

Stromeferry and Achmore Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on 27th August 2013 @ 7:30 p.m. Achmore Hall

Present: Audrey Sinclair, Phil Game, Dawn Lupton, Mary MacBeth, Neil MacRae
Sean Tomlinson (part - see 7.2)

1 Apologies

Ellanne Fraser, Jann MacRae. Wilfar Matheson has resigned from the Community Council.

2 June's minutes.

June's minutes were accepted, proposed by Dawn and seconded by Mary

Copies of minutes are on our website at: - www.stromeferry-and-achmore.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=220934
Email Phil at CC@fernaig.fsnet.co.uk if you would like to be put on the circulation list.

New format for the meeting

After the last meeting Mary circulated a new format agenda for the meetings to try to reduce the amount of time spent on reporting progress. The aim being to reduce the length of the meetings and allow members to concentrate on items that need debate and decisions, the key points and the new layout of the agenda are summarized below:-

The secretary's report will be taken as read from the agenda; only items needing discussion will be mentioned during the meeting.

Ongoing items, i.e. tasks allocated to members, either brief verbal update at the meeting or by email circulated before the meeting.

Update from our councilor.

Updates from Regional & National Organisations

Update from local groups

AOB

Items have been renumbered from previous minutes to fit in with the new format.

It was also agreed that we would review any item that had not be progressed in the last three CC meetings and if it was likely that little progress would be made in the next month we would either drop it or allocate it to someone with more time available.

3 Communications received July / August 2013.

3.1 By the secretary

Email - 28/6 NHS - Redesign of Service Provision - Skye, Lochalsh, W Ross

Email - 02/7 Neil - Portree - Achmore Defibrillator

Email - 04/7 Robbie Bain - Dates for Ward Forum meeting - Fire & police

Email - Free Climate Change Funding - distributed to some of Hall & CC committees

Email - Highland Council - Winter resilience - Distributed to all - see item 5.15

Email - NHS - IT Together - See item 7.1

Email - SLCVO Bulletins No 84, 85, 86 - Distributed to CC

Email - Fernaig Trust & CC meeting conclusions - Distributed to attendees
Email - Lisa MacKellaich - Highland Road Safety Seminar delayed until 22/11 - Distributed to CC.
Email - Jim Coomber - Holdings, grazings, allotments & membership.
Email - Donald MacLeod - RDP - Fernaig Wood (Braeintra) Long Term Forest Plan - See item 7.2.3.
Email - Mhairi MacSween - Energy Saving Trust Events - Distributed to CC
Email - Policy - Highland Council Quality Awards 2013 - Distributed to CC
Email - Kate Bulloch - How to save tax - must see for business owners & individuals. See item 5.14.
Royal Mail - Highland Council - Community Councils in Highland & Community Council Evaluation
Royal Mail - Scotways Newsletter
Royal Mail - Rural Development Contracts - Fernaig Wood (Braeintra) Long Term Forest plan on CD See item 7.2.3

3.2 By the chairman

None

If anyone would like copies any of the above documents please contact Mary at CC@fernaig.fsnet.co.uk or 01599 577 296.

4 Treasurer's report

Opening Balance	£ 3,560.84
Expenditure this period	£
Income this period	£
Closing Balance	£ 3,560.84

No financial report this month due to Wilfar's resignation. Dawn has agreed to be the new treasurer; we will notify the various authorities.

Action: Mary, Dawn

Mary called Scotways and the standing order which is normally paid on 2nd July has been cancelled, so we have to pay £4 by cheque to Scottish Rights of Way & Access Association for this year's membership. The annual fee is £20; in 2012 we paid £16 by standing order and £20 by Cheque in September. Mary will check with the bank that SO has been cancelled before sending cheque.

Action: Mary

5 Ongoing Items, progress reports

5.1 Distribution of minutes

Phil sent an email to Jack on the 23rd August saying that this topic will be dropped from the CC minutes; if the hall do want a copy of their own mailing list in the future they should contact Phil. No response.

Closed

Jim Coomber volunteered to raise the subject of email circulation lists with the Fernaig Trust at the last meeting. No response from the Fernaig Trust.

Closed

5.2 Notice board for Strome Ferry

The posts have been erected, ready to install the board.

