

KILTARLITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING 17th AUGUST 2016
7.30pm KILTARLITY VILLAGE HALL

In the chair:

Norman Grant (NG)

Present:

Members - Dorothy Ward (DW), Eunice Ramsden (ER), Lucinda Spicer (LS), Elaine Cameron (EC)

Ex-Offio members - Cllr Helen Carmichael (HC), Cllr Dr Jean Davis (JD)

Police representative - PC Craig MacIver (CM)

Also present - Ann Pirie (AP), Neil Wallace (NW)

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Margaret Davidson (MD), Hamish Wood and Ron Maclean (RM).

2. Police report

CM delivered the police report:

- Road traffic - miscellaneous road traffic offences; speed checks have been carried out on A 833 (no breaches detected); patrols carried out around the Free Church to follow up on possible obstruction; Road Traffic Collision at Burnside cross roads still being followed up; person charged with drink driving in connection with Belladrum Festival.
- One charge for Construction & Use offence;
- Belladrum - some misuse of drugs, antisocial behaviour, small number of theft reports; awaiting official figures but generally felt to have been an orderly occasion, with an increase in drugs incidents attributed to an increase in police vigilance;
- Advice given on noise from property and controlled burning at property;
- One charge of theft;
- Reports received of persons outwith the area using area addresses for insurance fraud .

Regarding insurance fraud, this should be reported to ACTION FRAUD. Powers to tackle this only exist under English law - there are no equivalent powers available for Scottish Police. Generally speaking, this arises because people get cheaper car insurance by saying that their vehicles are registered to a rural Scottish address, whereas in fact the owner and the vehicle address might be, for example, resident in an English city. Post addressed to someone unknown arriving at local addresses is the only sign that this crime is taking place. CM asked that this issue be publicised on local notice boards and in the Newsletter. ACTION - KCC (No

specific named person - suggest EC to note for next Newsletter, LS to prepare and print a notice and DW to place on Notice boards)

3. Belladrum report

There was a discussion on how the community felt Belladrum had gone this year:

- Generally, traffic congestion had been a lot less and things had been a lot smoother;
- There was some concern over the hoardings by Brockies and their proximity to the road;
- The length of the section of A833 subject to a 30 mph limit, well in advance of the event itself, was discussed; it was felt that the limit had something to do with the hoardings and the sight lines, though how this related to the long straight section from Tomnacross to Culmill (with no hoardings or sight issues) was not explained;
- A number of road signs had not been removed promptly at the close of the event/completion of break down but left protruding into the carriageway;
- There had been an issue with the unexpected overnight closure of Megstone Road on the Saturday which had resulted in people walking down the roads in the middle of the night.

Overall, it was felt that KCC might usefully meet with the event organisers at the planning stage for next year ie an email should be sent now. ACTION - KCC

4. Minutes of last meeting and actions arising

The Minutes of Meeting 15 June 2016 were then adopted. Proposed DW, seconded ER.

Actions were reviewed and carried forward/amended as necessary:

Name of new Chief Constable & Policing/emergency contacts - new CC Mr Phil Gormley QPM; emergency contact 999, non emergency 101. Use of direct dial numbers through to the station, to get round this, is not advised due to possible unavailability of local cover.

State of building site opposite the Hall - regarding the piles of rubble around the site in particular - MD had undertaken to speak to the planners to try and apply some pressure; carried forward due to absence of MD; it was noted with surprise that contractors from a neighbouring site were emptying materials from a van onto the site in question, contemporaneously with this meeting. ACTION - MD.

Blairmore Felling Licence application - LS reported that a letter had been sent on behalf of KCC to Mr Straker-Nesbit of EFR(Scotland), the limited partnership that is the forest owner, in reply to the two letters received on 13 June. This letter just sent has pressed for a reply from EFR(S) on the KCC request for active community consultation on the forest plan, major operations and historic interests, so that KCC can consider any proposed measures. Minutes of past KCC meetings have now been posted on the website and a general invitation to KCC meetings was included in the letter. LS and NG reported on the forest plan, which omits traffic plans for the proposed major felling operations over the period 2016-2020, and for the next round of felling to 2025. Nearly all of the forest will be felled and replanted by 2035, excluding the areas currently bare or mixed broadleaf/conifer (semi natural

woodland). Extreme concern over this was expressed, especially since a felling licence has already been granted for such a large volume of timber with apparently no detailed plan. It was resolved that this needed to be pursued, both with EFR(S) and possibly the Forestry Commission, whilst recognising that the only feasible action on the Forestry Commission side might be via the complaints procedure/Public Service Ombudsman. ACTION - LS/NG. Sale of Brockies Lodge - matters have moved on; it was reported that a local proposal has emerged for a single building that would comprise top level social housing, and a deli/cafe (picking up community provision such as OAP lunches), a function suite (catering for the shinty team, inter alia) and also office space for local start ups. It appears there would not be a licenced bar/publican, but an intention to deal with alcohol at functions by charging for corkage. It was agreed that this should be taken forward by holding a community meeting where the proponent of the scheme could present it and discuss how the community objectives, of preserving a local licensed meeting place at the Brockies site, could be reconciled. It should be noted that a change of use from licensed premises requires planning permission, which the KCC had resolved would not be supported. Resolved - set up meeting for October - ACTION - EC.

