

FERINTOSH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ONLINE ON THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2020

MEMBERS: Karen Harcus, Alastair Macintyre, Iain McCallum, Gordon Morris, Bruce Morrison (Secretary), Becky Richmond (Chair).

ALSO PRESENT: 3 residents.

APOLOGIES: Sally Falconer, Adam Fletcher (Associate), Alison Lowe, Eilidh Richmond (Treasurer), Cllr Angela MacLean, PC John MacPherson, 2 residents.

POLICE MATTERS: Report received with two incidents mentioned. On the A9 at the Cromarty Bridge, a driver was issued with a fixed penalty for careless driving. On the A9 at Duncanston, a driver was reported for driving with a provisional licence and no insurance.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES: (excluding actions carried out, carried forward and those considered later in the agenda): **Grit bin** has been installed near Alcaig as requested; **40mph signs** now installed around Mulbuie School (one delimiting sign needing removal, Becky to follow up); **Iain clarified** with THC FCC's meaning of 'local responses' and Becky replied to the resident who had objected to FCC's choice of words; **Becky replied to Black Isle Partnership** explaining FCC's reasons for not wishing to become a member and Cllr Adam (Director of BIP) replied to say that he would seek legal guidance to help resolve the perceived barrier to membership; **Bruce drafted a Participation Request** which Becky /Gordon will consider (all community councillors to reply by 5pm tomorrow) before sending in to THC.

MINUTES: Last month's minutes were approved (proposed by Karen, seconded by Becky).

FINANCIAL REPORT: Becky provided summary of 2019 /2020 accounts but full signed accounts need to be circulated prior to approval. November accounts showed cash in bank of £6199.17, including £500 remaining (BTSG) which will be repaid to BIP. Taking account of uncashed cheques and ring-fenced funds, £4719.17 remains as available funds. Online banking in the process of being set up.

Ferintosh Volunteers has applied for £40 to buy mobile phone as key contact point for the new group. FCC agreed that the application met FCC's criteria for funding and approved the request. FCC would continue to provide banking facilities for Ferintosh Volunteers and help source funding whilst the group finds its feet and establishes itself. Following discussion, it was agreed that FCC could continue to fund community projects provided that the reserves did not drop below £3K.

CORRESPONDENCE and REQUESTS:

THC: Consultation on revised policy for rural housing developments (FCC not responding); **THC** provided information about its new Business Hardship Fund; **Residents** raising further concerns about Urquhart Farm development and THC has now stopped the work on the grounds of development outside the prescribed area and possible impact on water course; **Developer of Urquhart Farm** contacted FCC challenging its use of the term 'local' and the validity of some of the information included in FCC's objection. Following lengthy discussion FCC replied directing them to the October Minutes (re: issue of locality) and also referred to documents within the planning application on which FCC formed the basis of its objection. A subsequent email was received, before FCC's first reply, reiterating concern over the use of the word local. FCC discussed at the meeting and agreed to a further reply reiterating the argument that FCC represents the majority view of the material concerns expressed by residents within the consultation period.

Community Housing Trust in touch about renewing membership. FCC decided not to renew (Bruce to action).

Scottish Boundary Commission: Ward /Councillor changes were put out for consultation together with THC's position that no detailed feedback has yet been provided by THC since it disagrees with the overall approach to representation in such a remote and rural area. One Highland Councillor provided feedback i.e. Cllr Gordon Adam who agreed with the inclusion of the Redcastle area into Ward 9, Black Isle, whilst retaining 3 Councillors.

From FCC's own consultation with residents, 4 were in favour and 1 against the proposed changes. One resident had the view that the Allangrange /Rootfield 'limb' should not be in a different Ward to the Mulbuie /Highfield /Bishop Kinkell area and feedback on this proposal was 2 for and 4 against. There were no comments received about the approach to Ward changes around the Highlands.