Action: Neil

5.3 Provision of more goal posts and nets for the green

Nets are relatively cheap at around £30, but as posts are expensive at £135 and need to be renewed quite frequently as they are not that durable, we will see if we can get wooden posts made locally.

Action: Dawn, Neil

5.4 Provisions of benches

Andy has been asked if he would make some log benches for us, we have asked for a quote for the work.

Action: Dawn

5.5 Skip for village clean up

We will organize a skip for Braeintra; Margaret Arscott has kindly agreed to be the "skip monitor". We are waiting for the HC to return our call so we can organise a date. We will circulate more details by email.

Action: Dawn

5.6 TEC Services

5.6.1 New issues reported

The cutting of verges and specifically the line of site at the A890 junction by the cattle grid, Sandy reports that the grass cutter has been plagued by problems but has now been fixed and is ready for use.

The RHS parapet of the bridge over river Ascaig on the Plockton road, no 672709, this is leaning out at a precarious angle and looks on the verge of collapse. Apparently this has been known by TEC services for some time and is to be put on a work schedule. Another inspection is due before the end of August and the risk will be re-evaluated.

Dave Biss has report the following 4 items to HC - reference no 673559.

The Crash barrier on the LHS of the Fernaig Road towards shore is loose; there is a 2' 6" gap underneath which is large enough for kids to slip under. The main ditch on RHS of the Fernaig Road from Aros to Dailfearn is overgrown with some trees having a diameter of 1.5". The Cattle grid after Dailfearn is loose and very noisy. The scrub by the roadside past the Achnacraig Bridge (heading towards Plockton) on the Plockton Road is seriously obscuring line of sight for traffic. We will chase up all of the above.

There was a general discussion about the state of the few footpaths we have and the small trees that now seem to be taking hold. It was agreed we would follow this up with TEC services.

Action: Phil

5.6.2 Road fault spreadsheet

The road fault spreadsheet will be updated with 673559 & a copy sent to Sandy.

The latest spreadsheet can be found by clicking [here-](#)

5.7 Scottish Water - Damage to surfaces in the Square and Achbeg Crescent

No progress this month.

Dropped

5.8 Capital grant funding from Sport Scotland

No progress this month.

Dropped

5.9 Defibrillator for local emergencies

Mary spoke to the hall committee and they are happy for the defibrillator to be located by the hall. We will liaise with the Hall Committee, and Lucky2BHere to find the best location.

We have contacted the local team in Kyle but have not received a response. We have contacted the Portree Lucky2BHere team and told them we waiting for the Kyle team to do the training.

Action: Mary

5.10 Provision of a recycling centre at the Auchtertyre Business Park

No progress this month, we are still waiting for the results of the HC review.

Action: Audrey, Mary

5.11 Highland Senior Citizen's Network

Waiting on a response from HSCN, Mary & Jann to review whether this is worth pursuing.

Action: Jann, Mary

5.12 Storage of CC records

No progress this month.

Action: Mary

5.13 Condition of Achmore sewage system

Dawn has reported that there is a discharge from the septic tank, which was subsequently emptied. However the discharge and fould smell still remains and so we will contact Scottish Water & SEPA to see what else can be done.

Action: Dawn

5.14 How to save tax - must see for business owners & individuals.

Mary contacted the organisers and registered to take part however it is a live interactive webcast and so it is not viable with our current broadband speeds. We will ask if there will be a recording of the seminar kept online so we can download it later.

Action: Mary

5.15 Winter resilience

Thanks to everyone that volunteered to help, we will pass on everyone's details to the HC and request equipment and grit. Volunteers will be covered by the HC public liability insurance. There is no obligation on behalf of any volunteer to clear paths it is to be done as and when suitable to the volunteer. As there are few pavements there is no choice other than to use roads as paths and grit is required to allow pedestrian access. This initiative is not a replacement for the HC road gritting program.

6 Update from our Councilor

Audrey attended the Planning, Environment and Development Committee where Andrea Rutherford gave an update on the HIE/BT broadband rollout.

Here is a synopsis of the questions Audrey asked on our behalf:-

Q) Why doesn't the map of existing fibre optic cable show the Strome Ferry Cable?

