep the communication going forward. NS suggested to enhance things further we involve primary school or youth café with visits to the Port – AT will mention to Rory.

SEPA:

Had a Teams meeting with SEPA to discuss water quality and how they are monitoring it. They confirmed they've not done any monitoring in the Cromarty Firth since 2015.

They suggested becoming a designated 'bathing area' (Rosemarkie is one) as this ensures frequent monitoring – you however need to have > 150 people per day 'bathing'. Members agreed that unfortunately this seems a bit unachievable for Cromarty.

There were no further comments on any of the portfolios.

8.2 The Highland Council:

SA sent notes to CF regarding what was discussed (to save time). See **Appendix H.**

Minute secretary note – SA left meeting at 2055pm.

8.3 Correspondence Received:

- 1) Apologies from Dom for not making his last C&DCC meeting. PS to write letter to DSL on behalf of C&DCC to thank him for his contribution to the community/C&DCC. **Action – PS.**
- 2) Dog Fouling – resident asking if signs in park are enforceable as had an earlier altercation with another resident re. dogs in park. AP responded to confirm that they are not, and were actually put up by our predecessors, however had mentioned that we'd discuss at this meeting. PS to email SA and see if there's anything that can be done. Are there any dog wardens? **Action – PS.**

Nothing else received.

9. **Any Other Business (continued..)**

Angus Watson – Deputy Lord Lieutenant

Angus talked about his background and the role of the Lord Lieutenant and her Deputy in the community.

Their most important role is recognizing the volunteers in the local area but are also available to provide support to nominees/communities in relation to the 'King's Honour' award, 'King's Award for Voluntary services' and can nominate people to be invited to the King's Garden Party (held annually in Edinburgh).

Advised that the cards received from the King for 100th birthday celebrations are automatic but 60th wedding anniversaries must be registered. The Lord Lieutenant and her Deputy would like to keep a note of both of these so they can also send a card.

The final thing advised was that they are able to arrange a Royal visit.

Angus went on to discuss Remembrance Day and how he'd like to be present but it's impossible to attend all 7. PR's details are to be given to Angus as he is the one who organizes the Cromarty event. To make contact. Is hopeful that some organisers will change the time of their ceremony from 11am to allow him to attend as many as possible.

Angus finished by suggesting we look at Alness gala week on Facebook and their 'inaugural civic awards', thinks it would help with community engagement. Offered their services to present the awards if it's something we decide to proceed with.

AT asked how long his position is active for, confirmed his role is until he's 75.

On a more personal front, Angus advised that he has just become chair of a newly formed charity (Communities in Motion) which has been set up to honour all transport across the Black Isle (including the wee bus in Ferintosh and the trikes in Cromarty, run by Cromarty Care Project).

There were no further comments or questions.

Minute secretary note – Angus left the meeting after his presentation – around 2130pm.

10. **Date of next meeting**

Next meeting – Monday 26th August 2024 at 730pm

Meeting ended at 10pm.

APPENDIX A
Agenda Item 6
Treasurer's Report Notes

- 1. AMOUNTS RECEIVABLE/PAID IN ADVANCE** still reflects the £150 planning fee STILL to be repaid by Stagecoach and some publications income not yet received in the bank. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 2. AMOUNTS PAYABLE** still reflects £4.50 p&p costs to possibly be repaid from our Paypal account for a publications sales overpayment, by an overseas customer, £200 that is to be used on a Primary School project (ex Open Gardens donation) and £1,000 donation to 2024 Open Gardens from Global Energy, to be paid out to the Harbour Trust, once their bank details are received. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 3. SURPLUS/DEFICIT TO DATE** reflects the costs so far this year ahead of receiving the annual THC maintenance grant, which has been applied for. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 4. COMMUNITY DEFIBRILLATOR FUND** reflects public donations via the 2024 Open Gardens event. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 5. COMMUNITY AMENITIES FUND** reflects the latest funded cost of the Reeds Loop Path maintenance. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 6. TODDLER PLAYGROUP FUND** reflects takings less monthly hall hire. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 7. CROMARTY RISING FUND** reflects donations received from General Public. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Alan Plampton
24/06/24

