

Tarbat Community Council

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd October 2012

1. **Present:** Janet Wilson, Hamish MacKenzie, Billie Wood, Helen Fleming, Steve Carroll. In attendance: Sgt. Keith Robb, Ranger Martin Hind, Cllr Alistair Rhind, Cllr Fiona Robertson, George Terry. Apologies were received from Hamish MacKenzie

2. Police Report

Sgt. Robb reported that there had been very few incidents in the Pormahomack area in the past two months. One had been a neighbourhood disturbance, and the other a false call. However, Sgt. Robb stated that there are a few ongoing incidents which are likely to go to court soon and it would be inappropriate for him to comment on these at this stage. The police had conducted radar speed checks recently during three days, and had some intelligence concerning drinking behind the primary school. Sgt. Robb urged the public to contact Tain Police Station by telephone if they suspected any criminal activity.

3. Rangers Report

Highland Council Ranger for Easter Ross, Martin Hind spoke in response to concerns express by the Committee and a letter from Hamish MacKenzie.

3.1 Weeds on Portmahomack Beach. Martin explained that the processes occurring at the beach were part of a natural cycle and that removal of marram grass may well lead to blown sand encroaching on the roadway. Use of weedkiller may well require permission from SEPA and was not advisable in any case. He felt that the problems may well resolve themselves over the winter with high tides and wind which may possibly remove vegetation, litter and seaweed. The best course of action would be to review the situation in the Spring before the summer season at the beach.

3.2 Gorse at Tarbat Ness. Martin described his vision for Tarbat Ness, to which he makes frequent visits. The gorse does need to be removed from the heathland between the lighthouse and Tarbat Ness.. The gorse between the car park and the lighthouse requires to be managed but not removed completely as it offers shelter for migrating birds and other wildlife. However, this mature gorse must be prevented from spreading and his wish is to create clearings in the gorse to allow different vegetation to become established. Unfortunately, the budget for work by contractors has been exhausted and Martin would like to see the creation of a body of local volunteers to form occasional work parties.

Martin offered to write an article on Tarbat Ness for the local press and give details of his next visit to Tarbat Ness at which he would meet with local volunteers. Steve volunteered to publicise this matter via the community noticeboard and the Portmahomack Facebook page. **ACTION Martin & Steve**

4. **Minutes of last Meeting** Billie Wood proposed that the Minutes be adopted as correct, and was seconded by Janet Wilson.

5. Matters Arising from Minutes

5.1 Traffic congestion at bottom of Castle Street Councillor Rhind confirmed the outdoor seating at the Castle Hotel lies within the operational area of the Hotel licence

5.2 Playpark Furniture. It was agreed that a traditional roundabout be installed in the playpark.
ACTION Fiona

5.3 Village Officer This matter is ongoing and awaits resolution

5.4 Fountain Steps Steve Carroll reported that he had been in contact with Peter MacLeod, who was willing to assess the problem in November/December when he next visits the village. He was also willing to assess the old well near the Carnegie Hall with a view to renovation. Steve was instructed to ask him to carry out this work. **ACTION Steve**

5.5 New Bench at Car Park This matter was postponed until the next meeting in the absence of Hamish MacKenzie **ACTION Hamish**

5.6 Removal of Derelict Boat at the harbour This matter is ongoing and Janet agreed to contact Helen Ross in an attempt to resolve the matter. **ACTION Janet**

5.7 Road Repairs at Arboll This work was completed in the past few days. Cllr Fiona Robertson stated that she would continue to press for further improvements to this road.

6 The Councillor's Report

6.1 Passing places in Tarbatness Road Cllr Alistair Rhind stated that this matter was ongoing.

6.2 Collapsed gullies in Portmahomack-Tarrel Road Cllr Alistair Rhind stated that he would press for repairs

6.3 Sustainable Schools Review Cllr Fiona Robertson stated that the future of Rural Schools will not be considered by the Highland Council before early 2013.

7 Financial Report

Billie Wood reported that the Annual Grant to Tarbat Community Council had been received and this year amounted to £984.01

7 Correspondence

Steve Carroll reported that the only item received was the Moray Firth Partnership News Bulletin for September.

8 AOCB

Billie Wood raised the subject of new picnic tables, empty planters and large rubbish bin at the football pitch. Cllr Alistair Rhind agreed to ask Kelly Skinner about her plans for the planters, and to enquire whether the Highland Council would empty the rubbish bin.

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm Next Meeting Wednesday 5th December 2012