FCC discussed these changes and the feedback and agreed to the following:

1. That FCC responds to the national consultation by supporting the small increase of area to Ward 9 whilst keeping 3 Highland Councillors.
2. That FCC won't comment on Ward 8 changes since the biggest changes there affect the interests of residents outwith our area in a far greater way than those within our area.
3. That the view of the wider strategic changes should be left to Highland Councillors.

Avoch & Killen CC: suggesting joint response on the Free Port idea but FCC agreed to wait and see how resident opinion develops; **Residents** sent in complimentary emails to Eilidh about the Remembrance and Xmas Noticeboards; **Becky thanked Stagecoach** /Alison /Bruce for responding sensitively to supporting a resident's difficulty with bus travel; **Resident** informed us about a community minibus beginning on Skye; **Kate Forbes office (Helen Brown):** phoned about resident's concern about speed around the Culbokie School area. The history of effort over the years was explained and how THC had declined to install a flashing speed sign and not yet installed 30mph roundels on the road throughout Culbokie. Helen provided feedback yesterday that THC is still not in a position to carry out either of those actions. Helen is now considering a request for a fresh speed monitoring exercise (to compare with FCC's previous data showing mean speeds of 28.5mph in 2016 and 27.3mph in 2017) which FCC has strongly supported and thanked Helen for her efforts; **Ferintosh Free Church:** Defibrillator now installed outside Church for community use; **Highland Green Health Partnership Survey** put out to the email list; **HTSI:** (this item reported by email to FCC but not voiced at this meeting): Informed FCC about an event explaining the new Links Workers scheme and Bruce attended with the following key notes: Funded by NHS Scotland, delivered by a third sector organization, Links Workers will be embedded in 29 primary healthcare groups (including Dingwall) around the Highlands beginning in April 2021. The Links Worker's role is to support, advise, advocate, solve problems and link patients with organisations that will help alleviate patient's social issues (e.g. housing, debt, employment, education, family, loneliness) i.e. prescribing social support, leaving more time for GPs and medical colleagues to focus on medical prescribing. FCC intends to build a strong relationship with its local Links Worker in order to help link residents with appropriate social activities in the area; **Neighbourhood Watch Scotland:** booklet received i.e. 'Safer Communities' with Police Scotland highlighting the local increase in scams; **THC:** link to information about uplifting bulky items; **ILM Highland:** installing recycling bins for small electricals (nearest is Tesco Dingwall) as part of a national campaign (<https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/>); **THC:** 'Worrying about Money' leaflet received and put to the email list and link to go on to FB /website; **Resident** contacted THC about the bad state of the road from Mulbuie School through to the A835 (Gordon to follow up with resident); **Resident:** speeding along the B9163, Urquhart, registration supplied (Alastair to contact PS); **THC:** sent out briefing (went to the email list) on its preparation for winter; **THC:** Consultation on Tourism Infrastructure Plan sent out to email list; **Cllr MacLean** sent information about Good Food Conversation podcasts/blogs.

Service Requests: Bruce reported to THC three street lights out. Gordon reported that some road patching had been done around the gravel pit area. The Upper Badrain road to be added to the priority areas for attention by THC.

ACTIVE PROJECTS: (Updates below on all FCC's linkages but only if new information).

Ferintosh Community Bus (FCB): Awaiting detailed timetables for consultation and next meeting is planned for next Monday. Discussions in the past month with partners, interested residents and neighbouring community councils is painting the following picture. Firstly, that the start is delayed and may begin 17th January. Secondly, the commuter service and the first /last non-commuter journeys are likely to remain as 'one-bus' journeys in the early phase of the trial with all others on a demand-responsive basis. In order not to negatively impact Killearnan CC residents, FCB will link with about two buses an hour at Tore (original plan was with 4 buses an hour).

Scottish Rural Action: A final set of notes for the interview with SRA was prepared with the input and agreement of FCC and 17 residents and the views expressed to SRA on 4 November. The interviewer was particularly pleased to hear that the views had come from many residents in addition to FCC and passed on her thanks to them. SRA is proposing now to submit a report (to be sent to FCC) by mid-December to SG's Rural Communities Team with likely follow up in the middle of next year.

