

**Assynt Community Council**  
23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2017  
Community Room, Lochinver Village Hall  
7.30 pm  
**Approved Minutes (March 2017)**

**1. Present:**

D Slator-Chair(DAS), A Dickson(AD), R Kerr(RK), D McBain(DM), K Anderson(KA), V Ling(VL), M Hutchison(MH)

Others present:

M Scott(MS), M Bangor Jones(MBJ), P Tew(PT), R Macgregor(RM), T Wilson(TW), G Robertson(GR), Victor Clements(VC), M Tomlinson(MT)

**2. Apologies:**

P Jones, J Thomas, L Taylor, G Farlow, N Goldie, M Stringer

**9. Scottish Water Update:**

Philip Tew (Senior Site Supervisor), Trish Wilson (Regional Communities Advisor), Ruaridh MacGregor (Regional Communities Manager) were present to give an update and answer questions. There are 2 phases:

1. Achmelvich Road – should be complete by Monday 27.02.17
2. B869 - work is behind schedule, partly due to there being more rock than predicted but Scottish Water is confident that the roadworks part of this phase will be complete by 31.03.17

A comprehensive discussion took place, including:

From now on, work will be in the centre of the road so there will be no option to ‘squeeze past’.

Emergency vehicles, funeral traffic, school transport, Assynt Community Care transport have been enabled to travel even during closure times – this will continue. On Monday 27.03.17, the road will open at 12:45 to allow people to attend the meeting with the Scottish Ambulance Service re.patient transport

RM asked about the best methods of communication with the community. Answer-Facebook, email & posters. **Action** - AD volunteered to distribute posters if info is supplied to him.

It was stated that letters from Scottish Water do not seem to be reaching Drumbeg, Stoer & Clashnessie and that diversion signs are inadequate and need to be improved as a matter of urgency. PT stated that he is available on-site for updates

From 27.03.17 normal passive closures will apply but, depending on progress ie. if more difficult areas of rock are encountered, evenings or Sundays may have to be used. All options and all feedback have been considered. After careful consideration, it was decided by ACC that, if additional work time is required, it will be better to use Sundays than weekday evenings. ACC will be advised toward the end of the week commencing 27.02.17 if evening or Sunday work is required.

**3. Expressions of interest:** DM – Geopark

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising:**

Minutes proposed by AD and seconded by RK

**Page 1:**

Bus shelters **Action**- DAS will follow up

Patient Transport Meeting will be on Monday 27.02.17

Sheep at Stoer Cemetery: **Action** - DM will report the removal of the sheep scaring device to the police & will investigate replacing it with ‘sheep scaring’ whistles. **Action** -The sheep situation at Stoer cemetery will be on the agenda in May 2017

First Responders – **Action** – DS will contact Ricky Laird to ask for information to distribute re. what a First Responder is, will arrange for Assynt's defibrillators and First Responders to be registered with the ambulance service and a list of the whereabouts of Assynt's defibrillators to be published in the Assynt News. The SSEN defibrillator fund will come round again later this year. **Action**- First Responders scheme will be reviewed by ACC in August

**Page 2:**

Fire Service recruitment: 2 people are currently completing their training and another 3 people have recently passed their initial interview stage and fitness tests

**Page 3:**

MH, as instructed, has contacted Diane Minty (Chief Registrar, HC) to ask about the possibility of training being provided for a new registrar in Assynt. It is unlikely that this will happen – some services are available online and others can be accessed in Ullapool. For those who cannot travel to a registrar, the implication is that a service could be brought to them. **Action:** MH will continue to pursue this to gain a more detailed response

**Page 4:**

Ranger Service: At the HC Budget Meeting it was decided that 10 out of the 12 Rangers will be retained. The ACC meeting was pleased to hear, from MBJ, that it had been demanded that the annual questions/debate over the future of the Ranger Service should stop.

Local Groups – DAS will report on Community Care Assynt at the next meeting

Campervan facilities: this has been passed onto ACA. Also, Assynt Foundation are exploring the viability of providing this service at the Walkers Carpark on Canisp Road

Plaque at Viewpoint: Assynt Crofters Trust (ACT) will not install a new plaque similar to the previous one which detailed information about the mountains on view because they do not own the land South East of Strone and don't want to give the impression that they do. They plan to erect a notice/plaque which offers information about ACT. ACT also plan to install binoculars at Strone and at the lighthouse.

**Action:** DM will speak to the Geopark group about providing information about the view at Strone, perhaps as part of their Geopod initiative

DAS will contact Discover Assynt to see if they wish to work with the Geopark on a new sign.