Lovat Shinty Club new clubhouse - LS to make formal response to Linda Bell on the grant situation - ACTION - LS.

Playground facilities in the Willie Gray development - EC to chase up so current plans can be publicised - ACTION - EC.

Report from Highland Council (MD not present) - NG led a discussion on maintenance issues around the village; it was agreed that around the CC area, there has been verge mowing to improve sight lines but the task needs to be completed; two bus shelters are scheduled for replacement.

5. Correspondence

LS had dispatched letters as agreed to DPEA concerning the Druim Ba appeal (asking to be included in further process) and also on Cnoc An Eas (objecting to the request for the appeal to be conjoined with DB).

She also reported the formal receipt of a bundle of new information concerning the Cnoc An Eas appeal; this information has already been seen and taken into account in KCC's objection sent some weeks ago, and re issuing of the information is a technical formality.

A report on mobile and broadband progress for householders in Highland has been received from MD's office, which had been circulated to KCC members before the meeting and tabled as a correspondence item. It is attached to these minutes for general information. Broadband speed is a real issue for those KCC areas outside the village, as is mobile reception and even TV reception. It was resolved that the new voucher scheme be publicised within the community. ACTION - LS.

6. Treasurer's Report

DW presented the monthly financial report, showing KCC funds standing at £2,277.81 after receipt of the coming year's grant of £1,082.56.

7. Committee membership matters

It was proposed by DW that Ann Pirie should join KCC as a member, seconded by ER. AP was duly elected to KCC.

8. Planning matters

LS reported that HC had resolved to adopt the draft Supplementary Guidance for Onshore Wind Energy. The document now goes to Scottish Government, who have 30 days to raise anything before the SG becomes part of the HWLDP. This is significant for both the DB and the Cnoc An Eas appeals, which concern developments within areas which the Loch Ness landscape assessment in the SG concludes are unsuitable for developments consisting of large turbines. The practical effect of this is that the weight given to the HC landscape assessment conclusions becomes greater in the balance of planning considerations, and also it means that in strategic terms, HC will be required to guide such developments away from these areas. No action required.

9. DB Forest Plan - dealt with above under item 4

10. Kiltarlity News - who will take this over?

It was reported that EC will be taking this over as editor/person in charge of production, while DW will continue her current contributory role. RM will still gather material. The software transition is still to be conquered, a version is needed that will run on the KCC computer; RM is investigating.

The plan is to produce 2 issues this year, but possibly raise it to 3 issues if conditions permit.

11. War memorial maintenance

On the fabric of the memorial, NG has been talking to Don Cowie about structural repairs. It was resolved that he should continue. ACTION - NG.

On mowing and weeds at the Memorial, LS reported that while it has been the practice of the community to deal with this obligation of the council, there is no formal agreement executed by the Council. If the community does not want to continue then the Council will take it back. It was resolved that LS would contact K2000 to see what they want to do. ACTION - LS.

12. PTA and Gala - Social Convener's report

It was resolved that this be discussed further at a later date. EC reported:

- there is the possibility of making this a joint effort with KCC and expanding it;
- there is an insurance issue if the event is removed from the auspices of the school;
- would there be benefit to the community in doing something like a flower show as part of it, for example?

ACTION - EC to make a further report.

13. AOB

DW reported that notice boards around the community were falling into disrepair. There was a brief discussion about the possibility of moving the Black Bridge notice board to a better place nearby, but there was a query over who owned the subject ground. It was resolved that NG should take this forward initially in terms of what could be done at what cost and then DW should organise the necessary repairs and payments.

NW attended the meeting to give an update on the bus situation. It appears that already the extra bus journey in the afternoon onto Beaulieu has been running. However the Council are looking for 15% savings and therefore weaker journeys could be axed. It was resolved that KCC should keep pressure on the Council by communicating with David Summers at the Council, to say how important it is for the community to keep the current level of service.

ACTION - NG.

14. Date of Next Meeting

It was resolved that the next meeting should take place on Wednesday 21 September 2016.

Thereupon the meeting concluded.

Lucinda Spicer

Secretary

Broadband/Mobile Reception

I have prepared this briefing as I know broadband and mobile reception are key priorities in every community in Highland. Rightly so, we all know how important it is for modern life for people and for business, and increasingly for tourism.

This is a snap-shot. It is where the various projects are in July 2016.

There are a range of promises by UK and Scottish Governments.

UK Government: 10 mbps by 2020. Universal service obligation gives the public a legal right to affordable connection of 10mbps.