Since this interaction with SRA raised one key theme of a wide-ranging desire for more localised decision making around Scotland, Bruce prepared a short paper for FCC in advance of this meeting to open up such a discussion. Our residents too were interested in this theme but with mixed judgements, for and against, such an outcome.

FCC agreed to approach the issue from a problem-solving point of view. That is, FCC would take a view on the current key issues concerning residents (seek a fresh view in 2021) and test whether more localized decision making was part of the work necessary to ease those concerns. FCC also agreed to approach the local Area Committee within which more locally accountable decisions are now being taken and explore a greater role for FCC /community councils. Should the Area Committee follow through on a commitment to hold workshops with community groups on this issue, then FCC would certainly engage and invite Cllr Adam to a meeting to discuss.

Ferintosh Volunteers: A second litter pick is planned for Saturday 28 November. FV is setting up a Christmas Tree Trail with a launch on 20 December and use thereafter. FV is also setting up a 'Fill Culbokie with Light' project.

Email list: Up one to 655. Alastair has kindly agreed to help trying to increase the numbers over the winter period.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS (only new information included):

Objections Lodged:

20/01084 /FUL: House and camping pods, 150m NE Grianan, Braes of Dunvournie (inappropriate scale and use of crofting land; road safety concerns).

20/02232/FUL: Erection of two houses, 46m SW Drummondreach Steading, Alcaig (not brownfield).

20/02674/PIP: House, 30m South of Dalshian, Alcaig: Object (sight lines)

20/02989/FUL: Two agricultural buildings, 105m NE of Northwood, Urquhart, Alcaig: Object

20/02676/FUL: Permanent residential caravan, 105m NE of Northwood, Urquhart, Alcaig: Object

20/02677/FUL: Farmhouse, Urquhart Farm, Alcaig: Object

Comments lodged:

20/01453 /FUL: Retrospective application for woodworking business, Old Grain Store, Culbokie (restrict noise to working hours on Monday to Saturday).

New Applications:

20/03921/FUL: Two houses, Plots 4 and 5, Fowlers Croft, Culbokie: No comment

20/04224/PIP: House, 50m NE of Grianan, Brae of Kinkell: If planning condition from 2000 requiring this area to be retained as amenity in perpetuity is firmly established (Iain to research with THC), then FCC will consider a formal objection to this development.

20/04490/FUL: House extension plus dormer addition, Benleana, Rootfield Farm: No comment

Outstanding Application:

20/03421/FUL: Erection of House, north of Rose Cottage, Braes of Balnabeen: To consider hinterland and crofting policies before reply. Becky apologised for not informing the rest of FCC outside the steering group that no objection would be applied.

Other Planning Matters:

Becky reported back on a meeting with two THC planners, Cllr Angela MacLean, Karen and Bruce. FCC was seeking an explanation of how THC would be able to enforce the road improvement conditions outstanding on the Eight Acres development. The conditions have now been individually applied to each of the four remaining house plots and no occupancy can take place until the road improvements are in place. THC would welcome FCC's local knowledge at any time and agreed to share the work programme for the development (Iain to follow up).

Over the holiday period, the steering group would ensure that applications requiring attention would not run out of consultation time.

AOCB: Becky will sign off on Xmas cards for all our volunteers. FCC agreed for future meetings to be held on the second Wednesday of every month, beginning in January. With Eilidh standing down as Treasurer and Becky considering standing down as Chair in the New Year, discussions will now be needed to find Office Bearers for the New Year.

INTERACTION WITH RESIDENTS: None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Second Wednesday of every month beginning in January as online meetings and will be reviewed when physical meetings can again take place.

Contact details for comments; to join the email list; to receive minutes electronically:

Bruce Morrison, Secretary, 01349 877127; ferintoshcc30@gmail.com, <http://ferintoshcc.co.uk>;
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