A) Because this uses different protocols and is distribution and access type fibre rather than backhaul.

Q) Which of our local exchanges will be upgraded as part of the rollout of Next Generation Broadband and when will this take place?

A) There are no specific details at the moment, but the first announcement is scheduled for October 2013 and there will be regular updates each quarter.

Q) Since BT are being given public money to upgrade the network and local communities are also getting public money from Community Broadband Scotland what measures are in place to ensure that BT & others do not try to undermine local taxpayer funded community initiatives.

A) HIE are working through this with BT.

There was then a discussion about the documents we receive from the HC regarding planning applications & decisions & it appears that we are not receiving all the information that should be sent to us, we will check this further

Action: Mary

Audrey informed us that the period for comments on the Kishorn development was due to close shortly.

7 Update from Regional & National Organisations

7.1 NHS Redesign of Services in Skye, Lochalsh and W Ross

Mary attended the 1st of two workshops in Dornie Hall to discuss the redesign of Health services for Skye, Lochalsh and W Ross. A full time project manager, Roger Tanner, has been appointed and he has the necessary experience to complete the Investment plan and reports. These need to be presented to the Scottish Government to obtain the Capital spend for this project. The redesigned services will not have an increased revenue budget and will have to pay charges out of the existing revenue budget. The meeting was well attended by NHS professionals from Broadford and Portree who were very open when discussing how they could reduce duplication and provide better services to our communities with redesigned services both in and out of hospital buildings. The next workshop will take place on the 4th Sep at Aros Centre in Portree. Mary will attend for Stromeferry and Achmore CC.

We may organise another meeting with Tracy Ligema or Paul Davidson later in the year.

Action: Mary

7.2 Tilhill

Sean & Ingrid contacted Mary on receipt of this month's agenda when they saw that there was an item covering Tilhill and subsequently met with Mary & Phil. Sean and Ingrid were concerned that the CC and others might think that they were the local representatives for Tilhill since previous minutes had given Sean as a contact point. Mary & Phil suggested Sean attend the CC meeting and we could then run through the issues relating to Tilhill and make sure it was clear to all members of the CC & the wider community that the interface on all issues relating to Tilhill will be through the CC.

We discussed the issues with Sean and agreed we would make it clear that all matters relating to Tilhill should be referred to the CC.

In fact the CC is in contact with **three** managers at Tilhill, one for each of the woodlands. If anyone has any reason to contact Tilhill please contact the CC in the first instance. If appropriate we will take up the issue on your behalf otherwise, at the very least, we will be able to give you the correct manager's contact details.

7.2.1 Access, stalking & naming of woodlands

Mary has spoken to Tilhill and is still waiting for a response, we will chase Tilhill.

Action: Mary

7.2.2 Fire beaters

We will go back to the Fire Service and Forestry for clarification as to whether these are a good idea.

Action: Mary

7.2.3 Fernaig (Braeintra) Woodland Plan (2012 - 2031)

The woodland is owned by the Brown Family Partnership and it was planted in 1981 with an area of 208.28 hectares, there are 22 hectares of unplanted ground. The woodland is managed by Tilhill, there are two access points; the main one is from the A890. The long term aim is to manage the woodland area for production of timber to generate an income. The plan covers the next 20 years, harvesting and extraction will be mostly mechanised, with some selective felling. The felling phases are as follows; 1 (2013 - 2018) 39.50 ha = 19.05%, phase 2 (2018 - 2023) 43.73ha = 21.39%, phase 3 (2023 - 2028) = 56.49 = 26.91%.

LTR & Natural Reserve 10.23 ha =4.87%; OG/OL 41.66 ha = 19.84; Native MB 16.67 ha =7.94%.

All compartments will be restocked within 3 years of clear fell. Broadleaves will be protected from deer by suitable tree shelters/guards and deer management will be carried out by licensed stalkers.

See Mary for a copy of Fernaig (Braeintra) Woodland Plan (2012 - 2031), this document is too large to load to the website.

Action: Mary

8 Update from Local Groups

8.1 Broadband

The following update was received from the Broadband Steering Group.

The latest minutes of the BSG were circulated on the 14th August.