APPENDIX B
Agenda Item 6
Treasurer's Report

Statement of Financial Position at 24th June 2024				
		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Net Assets			<u>Movement</u>	<u>at 26/05/24</u>
Bank & Cash in hand balances as at 25th June 2024		13,695.26	800.50	12,894.76
Paypal Balance as at 25th June 2024		4.50	0.00	4.50
Amounts Receivable/Paid in Advance		190.00	40.00	150.00
Amounts Payable		-1,204.50	0.00	-1,204.50
Total Net Assets at 24th June 2024		£12,685.26	840.50	£11,844.76
		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Represented by:				
C&DCC Accumulated Fund Reserves at 1st April 2024		1,596.69	0.00	1,596.69
Surplus/ Deficit for the year to date		-349.30	-45.00	-304.30
		1,247.39	-45.00	1,292.39
Provision for Guidebook reprinting at 1st April 2024		211.75	0.00	211.75
C&DCC Amenity & Event Funds	<u>£</u>			
Community Amenities Fund	1,524.69		-50.00	1,574.69
Community Event Funds ex Bonfire/Gala/S&D	5,073.84	6,598.53	0.00	5,073.84
Community Resilience Fund		336.10	0.00	336.10
Cromarty Live Fund		0.01	0.00	0.01
Community Defibrillator Fund		1,803.71	750.00	1,053.71
Net C&DCC Reserves		10,197.49	655.00	9,542.49
Designated Community Funds				
Open Gardens Fund		0.00	0.00	0.00
Gluren bij de Buren Fund		202.06	0.00	202.06
Toddler Playgroup Fund (prev West Church)		1,447.29	20.50	1,426.79
Cromarty Rising Fund		838.42	165.00	673.42
		£12,685.26	840.50	£11,844.76
Alan Plampton 25th June 2024				

APPENDIX C

Agenda Item 7

Victoria Hall Report

1. **Bookings** Quieter now the winter season has ended, but plenty of varied events still taking place, including CYC Summer Programme. Stagecoach have asked us to make sure that Hall users do not park in the bus stop. Hirers being reminded that while unloading is allowed, parking is not. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
2. **Repairs & Maintenance** New bins are now in operation. Outside YC murals have been taken down and no refurbishment required. An installation and unveiling of the new Mosaic replacement is planned in July. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
3. **Sheddie** - No issues or updates. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
4. **Youth Cafe** The monthly report is attached (and available to view on Cromarty Live). **ACTION – Information only**

Alan Plampton - VHMC

24/06/24

APPENDIX D
AGENDA ITEM 8 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS
ALAN RYCROFT

Police Liaison

As previously reported, our previous police liaison officer has left the post. No replacement has been named as yet. There is an imminent appointment of a new Inspector to the role of Area Commander, based at Dingwall Police Station, and responsible for the Black Isle. I have asked to be informed of this senior officer's identity, and contact details, as soon as the appointment is made, so that I may approach the Area Commander on the subject of future police liaison with the C&DCC.

Black Isle Swimming Pool

We still have no further information, regarding the status of any funding held for this project.

APPENDIX E
AGENDA ITEM 8 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS
NIGEL SHAPCOTT

HC Core Path report- Reeds Loop Path, Lady's Walk, 100 Steps

Reeds Loop Path has been mowed in May. Path is now reopened and is in use with notices saying take appropriate care. The path is showing some wear and tear due to poor weather but is still being used.

100 Steps See above. Following our meeting with CCDT we have produced a 1st draft of a generic grant proposal for significant path maintenance using ChatGPT.

Highland Local Access Group Meeting - Unfortunately I had to pull out of attending the meeting of 30th May at short notice due to illness. There was a follow up LAG meeting to discuss the previous meeting's work on the Vision statement and Chair/Vice Chair selection. There was discussion regarding the long term prospects of the project which cannot be guaranteed. So we are treating this as a short term project finishing 31st March 2025 until we hear otherwise. There was an announcement for grant applications on 17th June, deadline 17th July. Decision around 20th August. Start date 1st September and finish 28th February 2025. An extremely tight timetable. As a LAG member I must declare any conflicts of interest.

Cromarty Harbour Trust (CHT)

No report as the Chair is having a well deserved holiday. The author of this report is a Harbour Working Group Member and has observed that the final two mooring fingers have been installed and the harbour is starting to fill up now that the weather has turned really nice. please refer to the Chatterbox for a long article on the Cromarty Harbour.

Black Isle Swimming Pool

Alan Rycroft will be reporting on this.

Cromarty Care Project (CCP) - Alison Sellar

Lunch Club – Summer Café at Cromarty Primary

Final meeting was on 11th June – a lovely event (more, incl pics, in the Newsletter). An overwhelming success. The school was very pleased with curriculum links and new equipment for their kitchen; the pupils really enjoyed it and grew in confidence over the 7 weeks of the café; the attendees ran out of superlatives to describe both the food and the pupils. It hit all the 'intergenerational' buttons and it's going to run again next year!

Strawberry Tea for the Over-60s

We still await approval from our funder for re-allocating funds to this event.

Larder

Funding for Larder stock is coming to an end shortly. Costs have increased beyond what we estimated last year. We have submitted two applications for funding.

"Chairs for Chats" Bench

We have the bench and it has been assembled, but there has been a long hold-up with the concrete base (required by Hi-Co). Keith Greenfield has now volunteered to take this on. (Bench will be sited at the sheltered housing).

