

Assynt Community Council

30 March 2017

Elphin Community Hall

7.30pm

Approved Minutes

1) Present:

A Dickson (AD), R Kerr (RK), M Hutchison (MH), P Jones (PJ), V Ling (VL), D Slator - Chair (DS); L Taylor (LT)

Others Present:

G Farlow (GF) (Highland Council), B Badger (BB), M Bangor-Jones, L Jeffrey, S Jeffrey, B O'Hanrahan, A O'Keefe, B Pursey (BP), R Pursey (RP), M Stringer (MS), A Venters, T Wright

2) Apologies:

K Anderson (KA), D McBain (DM), J Thomas (JT)

DS welcomed everyone and introduced the new local policeman, Matt Stringer.

3) Expressions of Interest:

There were none.

4) Minutes of February Meeting and Matters arising:

VL proposed the draft minutes be accepted and AD seconded.

Bus Shelter at Lochinver Harbour: This is now in place

Fire Service Update: VL proposed that the committee thank LT for his efforts in promoting the latest Scottish Fire Service recruitment campaign

Registrar: MH has been informed there is no local replacement planned for Assynt

Ranger Service: DS reported back that 10 of the 12 Rangers will be retained for the time being. The North West Sutherland Community Council Forum have included this issue on their agenda to ensure the situation is monitored. Andy Summers will no longer be based at the Visitors' Centre in Lochinver. This is now closed but for the coming season there will be a presence at the Tourist Information desk within the premises of 'An Cala' (the old Lochinver Mission). Andy is currently looking for new office premises.

Campervans: No further action in Lochinver. Assynt Community Association (Development Group) are aware of the issue and Discover Assynt are pursuing the matter. RP reported that Elphin community continues to search for a suitable site in the village.

Strone Hill Plaque: DS has spoken to Helen Akerman of Discover Assynt and DM is in discussion with the Geopark but for now no further action.

Action: GF has this on his to-do list.

Scottish Water Update: The works are close to completion. Remedial work to the Leisure Centre car park has not yet begun but SW have been in contact. AD believes this might well be a cosmetic exercise and he is looking to obtain quotes from contractors for a grid system to help keep the area clear of standing water in the future.

Action: DS to email Ruairidh MacGregor.

Rockstop: AD has discussed the issue of external doors. A competitive quote has been obtained for a single door which will serve the same purpose as the existing double doors but require less maintenance. DS has also spoken to Dylan Bentley regarding the issue. It was agreed to go ahead with the single-door option as there appears to be no other major one-off maintenance costs once the doors are replaced.

DS informed the meeting that Clive Ward's licence to run Rockstop is about to come to an end, and due to ill health he will not continue in his existing role. The Geopark will take over the management and running of the site.

Dog Waste Bags: ACC has purchased a quantity of bags and these have already been distributed by JT and her grandson. R Fleming's job is about to be advertised, and his replacement will take over the emptying of the bins and the supply of fresh bags.

Ice Plant: DS has enquired at the Service Point about the relocation of the TV relay mast when a new ice plant is erected. There is no further information at present but AD confirmed the mast will not be attached to the

roof of the Culag Hotel. He is waiting to find out if the new relay station will provide a fuller provision of all terrestrial TV channels.

5) Local Issues (Elphin):

i) Elphin Speed Control

Several emails have been circulated regarding the Traffic Calming measures requested for the village.

BB explained how the initial campaign started by Sian Curley gained momentum and has achieved a great deal due to the involvement and support of the local community and Assynt Community Council. 12 of the initial requests have been granted, including new signage. But a number of matters have not been carried out to everyone's satisfaction, such as the exact positioning of the 'smiley face' sign, a reduction to a 30mph limit, and white lining. It was agreed the local community should continue to chase up these issues and DS promised to keep supporting the campaign since promises made by HC may need chasing up.

