

Stromeferry and Achmore Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on 29th October 2013 @ 7:30 p.m. Achmore Hall

Present: Audrey Sinclair, Phil Game, Dawn Lupton, Mary MacBeth, Neil MacRae, Ellanne Fraser, Jann MacRae (part).

1 Apologies

None

2 August's minutes.

August's minutes were accepted, proposed by Neil and seconded by Dawn.

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.

3 Communications received September / October 2013.

3.1 By the secretary

Email - 29/8 - Robbie Bain - Ward Forum, Ward 6

Email - 30/8 - Policy - Community Council Evaluation 2013

Email - 30/8 - Skye and Lochalsh Local Access Forum

Email - Various September/October - Defibrillator training

Email - 5/9 - Highland Council - Licensing Board Overprovision Consultation

Email - 16/9 - Highland Small Communities Housing Trust Newsletter and Open Day

Email - 16/9 - URS - Stromeferry Options Appraisal Business Directory

Email - 26/9 - Scottish Civic Trust

Email - 7/10 - NHS - Redesign Healthcare Skye - Design Statement Workshop 1 - 29.10.13

Email - 9/10 - Robbie Bain - STROME FERRY A890 BYPASS Questionnaire Poster.docx

Email - 15/10 - URS - Stromeferry Bypass Appraisal, Stage 2 Joint Stakeholder Workshop

Email - 22/10 - Policy - Review of Traffic Warden Provision and Public Service and Opening Hours at Police Offices

Letter - 24/10 - Highland Council - Training for community Councillors

Email - 28/10 - Calum Bulloch - Gates padlocked around the new plantation

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	£ 0.00
Income this period	£ 0.00
Closing Balance	£ 3,560.84

Dawn has agreed to be the new treasurer, the bank details have to be amended.

Action: Mary, Dawn

We have to pay £4 by cheque to Scottish Rights of Way & Access Association for this year's membership.

Action: Mary, Dawn

5 Ongoing Items, progress reports

5.1 Distribution of minutes

Phil has set up a Google Group to allow Ingrid to circulate Hall updates to all those who have registered an interest, once this is proven other groups will be set up.

Action: Phil

5.2 Notice board for Strome Ferry

Erection of the notice board has been delayed as we have discovered that the board was damaged in transit. A small repair is required and an additional key needs to be sourced.

Action: Neil

5.3 Provision of more goal posts and nets for the green

We have obtained a set of goal posts and will buy nets.

Action: Dawn, Neil

5.4 Provisions of benches

There was some discussion about the type of bench we thought was suitable so we could pass a “design” to Andy. The conclusion that something fairly simple that was heavy and unlikely to be “relocated” by a passing opportunist would be best, Dawn will discuss the requirements with Andy to see what’s practicable.

Action: Dawn

5.5 Skip for village clean up

Dawn organised the skip which was delivered to Braeintru.

Completed

5.6 TEC Services

5.6.1 New issues reported

None

5.6.2 Outstanding issues

The grass cutter was broken again, and finally gave up the ghost & has just been replaced. We still do not know when the verges will be cut. We sent an email to Audrey asking if the budget cuts have gone too far. Audrey has agreed to take this up on our behalf.

Action: Audrey

We will cut the overgrown shrubs where the road through the village meets the A890

Action: Phil

The parapet of the bridge over river Ascaig on the Plockton road, despite emailing Sandy numerous times, there is still no feedback on the status of the parapet, we will chase Sandy again.

Action: Phil

Footpaths, Phil forgot this item from the last meeting & will raise it with Sandy.

Action: Phil

5.6.3 Road fault spreadsheet

The road fault spreadsheet has been updated with 673559 (sent in by Dave Biss) & a copy was sent to Sandy.

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

5.7 Defibrillator for local emergencies

The CPR and Defibrillator training took place in Achmore Hall on the 17th October at 7.30pm and was attended by 14 people. Alain and Lannie delivered an excellent course and we all learnt a lot. We have some spare booklets from Alain & Lannie for those that were not able to attend the training, contact Mary if you would like a copy.

The defibrillator will be donated by the Lucky2BHere charity based in Portree and run by Ross Cowie. Our community will need to undertake some fund raising so that we can contribute to the cost of the next defibrillator. There was some discussion about what sort of fund raising events we should organise. The defibrillator will be located to the right hand side of the entrance door as you enter the hall. Once the defibrillator has been installed we will organise an “open day” to inform everyone and provide some publicity for Lucky2BHere We will chase Lucky2BHere for a delivery date for the defibrillator.