We have 44 subscribers, 28 wanting a connection asap. The remainder to follow in the next 12 months.

Plockton High School is suitable for a connection to the Plockton BT exchange and has a line of sight to Portchullin; we have to talk to the schools estates department for formal permission to use the school buildings. We will test an access point in Lochcarron for upper & lower Strome and a connection to Lochcarron BT exchange.

Our holding company CMNet CIC has been set up; we are in the process of setting up the bank account.

We are close to finalising the following documents:-

Mast licences (masts + other equipment on open ground)

Subscriber contracts

Hosting agreements (masts + other equipment based on / in buildings)

Loan agreements

Internet Service Providers, we now have prices from seven different suppliers, although it is difficult to make direct comparisons the most expensive is almost 5 times more than the cheapest. This, plus an expected upgrade to the Lochcarron BT exchange within the next few years which will reduce costs through Lochcarron by at least 66% makes it **very** difficult to decide on the best long term solution. Therefore the best solution will probably be short term!

The implementation plan has been completed with 10 connections being made asap for a volume trial, another 18 as soon as that is complete and the remainder of the 44 following in the next twelve months.

Financing, with help from Sandra Byrne of Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) we have completed a business plan covering the implementation of a service to the 44 subscribers that have signed up to take the new service. CBS provide capital funding only, all running costs have to be met by subscriptions. CBS also insist that we demonstrate that we are able to generate enough income from subscriptions to cover replacement or upgrade of all electronic equipment in a five year cycle. CBS also insist that all main relay licences (mast or hosting) are agreed and signed **before** any money will be released.

CBS will provide 89% of the funds and we will have to raise the remaining 11% ourselves. Given that this is a one off process we have applied for all the equipment needed to implement a fully fault tolerant system. If our application is successful we will be given a grant to cover the whole project although we will still employ a phased implementation as described above. CBS money is only paid on receipt of invoices and must be used within one year of the grant being awarded.

With contingency this means our maximum project capital costs are £37,538. This is for equipment only, all labour is to come from volunteers. We will have to raise a minimum of £3,300 and a possible maximum of £4,200 (depending on how much contingency we draw down).

We will raise our local contribution through loans as detailed in the feasibility study. Loans will be in multiples of £50 for either one or two years and will give a return of 5% per annum.

Although Sandra has confirmed she is happy with our business plan we will not know whether our application has been approved until early September.

It then takes up to a month for all the administration details to be completed, so it seems unlikely we will be able to start to purchase equipment before October.

Jim Coomber has raised questions about the ability of the system's power supply to withstand lightning strikes, Jim was asked for his recommendations, as nothing was received nothing has been included in the business plan.

The latest information on the broadband project can be found at:-
www.stromeferry-and-achmore.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=433827

8.2 Fernaig Trust

Audrey chaired a meeting between the CC & the FT. The CC explained the difficulties caused by information not being distributed in time to allow people to decide whether they should attend meetings, take advantage of information gathered by the FT or pass comment on items being discussed and the difficulty in gaining access to the minutes via the website.

At the meeting with the FT it was stated that members of the FT had received complaints about the CC. If anyone has an issue with a member of the CC or the CC in general then they should take the matter up with a member of the CC or alternatively contact Audrey via email at Audrey.Sinclair@highland.gov.uk The HC are in the process of setting up a formal complaints procedure and we will publish this in due course.

Mary attended Monday's FT meeting and reported that the FT had discussed and agreed the following:-

An agenda will be distributed 3-7 days prior to a Fernaig Trust meeting, so that people know if they want to attend the meetings.

All information relating to courses or other materials which may be of interest to the wide community will be distributed as soon as possible.

There will be a timetable produced so that everyone will be aware when the Trust minutes are published, this will typically be four days after the meeting that approves the minutes.

We thanked Audrey for chairing our meeting with the FT.

Audrey said she would have attended the FT meeting on Monday if she had had prior notice.

9 AOB.

CC projects for 2013, this was deferred.

10 Calendar

August / September, prepare for winter roads, gritting stocks, gritting schedule for Strome Ferry hill.

November, MOD support fund for schools

11 Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 29th October at 7:30 p.m. Achmore Hall.

The meeting closed at 9:30pm