UK Government have also made a commitment to bring forward a Digital Economy Bill

It will include:

- Giving every household a legal right to a fast broadband connection.
- New laws to help telecommunications providers build the infrastructure needed for faster broadband and better mobile networks.
- Allowing consumers to be automatically compensated when things go wrong with their broadband service.

Scottish Government: 95% of properties with next generation broadband by 2017 and significant uplift for the rest. H&I targets behind this, at 84% by 2016.

In addition the SNP made a commitment in their manifesto for 100% superfast broadband by 2021.

For Highland there is the additional money in the City/Region deal £20m for The Highlands. There is also European Funding to draw down.

High Speed Broadband

BT is delivering a contract for High Speed Broadband across Scotland. The contract is managed in the Highlands and Islands by HIE. Good progress has been made in Highland,

though the places it has been delivered to are the larger towns, some villages and the City of Inverness.

This contract is due to conclude by the end of 2016 and is committed to deliver 84% coverage. This is being delivered by fibre and is visible as the new green boxes (cabinets) in our communities.

Updates on progress can be seen on the HIE website at

<http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/digital-highlands-and-islands/news-and-events/news/more-places-in-highlands-region-and-islands-get-set-for-a-superfast-boost.html>

This is the latest roll out news with latest locations. The news section is where the updates can be found

There has been good customer take up of new high speed broadband once installed, and this has meant that BT has committed to reinvest some of its profits in further extension of the network called "gain share", but this will likely be of the £2-3m. The final roll out is now estimated at 86%.

Phase 2

There is likely to be a Phase 2 contract, to reach beyond the 84% reach of Phase 1.

Again this is to be managed in the Highlands and Islands by HIE. At present the thinking is to break this contract into smaller parts to enable more competition from potential providers.

However, in the light of the Scottish Government's promise of 100% Broadband cover, everyone is now waiting for their implementation plan, due early autumn.

There is approximately £42 million available for phase 2, with an indicative figure of £25 for H&I region.

There is in addition £21 million of ERDF monies available; however this cannot be used to extend the current BT contract and would be additional. To go to 100% cover will need more money.

City-Region Deal

In the Inverness City-Region Deal there is £20m ear marked for broadband expansion.

Once we have more idea of how far any new contract will reach we can plan good use of this welcome extra money to go beyond the easier to reach places.

An implementation plan will be drawn up with HC & HIE.

So in conclusion – Risks:-

- **Unsure of contract size, timing and if fully funded**
- **Contract delays and procurement delays**
- **Waiting for Scottish Government decisions**

It may become clearer as the 2016 goes on.

Community Broadband Scotland

Community Broadband Scotland is an organisation set up to help communities who will not be reached by the large contracts to improve broadband. There has been some good success in remote areas, mainly through the provision of locally run wireless networks.

The Choice

The difficult choice for many communities is:-

- Do we wait to see if we will get BT type cabinets in a new contract, or,
- Do we plan a project with Community Broadband Scotland.

The difficulty is that if you embark on the CBS route to spend public money on wireless investment it would mean you could not change your mind and have cabinets and high speed broadband as well.

A difficult and frustrating call.

CBS is a good option where you have:-

- A keen community willing to take things on.
- A community willing to run a business – that is what it could be.

Some projects in Argyll have grouped together and have attracted a local internet service provider (ISP).

Mobile Reception

This is set to improve dramatically over 2016/17 in Highland.

They are obligated by UK Government to get 90+ % coverage across the UK. (Of course the H&I will have much of the 10% not reached).

This is to be 4G roll out and will be extensively along Trunk roads where we have many “not spots” of poor coverage. It will be an upgrade of existing masts and some new masts.

The planning applications are beginning to arrive and some are “permitted developments” on existing masts and should go ahead fairly quickly.

In addition there is to be a major upgrade of Police/Emergency Service masts to 4G and this will have the ability to enable public access.

Many of us will see a major improvement in mobile reception this year.

Recently Cabinet Secretary for Connectivity Fergus Ewing announced a plan to increase and improve mobile coverage in Scotland. This has been agreed with mobile operators. The plan will see the Scottish Government work with the industry and other partners to maximise commercial investment in 4G mobile in Scotland, and ultimately, to support 5G-ready infrastructure across the country.

Satellite Broadband

After a period without, there is now a subsidy for satellite broadband users where there is no other option. There is a voucher scheme where anyone getting speeds under 2mbps, and where there are no plans for the local exchange to be upgraded in the next 12 months, can claim the voucher. Voucher only covers installation fees

Conclusions

We have a mixed picture.

We have huge hope and expectations throughout Highland, and expectations from our visitors that they will also have mobile reception as they do in their homes.

There is a high speed contract underway and another to come. This has risks and uncertainty and perhaps funding issues around that contract.

Good news on mobile reception plans.

Councillor M Davidson

Leader of the Highland Council

July 2016

MD/rm