Action: Mary

5.8 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

5.9 Highland Senior Citizen’s Network

Mary emailed them and we are waiting on a response from their officer, Mary & Jann to review whether this is worth pursuing.

Action: Jann, Mary

5.10 Storage of CC records

No progress this month.

Action: Mary

5.11 Condition of Achmore sewage system

Dawn contacted Scottish Water and SEPA who have emptied and inspected the tank and say it is OK. Audrey suggested we contact Scottish Water and ask for a formal report on the condition of the tank.

Action: Mary

We will check if some domestic chemicals could be causing problems with the tank.

Action: Phil

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

This is extremely difficult to view as due to our limited broadband most of the time is spent waiting for buffering.

Closed

5.13 Winter resilience

Thanks again to everyone that volunteered to help, Mary passed on details to the HC. Nothing has yet been received although the “normal” piles of grit & salt appear to have been replenished. We will chase the HC. Please let Mary or Phil know if grit / salt have not been delivered in your area.

Action: Mary

6 Update from our Councilor

Audrey informed us that the Kishorn development has been given planning approval. Although no contracts have been signed the dry dock would be suitable to build the concrete bases for offshore wind farms. These would then be floated and completed locally before being towed out to their final location.

The HC has a new CEO, Steve Barron, who was deputy for the past couple of years. He has already started a reorganisation of the civil servants and will reduce the number of directors from 9 to 7. Council committees will be altered to correspond with the new structure.

7 Update from Regional & National Organisations

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

Mary attended the workshop on the 2nd October. Currently there are three scope options, three service solution options, three service delivery options and three implementation options. There are two funding options. Each of the above has a preferred option.

Once it is finalised the documentation will go to the senior management team who are expected to give feedback by spring 2014. The full business case will be completed by 2015.

Contact Mary if you would like more information.

Action: Mary

7.2 Tilhill

We have received the following responses from *Tilhill*.

7.2.1 Access

Gates on hill – The issue arose when the gates were removed on three occasions which allowed hill deer to enter the enclosure which browsed the planted trees. The Forestry Commission issued a warning letter in relation to the browsing and to stop the deer incursions we were forced to lock the gates to stop them being lifted off. Access to the lower part of the hill and the main gate on the path is via kissing gates which are not locked. In addition we (Tilhill) have a fencer on site over the next two weeks who will make an additional kissing gate on the upper margin to facilitate more access for pedestrians onto the open hill ground.

We will ask Tilhill for a map showing the location of gates and respond with the communities view on access.

Action: Mary

7.2.2 Stalking

Deer control is undertaken on the estate by a stalking syndicate. All those in the syndicate are fully trained to DSC level1 &2 and are fully insured. They stay locally at the B&B at Braeintra but we are not informed of each visit and timing or location on the hill as this depends on the season and weather. This is standard across deer control and stalking within woodland areas.

We will investigate other ways to inform everyone when stalking is taking place.

Action: Mary

7.2.3 Naming of woodlands

Place names – The woodland named ‘Achnandarach’ originates from the land formed at Achnandarach, Duncraig and Craig. When the Caithness family sold the hill land at Fernaig to the owner of Achnandarach the hill became part of the Achnandarach estate with the low ground being sold back to the Achmore Community. As you are aware there were two major fires affecting the estate earlier this year and following these we had a request from the fire brigade to erect signs and contact numbers for Tilhill so that these correspond with the maps and data sheets held at Fire control. This will make it easier for future fire control in the unfortunate event of any future hill fires. We understand that the hill and other areas are known by different names locally but these signs are for management purposes only.

Closed

7.2.4 Fire

Hill ground – the fire which devastated the young planed trees on the hill at Achmore is still being investigated by the insurers and it is hoped that this can be resolved in the near future. The plan is to replace the planted trees when the insurance is finalised. Meantime we have proceeded in securing the fence with the conifer woodland which was damaged by the fire. The planting has to be replaced as this is a condition of the Forestry Commission woodland grant scheme in place on the hill.

Closed

7.2.5 Fire beaters

We are waiting for a response from the Portree fire station.

Action: Mary

8 Update from Local Groups

8.1 Broadband

The following update was received from the Broadband Steering Group, (now CMNet CIC).

The latest minutes were circulated on the 9th September and are on our website along with previous minutes.

We have one additional subscriber taking the total to 45.

Our holding company CMNet CIC has been set up and the directors have elected office bearers. We are waiting for confirmation from RBS that we have all provided enough information to complete setting up the bank account.