A discussion followed on the legality of certain requests, given the layout of the village. RS asked that speed camera signs be put up but MS pointed out that camera signs can only be erected when there are cameras in place. He suggested that white lines down the centre of the road would encourage most responsible drivers to automatically slow down. GF confirmed the new road surface is waiting for a top dressing of grit before the white lines are applied.

ii) Caplich Wind Farm

DS reported that a public consultation is due to take place in Lairg in June. The results of the ballot organised by the ACC (where the application was narrowly rejected) will be taken into consideration.

GF added that the Geopark was asked to support the application but instead agreed to raise no objections.

There were no other local issues.

6) Financial Report:

PJ read out the figures provided by KA from the latest statement dated 13th March.

Business Instant Access Reserve Account:	£4374.00	Business Current Account:	£101.59
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7) Correspondence:

There were only two Planning Applications for March, including one for a second catering van to be located in Lochinver (at Cruamer and within the harbour area).

VL referred to the number of emailed invitations the ACC receive to attend various meetings throughout Sutherland. She felt these should be circulated within the local community so any interested individuals could attend. The latest invitation refers to the CPP Roadshow currently scheduled for 9th May 11.00 to 15.00 at Kinlochbervie (booking is essential).

DS added that the ACC are regularly bombarded with on-line surveys. He felt it was difficult to share this type of information and invite participation throughout the community since many individuals do not use or have access to the internet.

Action: PJ to share each invitation with members of the local community.

This has since proved to be impractical in terms of security and confidentiality since links to individual emails will provide access to that account's entire in-box. Emails can only be forwarded to other individual email addresses. Attachments or any other information contained within the body of an email can only be made public if the entire document is copied and printed out then published by some other means.

Action: DS to raise the matter of improving community consultation in a future meeting.

8) Community Services:

DS has received a lengthy reply from Graham Mackenzie related to various incomplete projects.

AD reported that the geographical area John Clark is now responsible for has increased, placing greater pressure on him. He also has a new road crew but they are not necessarily experienced enough to carry out some of the outstanding work. AD has spoken to John and it was suggested the crew can concentrate on other items for the time being.

Action: DS to invite Graham Mackenzie to attend ACC meetings so he can address the community's concerns in person.

AD referred to the school path issue. Initially it was agreed to repair the entire length of the path. The worst section would be completed when funds became available under the Safer Routes programme. But Graham's latest email implied the remaining section of path would not be replaced as there had been an initial agreement it was not a priority. AD was at pains to point out that the ACC had not agreed half the repair would suffice.

DS and VL feel the situation is not ideal, but concluded that the remaining section is acceptable for now. Of more concern is the state of the fencing near the river due to the rusted posts. MH added that the road close by appears to be subsiding as well but John Clark has already informed AD the road is not being undermined.

Action: DS to email a reply to Graham Mackenzie on all issues raised.

9) First Responders Scheme:

This has come about following a meeting with the NHS regarding the withdrawal of weekend cover by the local General Practitioner. It was suggested the community look to setting up a team of volunteer Community First Responders to support the Ambulance Service. The first step includes posters and advertisements in the Assynt News to publicise the campaign. RP pointed out that a similar campaign in Elphin has generated no response so far.

Action: DS to send a copy of the poster to elkcal. LT also to share this information on the ACC Facebook page along with a contact email address.

DS suggested that a public meeting be arranged before any training is authorised if there is sufficient interest.

DS has also carried out a survey of the Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) within the community and it is apparent that some have not been given the regular checks that are intended. MH pointed out that since an initial training session held in 2015 there has been no further contact with those involved. DS pointed out that the door of the defibrillator located on the wall at the Spar won't open. He has been in contact with the suppliers of the device and told how to fix it. DS also informed the meeting that the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) has asked for all AEDs to be registered with them so they know where they are and can direct someone to them in an emergency and also ensure they are checked on a regular basis. But he was concerned that this may place an unwelcome legal and medical responsibility on the person who does the registering and the monthly checking.

Action: DS to pursue the matter with the SAS and to attempt to fix the door of the Spar AED.

10) Patient Transport Service

Following a recent meeting to discuss the PTS/SAS it was agreed there would be changes made to the way telephone requests are handled in future. There are also plans for a longer term redesign of the service to match requirements.