**5. Financial Report:**

Current Account £115.69

Main/Savings Account £4573.96

Recent – payment from the Maldie Burn community fund

**6. Planning:**

GR: SNH have proposed new designations of 'Wild Land' areas. If approved, this legislation will have implications for planning ie even pipes from a hydro scheme would require planning permission

MBJ: perhaps these areas are not new designations but new descriptions of existing 'Wild Land' areas?

**Action** – GR will follow this up and report back to ACC, including details of any ongoing consultation

**7. Community Services:**

There has been no progress with the salt dump

MS pointed out that lorries are being washed in the vicinity of where the salt dump should be and asked if SEPA might be concerned about this. To the knowledge of those present, nothing has been raised about this.

Elphin – smiley face speed-responsive signs have been installed as an initial part of a programme of speed controls

It is hoped that the Loch-an-Ordain culvert crossing will be repaired by Community Services by the completion of the water mains works ie. March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017

Kirkaig Bridge Cattle Grid – the promised review is overdue as are most of the targets/dates for work that was to be monitored & supervised by W Gilfillan.

**Action** – DAS will pursue all outstanding issues ahead of the next ACC meeting

**8. Assynt Peninsula Deer Management:**

Victor Clements (VC) of 'Native Woodland Advice' is carrying out research to enable him to produce a Deer Management Plan for the Assynt Peninsula. He is aware of the history of conflict, between

several parties with an interest in the land of Assynt, around the issue of deer management and feels that the situation has been politicised unnecessarily. VC asked for information of any local issues relevant to deer management. DAS outlined the concerns that have been raised with ACC regarding deer in Lochinver and on Assynt roads ie. primarily safety/hygiene/health issues. ACC asked VC to look into the possibility of closing the boundaries of the village to deer. VC replied that closing the boundaries can be explored but there is a need to balance the economic value of deer and the needs/concerns of the community. Asked about deer on the roads, VC said that roadsides are very attractive to deer in such a bleak landscape and that not much can be done other than increased efforts to raise awareness eg. more warning signs.

**9. Scottish Water Update(continued):**

**Compensation:** An offer has been made by Caledonian Water for the company to help our community with any physical work that needs doing locally. The types of things they have in mind are path building, road repair, removal of rocks, etc- anything they already have the equipment for here.

Everyone agreed that the preparation/repair/resurfacing of the Assynt Leisure car park is a priority for the community. Other suggestions were Canisp Road repairs, path repairs and provision of campervan facilities. **Decision:** It was agreed to list all these ideas with the Assynt Leisure carpark at the top.

**10. + 12. Unapool Old School/Rockstop:**

We have already established that the tenants, not ACC, are responsible for the security of the building but the Geopark claim that the doors are rotten so it is a repair and, therefore, ACC's responsibility. It was acknowledged that ACC /the community have spent a considerable amount of money on the building and cannot continue to do so. Geopark are asking ACC to bear the cost of replacement UPVC doors (£2000) with them paying up front 50:50 with Clive Ward and then taking a rent holiday to recoup expenditure. ACC to seek quote for repair or replacement of wooden doors and then reconsider how much of the cost ACC should bear. It should be noted that the Geopark regard internal repair as their responsibility.

**11. School Path completion:**

**Action** – DS will add a request for this to his email to W Gilfillan

12. See above

13. Grant Funding – dealt with under 'First Responders' (Matters Arising from Minutes)

**14. Outreach Meetings:**

Last year, apart from Drumbeg, these were successful. So we will meet as follows,  
30<sup>th</sup> March 2017 – Elphin, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 – Drumbeg, 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017 - Stoer

**Decision:** this year, we will establish a contact with someone who is willing to publicise the meeting in the Drumbeg area

**15. Dog Waste Bags:**

If we don't keep the dispensers filled up with bags, the bins and dispensers will be removed.

AD has looked into prices etc:

20 cases (16,000 bags) will cost £450 incl.VAT

Storage? There is a possibility that they could be stored at the HC depot

**Decision:** order, as above

**Action** – AD will ask about storage at the HC depot

**16. AOCB:**

MS: When the ice plant is replaced, what will happen to the TV mast?

Perhaps it is to be installed on top of the Culag Hotel?

**Action** – DS will find out

Caplich/Muirhall Energy – a public inquiry is imminent

DM questioned, in light of the demands for compensation for road closures on the water work, how the closures associated with this development will be viewed.

ACC noticeboard lock is broken

**Action** – AD will arrange a repair

Sutherland Community Partnership survey – has been distributed. RK attended a meeting with representatives from the Sutherland Community Partnership.

**Action:** RK will email a report of the meeting to ACC

Friends of Sutherland Veterans – are having a flag raising ceremony / get-together in June 2017 at Drumuie, Golspie. They requested a donation from ACC. We have donated in the past and will suggest that, in future, the group might hold an event on the West.

**Decision** – not this year.

Meeting closed at 21:30

MH February 2017