We have finalised all the relevant documents to set up relays and accept customers, the next step will be to get the documents checked by a solicitor.

Apart from the items mentioned above we have made little or no progress in the past two months. Most of the time has been spent waiting for Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) to process our grant application.

We agreed our business plan with CBS and submitted the final version on the 21st August. On the 4th September CBS informed us that there would be a month's delay for a consultation period. This was to see if any commercial provider had plans to implement a broadband service in the area. On the 24th September CBS informed us that BT had notified them that they had plans to implement a new service by the end of 2015; which BT estimate would cover around 50% of the properties in our area. This change will not be an upgrade to the existing telephone exchange and anyone not included in the BT upgrade would remain capped at 0.5 Mbps, see the email from Phil of the 14th October for more details.

We met with CBS on the 9th October and were told that they would process our application even though BT had committed to an upgrade. This information conflicted with what we had been told when we met CBS on the 17th July and contradicted documents on their website. We therefore asked CBS to give us confirmation in writing that our grant application could proceed, CBS have confirmed this via email.

CBS asked for confirmation that CMNet intends to proceed with the original business plan and original numbers of subscribers. On Tuesday the 22nd October we sent CBS a letter confirming we have 45 prospective subscribers, we also completed and submitted a formal application for a grant of £33,339, which is 89% of the total shown in our business plan.

CBS have told us it should take two weeks from receipt of our grant application to formal approval of our grant by CBS management.

After some confusion at the meeting on the 9th October we asked CBS to confirm that they require that all main relay licences are agreed and signed **before** any money is released. CBS have replied that the agreements only need to be in place on a phase by phase basis. I.e. we do not have to have **all** agreements in place before we start phase 1, the volume trial.

Given that we will now have to employ a solicitor to check the relay licences and we can't do that until our grant has been formally approved it seems unlikely we will be able to start buying equipment until January.

On Monday, 28th October we received formal written approval of our grant for the full amount requested. We will have to go through the document carefully and may need clarification of some issues. There is a prerequisite that we obtain formal signed agreement to install our mast on Creag Mhaol. This may take some weeks to complete.

In the light of the restriction on obtaining funds from CBS until the mast leases were signed Phil asked that the CC loan CMNet enough money to cover solicitor's fees should bills be presented before CBS had formally approved the mast lease for Creag Mhaol. This was agreed.

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

The AGM of the Fernaig Trust will be held on Tuesday, 12th November at 7pm in Achmore Hall.

8.3 Hall Committee

The CC meeting coincided with the hall being prepared for Friday's "Spooky Bingo" which prompted comment from members of the CC recognizing the hard work being done by the hall committee, raising funds and making sure the best use was being made of the hall.

9 AOB.

9.1 Visit by PC Ali Mackenzie

To allow Ali to leave early we discussed the issue relating to the Police service at the start of the meeting. Ali informed us that a member of the Police service would be able to attend CC meetings as and when requested. He gave us contact details so we could forward a copy of our agenda.

Ali told us that the new organisation of the service had resulted in the reduction in opening hours of some stations although so far Kyle had not been affected. The new shift system means that there are now fewer officers on shift at any one time but this is compensated by other task forces that cover our area. We asked to be part of the consultation process in future; Ali said he would raise that for us.

Crime in our immediate area is very low and when it occurs it is mostly opportunistic. I.e. Most thefts are from unlocked sheds rather than from break-ins. Ali asked residents to remain vigilant and note down registration numbers of any suspicious unknown vehicles in the area. Most opportunistic criminals still "case the joint" and are often in the area behaving suspiciously several times before acting.

Ali reminded us that the new 101 number should be used to contact police for non emergencies; this will get a much quicker response than calling the Kyle station. 999 is still the number to use in an emergency.

9.2 CC projects for 2013

It was agreed to change this to CC projects for 2014, and then this topic can be deferred for another year.

9.3 Christmas Party

We have been asked for, and have agreed to make, a donation of £150 to the Christmas party.

Action: Dawn

9.4 Damage to the forestry tracks

Ellanne noted that the forestry tracks had been damaged by work being carried out on the hill. It was agreed we would send a letter of complaint to the Forestry Commission.

Action: Ellanne

10 Calendar

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

November, MOD support fund for schools, so far we have heard nothing this year, we will check what details we received last year.

Action: Phil

11 Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 26th November at 7:30 p.m. Achmore Hall.

The meeting closed at 10:05 pm