Action: DS to place a poster in the surgery requesting any feedback following telephone enquiries made to the PTS

11) Mobile Phone and increasing use by government agencies to confirm identities:

DS raised concerns that when accessing the Government Gateway on-line, individuals are asked to insert a security code that has been transmitted to their mobile phone after logging in. He wonders if this was an issue due to poor mobile reception.

PJ pointed out that the security code can also be transmitted to an individual's landline if they do not wish to share their mobile telephone number with government agencies.

12) Local Groups - Community Care Assynt:

DS gave a brief report on the success of Community Care Assynt which offers a health and wellbeing hub available to anyone living within Assynt. CCA is registered with the Care Commission to provide a registered care service to

ensure people can continue to attend the centre. This service also offers support to sufferers of dementia. A day respite service has been started which is very popular and a befriending service is about to start. Both these are supported by a grant that will only run for 12 months unless further funding can be found. The core service is funded by the NHS but there has been no increase in this allowance for the last six years.

13) Changing Meeting Dates:

VL pointed out that following the agreement not to change the date of the February meeting due to various concerns she had raised, a situation has now arisen concerning the June meeting. The AGM is scheduled to take place before that month's general meeting opens, but VL and DS are both unable to attend. It was suggested that, since a variety of formal procedures have to be gone through at the AGM, it be brought forward to the May meeting. This was agreed upon in principle.

Action: VL to check that all members are willing for this change to take place and to contact Garry Cameron for confirmation that bringing the AGM forward a month is constitutionally acceptable.

14) AOCB:

AD brought up a number of issues:

i) Continued delays in the resiting of the ATM at the Village Hall will be resolved once Vestey's lawyers sign the dispositions and these are then forwarded to RBS. The programme has fallen behind schedule, but given the ongoing problems with the existing ATM AD hopes that RBS will push this project to the top of their action list once approval is finalised.

Action: DS to confirm with RBS that this will be the case.

ii) The dog warden who is also responsible for handling dumped cars and caravans has been unable to affix notices to those left on the Cruamer car park. This is because the landlord's permission is required and no one knows who owns the land. A search is currently taking place but it was suggested this site might still be owned by the Vestey's.

iii) The exercise to remove scrap cars located at various private addresses within the community for a nominal fee has met with little response so is unlikely to be actioned.

iv) A quote has been received for the refurbishment of the bus shelter adjacent to the kirk.

Action: AD to pass on the details to GF before the 10th of April when funding will probably be made available to cover the cost.

v) 2 candidates for the forthcoming election of councillors to the Highland Council were in attendance. The hustings have been arranged for Tuesday 18th April at 19.00 in Lochinver Village Hall. An advertisement for this meeting will be placed in the Northern Times a week before and it was agreed the ACC will pay for this.

vi) BS asked if there is any further information regarding the relocation of Lochinver Post Office.

DS reported that the transfer to the Spar in Lochinver is due to take place on May 19th. Lairg Post Office has already moved to the local Spar store.

vii) DS reported that Andy Summers has come across copies of minutes from past ACC meetings while clearing out paperwork from the Tourist Information building. One suggestion was that they be transferred to the Archive section upstairs at 'An Cala'.

Action: GF to email DS regarding this matter.

viii) VL asked if GF will be attending the April meeting in view of the forthcoming elections. He confirmed that he will attend.

The meeting closed at 21.15.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, April 27th 2017 in the Committee Room of Lochinver Village Hall.

PJ March 2017

assyntcc@gmail.com

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Calendar for the rest of 2017:

May 25th (19:30)

Lochinver Village Hall Committee Room (including AGM)

June 29th (19:30)

Drumbeg Village Hall

July

No meeting

5

August 31st (19:30)

Lochinver Village Hall Committee Room

September 28th (19:30)

Stoer Village Hall

October 26th (19:30)

Lochinver Village Hall Committee Room

November 30th (19:30)

Lochinver Village Hall Committee Room

December

No meeting