Cinema Club

Currently one showing per month over the summer and will return to two per month in September. We were led to believe that the Port Authority would review our application and respond very quickly. This was back in March, so AS has started looking for alternative funders.

Open Gardens Weekend

The Trikes were serviced and out and about over the Open Gardens weekend. The OGC have awarded CCP £1,500. Playgroup will finish this month at the end of the school term and Table Tennis will continue over the summer.

Seagull Trust Cruises

Very little uptake so far. One trip to be arranged soon.

Citizens Advice-CAB

There have now been three in-person sessions at the Victoria Hall. The time required to deal with clients is very variable and we continue to appreciate the CC undertaking to only charge us for our 3-hour booking. CAB continue to provide a regular information slot in every Community Newsletter. We have passed on posters to AP for advertising. Next session will be 16th July.

APPENDIX F
AGENDA ITEM 8 - PORTFOLIO REPORT
ALAN PLAMPTON

1. **BICC** Three meetings (the last of which included THC representation) have taken place over the last month and have resulted in agreement on a democratic governance section to be added to the registered BIPP. Draft Terms of Reference for the BICC group are being created for the BICC to be able to take the lead in BIPP governance. **ACTION – Information, no action required.**
2. **Housing** Still awaiting Albyn Housing proposals on CM01 (even after surveyors doing soil testing had been seen on site!). New IMFDP is due to be adopted by THC in the autumn. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
3. **Events** Final figures from Open Gardens to be made available soon. £750 received by the C&DCC De-fibrillator Fund and £1,000 donations being processed to the Ross & Cromarty RNLI and the Cromarty Harbour Trust. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
4. **Defibrillators** £1k quotation received to supply, fit and train on a new Townlands defibrillator unit. The supplier Charity to liaise over the technicalities of a suitable siting to receive a trickle charge supply. In addition to the Open Gardens donation, a further funding source has been identified to cover all costs, including future maintenance. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**

Alan Plampton 24/06/24

APPENDIX G
AGENDA ITEM 8 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS
ANDY THURGOOD

Meetings attended

I attended the post-event Open Gardens Committee Meeting on 12th June. Just short of £8.5k was raised for community benefit. The Committee have donated £750.00 to the Community Council for the purpose of contributing towards town defibrillators.

I attended a Communities Councils Liaison meeting via Teams, on 12th June, hosted by Global Energy / Port of Nigg. An update was provided on their activities, including projects completed and in the pipeline, development of the Sumitomo Cable Plant, and oil terminal decommissioning.

Along with A Plampton, A Ryecroft and N Shapcott, I attended a site visit to Global Energy at Port of Nigg, on 14th June. We were afforded a detailed review of current and future activities, and had the opportunity to tour the site – which proved useful in understanding operating conditions relevant to the Cromarty community, and complaints relating to dust and noise.

On the 17th June, I had a Teams call with Keith Beaton at SEPA to discuss water quality in the Cromarty Firth. I attach my notes below, which include his email response to my original enquiry.

Correspondence

I wrote to Tim Morris at ABP on 21st June, to enquire on their current position regarding their option on land at Nigg. Tim has offered to attend a CDCC meeting and give an update, and I have offered dates to him.

Noise and other nuisance from the Firth

No nuisance identified since the last report.

Andy Thurgood
23/06/24

Notes from CDCC visit to Global Energy Group (GEG), Port of Nigg (PON) 14/06/24

Those Present:

Global Energy Group (GEG) – Rory Gunn (RG), Iain MacLeod (IM), Shaun Slaymaker (SS)

CDCC – Andy Thurgood (AT), Alan Plampton (AP), Nige Shapcott (NS), Alan Rycroft (AR)

1. Introductions. SS identified as the primary contact for environmental issues.
2. Aspirations for the meeting were discussed.
3. Presentation given by RG, and questions taken. Items of note;
 - a. FPSOs Enquest Producer and Ping Excalibur have been berthed for 4 and 2 years respectively. Both vessels have been marketed to potential buyers.
 - b. GEG revenue reported as £273m.
 - c. The need for separate works to accommodate contract/customer needs was identified (so that customers aren't sharing work areas).
 - d. There is a possible 2-year hiatus in big projects, although PON are positioned to pick up work from other ports.
 - e. GEG have invested £120m at PON.
 - f. A key feature of the port is very hard ground (50mt/m² ground bearing capacity), making it suitable for lifting activities.
 - g. There is 440,000m² of storage laydown at site.
 - h. It was identified that the size of turbine has doubled in the last 6 years, going from 7mW to 14mW – having a big effect on the way activities are scaled at site.
 - i. It was revealed that Opportunity Cromarty Firth was joint second in the Green Freeport bid, but was awarded the status over Glasgow, as it is better situated for the renewables sector.
 - j. Tax benefits arising from Green Freeport status were clarified. In real terms, as a renewables port, there will be components that will come to site that will not be taxed if assembled into products that are destined to be dispatched beyond UK waters.
 - k. There is no strategy at present, to be decommissioning assets from the oil and gas industry.
 - l. Power capacity at site is a concern. GEG have speculated about a linked turbine to feed power to the Port. When the Sumitomo cable plant goes online, it will use 75% of available power at site. Accommodation of shore power as a long-term goal was discussed; CDCC made the point that awareness that shore power is being factored into mid-to-long term energy strategy is important for the community. GEG referenced shore power that has recently been adopted at Montrose, and made the point that the demand of the vessels at PON is very different.
 - m. A video of the proposed development of the site was shown. Development of Zone 4, West Finger Quay expansion won't extend beyond the existing jetty. Budgeted at £160m. Other Zones gave rise to questions about land ownership. This in part has delayed piling operations at the new cable plant, while lease issues are resolved. Zone 5 has historically had three owners: GEG, Wakelyn Trust (John Nightingale) and Robert MacKenzie. Crown Estates Scotland are to take ownership of the latter.

