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Stromeferry and Achmore Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on 23rd February @ 8 p.m. Achmore Hall

Present: P. Game, R Gibson, M. MacBeth, M. MacDonald, N. MacRae, B. Campbell

Apologises: C. Begg, E. Bird, C. MacDonald

Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting on 23rd January were presented. Correction made under Section 3 Matters arising, item 1 CC. Communication - should read 'setting up an Achmore & Stromeferry C.C website'. Proposed: N. MacRae, Seconded: P. Game

Matters arising since meeting of 26th January

1. Re-siting of the re-cycling bins from the Square

This topic was discussed again and Neil informed the meeting that more residents in the square wish to have the bins relocated. We are still awaiting response regarding siting at top of Achmore Road where old main road runs off.

Action: Biz Campbell to discuss with Highland Council and resolve.

2. Re Review of Community Councils - First Phase – Boundary review.

The change requested and submitted by Stromeferry & Achmore CC had been acknowledged. Biz Campbell told us that the ward boundary changes had been discussed and no issues were raised. Topic closed.

3. NHS

Lizzie emailed the following update. 'I attended a NHS Workshop/Meeting in Broadford on Friday 12th February. Key thing is, both hospitals Broadford and Portree are being kept open. Lots of discussion about how to save money, in other words, take on board there will be cuts. Discussions about tele-monitoring and possible ideas to save on travel costs etc, and possible video link for discussion/consultation. Comment was made, however, that some existing broadband services would not support that.

The Workshop negates the need for us to link up with other C.C.s (as was being planned) regarding hospital closure or loss, so this topic is closed for the time being. Topic closed.

4. Broadband Speeds

Phil presented his findings from the email conversation he has had with the BT Head of Scottish Affairs, located by Neil. The key points being that our exchange is an 'Exchange Activate' which means that broadband speed is set at the exchange so that all broadband users receive a max. of 512k and we all pay the universal BT options tariff for a degraded service.

Phil asked Biz for her advice on where we go next to push for a better service as BT have made it clear that our exchange is not commercially viable for them to upgrade so it has got to be done in conjunction with government funding.

Action: Biz to email Phil contacts at Highland & Island Enterprise (HIE), so he can pursue getting a better broadband service.

Phil has provided the community with a synopsis of the consultation document relating to the Digital Britain in Scotland initiative which has a 12-week consultation period. The consultation document can be accessed at <http://www.berr.gov.uk/consultations/page54155.html>. Phil will respond by the 31st March, so all contributions would be appreciated by the 15th March so our community response can be lodged by the deadline. This CC. response does not preclude individuals from responding directly.

Action: Phil to respond on the Digital Britain in Scotland consultation by 31st March

5. C.C. Communication

Minutes circulation - The C.C. agreed that we need to liaise with Sarah Berry who does the Newsletter, to update email listings when we need to email out to residents. We need a paper circulation list for those that don't have email.

Action: Neil volunteered to discuss with Sarah the need to get the email address list updated.

C.C. Website - Neil updated the meeting on his discussions with Stephen about setting up a website for Achmore & Stromeferry CC. This website would be used for lodging minutes and other relevant information pertaining to the community. To progress the website construction Stephen needs samples of documents.

Action: Neil agreed to send sample minute to Stephen.

Phil asked Biz if it was possible for us to get space on the Highland Council servers to host our website.

Action: Biz to check with Highland Council and report back to next meeting.

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6. Fernaig Trust

At the meeting of 23rd January, Neil as chairman, agreed to link more closely with the Fernaig Trust. Neil has had some conversations with Fernaig Trust directors but feels that he should outline his points in a letter.

Action: Neil to write to Directors outlining the CC ideas to aid communication, information exchange and understanding between the all community groups.

7. Planning

There was a renewal of planning application for erection of house to right of hotel, up bank above High Street, Stromeferry. No further information. Email update from Lizzie 'No correspondence of note other than a planning application to refurbish boathouse at Duncraig Castle, Ref Strome and hotel etc. No further update as Sam and Perlin are down in Nottingham at the moment'

8. TEC Services

Planning Schedule

In September we had a meeting with Tech Services - George Speed & Mark Crowe to determine what road problems we want sorted and we agreed to create a spreadsheet documenting all our road problems, location of faults and where possible include images of the faults. This spreadsheet is 90% complete and as it is some time since the meeting, the CC agreed to send the spreadsheet documenting problems reported up to December 2009 to Tech Services, prior to all new road problems being collated. Lizzie's update 'Emailed George to offer sympathy for state of roads and thank him re gritter service round here! No response as yet but he must be very, very busy'

Action: Mary to finish spreadsheet and send to GS & MC for them to agree/alter prior to 2010 faults being collated. Spreadsheet emailed to G Speed 2 Mar 2010.

Waste Bin At Viewpoint.

Lizzie's update as follows 'Haven't met up with Bruce yet re Forestry Actions – i.e. Sign for viewpoint above Strome and refuse bin discussion – will try and tie this in with next FT meeting if I can get to it. If not will ring him'

Action: Lizzie to contact Bruce and discuss signs and bin.

New Matters arising

1. Highland Council Budget

Mary & Phil both raised questions about the Highland Council budget and asked Biz to outline the budget allocations for our Ward for 2010. Biz told the meeting that there was a cut of £22m which is being allocated as we speak. At the next meeting Biz will be in a position to give us an overview of the budget and the impact of the cuts. Biz made it very clear that the budget cuts are severe and will have an impact and that the Credit Crunch is now being felt everywhere.

Action: Biz to present HC budget and where cuts are happening at next meeting. Post the meeting Biz passed on a copy of the current budget booklet to Mary & Phil. It will be review at next meeting.

2. Braeintra Junction Visibility

Renee raised the issue of the topside of the Braintra junction where all the willow shrubs grow in the wide ditch and pointed out that as soon as the scrub is in leaf, all visibility for turning right will be blocked, unless it is cut back soon.

Action: Biz to inform Tech Services of need to cut vegetation prior to it coming into leaf.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30th March at 8 p.m. Achmore Hall

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.10 pm.