- n. AT asked if Associated British Ports, have declared their intention on their 12-month option at Nigg. RG reported that nothing has been declared.
 - o. NS pursued questioning on the adoption of a year-round ferry service to accommodate the needs of workers and others to the Port. There was further discussion on the related infrastructure to support this, and how funding from retained business rates could facilitate investment in existing and new assets, such as slipways.
4. RG took AT, AP, NS & AR on a site tour. Items of note:
- a. RG identified the activities of the on-site development centre.
 - b. The tour revealed the nature and scale of activities at Nigg. 1350 tonne cranes purchased 6 years ago at £8m, are now not big enough to service the contract that GEG are working on (cranes are contracted into site).
 - c. Terns nesting at the site were seen to be managed in line with environmental requirements.
 - d. The area that gave rise to recent dust nuisance was viewed. It is a vast area of unmade ground for component laydown. Even using bowsers, it would be very difficult to manage dust emissions due to the scale of the area.

Feasibility Project for Infrastructure to support Black Isle Training and Employment in Nigg

In order to encourage and permit residents of the Black Isle to access training and/or work at the Nigg, as part of the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport, a reliable, safe and efficient year-round ferry service is needed from early morning to late evening.

This would require investment in infrastructure to support the Cromarty to Nigg ferry - supporting Black Isle trainees and workers. It is envisaged that this would necessitate a structure acting as a breakwater for safe mooring and embarkation/disembarkation at Nigg.

Design/costing

Identification for type of craft: Both Dougie and Sarah recommend a high-speed enclosed cabin RIB, with suspension seats, capacity of 12, capable of multiple trips in one hour.

Additionally, a bus service to support workers from the Black Isle getting to the Cromarty Ferry and collecting people at the end of the day.

Support from Nigg and Chandwick CC; C&DCC, Highland Council; Global; Black Isle CCs; Black Isle LPP and perhaps the Scottish government.

To take this idea forward and provide some idea of costings, the next step would be to initiate a feasibility study. This would look at design approaches, hydrology, permissions, costings, etc.

Andy Thurgood - 24/06/24

APPENDIX H
AGENDA ITEM 8 – THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
COUNCILLOR SARAH ATKIN

Local Councillor Summary

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Thursday's meeting of the Full Council.

Key papers (IMO) are the *Social Values Charter. Next Steps Investment Plan. Highland Housing Challenge. Following an economic needs assessment in light of the Freeport; the declining working aged population and demographic imbalance, it is projected that 24,000 additional homes will be needed over the next decade in the Highlands. This is twice as had been projected. This challenge will involve a collective effort – public and private sectors – and all tenures. The paper is incredibly detailed if anybody is interested to read it.

**The Social Values Charter paper has caused a furore, much of which is misunderstanding the aims. I will attempt to produce a bullet point summary to explain the rationale. In short, people have been wanting the council to do something like this FOR YEARS. Also, it has NOTHING to do with planning.*

Me: I've been proposed (and now voted in) as Vice-Chair of the Housing and Property Committee.

WARD BUSINESS

Most of the issues that have ended up at Ward Business aren't in Cromarty – road safety of children heading to school in Avoch. Traffic issues in Rosemarkie High Street.

The Common Good Officer did update on East Church Hall and this aligns with the update from Matt at the meeting.

BICC / Place Plan: local members are delighted that a form of governance that puts democratically accountable representation front and centre has won through. The 'Community Body' idea proposed by Rory Mair is an ideal 'model'.

Fortrose Academy: interviews for two Depute Head Teacher posts took place earlier with appointments to both posts.

Ward Support: we're losing Lewis Hannah which is disappointing. The new structure was just beginning to 'bed' in, and he's decided to take a post south of the bridge. His post will be advertised.

CLlr Sarah Atkin (June 2024)