

Assynt Community Council

27 September 2018
 Community Room, Lochinver Village Hall
 7.30pm
 Approved Minutes

1) Present:

K Anderson (KA), M Hutchison Chair (MH), R Kerr (RK), P Jones (PJ), D McBain (DM), D Slator (DS), L Taylor (LT)

Others Present:

R Pope Highland Council (RP), T Urry Highland Council (TU), A Pellant Assynt Development Trust (AP)

2) Apologies:

K Currie Highland Councillor (KC), V Ling (VL), D McBain (DM), J Thomas (JT)

3) Expressions of Interest:

None.

4) Minutes of August Meeting and Matters arising:

Two minor amendments were made to the August Draft minutes. The venue of the August meeting had been incorrectly printed as Lochinver when the meeting actually took place in Elphin. And the bill for the Rock Stop repair work was £650.00.

LT proposed the minutes be accepted and KA seconded.

Matters arising were as follows:

4 i. Litter

The litter pick-up will now take place on 29th September, weather permitting. There was some concern regarding access to the foreshore at Baddidarach and between the Caberfeidh and the old Post Office and the need for insurance to cover those participating in the clean-up. It was suggested the ACC's public liability insurance would prove adequate since the work is being carried out under the auspices of the ACC.

ii. Clashnessie Beach Access:

RK reported that the planning application has now been acknowledged by HC but there will be an extra cost of £133 for placing an advertisement in the press informing the public of the application.

DS referred to the ongoing issue between the ACC and Matt Dent regarding the Clashnessie Falls access sign. Matt Dent has now been invited to the October ACC meeting to explain his oversight in informing the Community Council of the site meeting and local consultation.

iii. Playpark:

Action: LT to contact Garry Campbell regarding the gate at the playpark.

x. NC500 (Drumbeg):

LT has received a set of photographs from the local community highlighting problems caused by inconsiderate visitors travelling along the NC500.

TU explained that a sub-group is currently looking at the negatives and positives associated with the popularity of the NC500. Driver education is a major factor and the HC will consider adding more signs instructing visitors on the correct use of passing place. A request was passed on for the local community to be consulted before a final decision is taken on their placement.

7 ii Parking outside the Surgery and the Caberfeidh:

Local police officer Matt Stringer has promised to get back in touch with LT regarding this issue. It was pointed out that two local car-owners parked on either side of the main street alongside the surgery causing a traffic hold up even though there were spaces available in the car park nearby. One issue is the lack of clearly marked disabled spaces in this car park as the current markings have worn away.

PJ also pointed out that the number of campervans using this busy car park or parking in the shopping spaces along the main street aggravate the problem. The huge Cruamer car park is empty most of the time because it's not adequately signposted.

LT has received permission to erect proper signage instructing all caravan and campervan owners to use Cruamer. RP pointed out that any parking instructions would be unofficial and impossible to enforce without the relevant Traffic Order in place, but most drivers would hopefully take note and act accordingly.

Action: LT to pursue the matter.

11 Toilet Closures Update:

MH has received further correspondence from Kinlochbervie Community Council. A letter has been sent to Andy Summers and Debbie Sutton but there has been no response to date. There were fears that the HC might produce a new report without proper local consultation and that a change in policy could be put into operation without proper consideration of the number of objections to the proposed closures.

Action: PJ to write to Andy Summers and Debbie Sutton expressing the ACC's concerns and supporting Kinlochbervie's attempts to get HC to reconsider. Concerns are also to be raised on how long the petition objecting to the closures will be taken account of, and how effective the comfort scheme has been.

12 ii Assynt Development Trust Update

AP has already forwarded a report to the ACC identifying the ADT's plans for community asset transfers.

It was agreed that this is still in its early stages. In the meantime the ADT are looking at conducting a public survey amongst the local community on this issue either by mailshot or online using SurveyMonkey.

AP also informed the meeting of a Democracy Matters event due to take place on 9th October and gave a brief update on the 'Cludgie Project'.

iv Defibrillators:

PJ passed on concerns that the existing signage for the defibrillators in the village is inadequate.

Action: DS to check with 'Lucky to be Here' if there are suitable signs available and to obtain a price before the ACC considers whether or not to purchase. It was also suggested a rain-proof cover be obtained for the defibrillator outside the Spar.

vi Animals on Culag Park:

MH has spoken to the relevant authorities regarding the banning of dogs on the park and their advice was limited to placing a sign educating dog owners of the toxicity of dog poo.

10 Centenary Fields Status

MH is still in the process of applying for funding on behalf of the ACC.

13 AOCB

i Sheep at Stoer Cemetery

Action: DM to purchase more scarers and put in place.

iv Broken seats and table in the play park

Action: LT to arrange for Caroline to remove them.

v **Bus Timetable**

DS has contacted David Summers with a view to adjusting the timings. One of the problems of the proposed change is that there is no driver available for the Lochinver mini-bus to do the late run to school and so no option to use this to take paying passengers back to Ullapool the same day.

David Summers was not aware of the failure of Saturday afternoon bus services in Ullapool to connect. He will look into it.

vi **Police Response**

It was agreed that the matter raised in August be left for the local police to handle.

In future anyone requesting the police respond to an emergency should telephone 999 rather than 101. This information has already been placed in the Assynt News.

14 **Community Council Scheme Review**

MH has been invited to attend a meeting on behalf of the ACC on 9th October.

PJ asked if in future he can place brief updates in the Assynt News once a month rather than once a fortnight.

5) **Financial Report**

KA read out the current balances:

Business Current Account - £187.75. Business Instant Access Reserve Account - £6392.00

6) **Correspondence**

i An email has been received from the Forestry Grant Scheme notifying the ACC of an application from the Ledbeg Planting Proposal.

Action: PJ to respond on behalf of the ACC offering full support.

7) **Response to Planning Applications**

There were no contentious planning applications on file.

8) **Electric Car Charging Points**

RP has visited two potential sites in Lochinver - the Cruamer car park and the Leisure Centre car park and both were considered suitable. The Cruamer car park site is close to an existing transformer which might make connection to an existing electricity supply less problematic. But both will be given due attention.

Action: RP to obtain quotes for both sites and report back.

RP also mentioned the proposed replacement of the radio mast next to the water tank which would improve Freeview reception, mobile phone reception and emergency services communication.

9) **Winter Road Maintenance Programme**

KA passed on the ACC's thanks for the completion of the new road surface at Lyne.

TU then gave an update on HC's plans for improving winter road maintenance in Assynt. Following a review of last winter's issues one suggestion was to encourage more local communities to participate in the Winter Resilience Scheme. It was also agreed that the weekend gritting service be improved allowing main routes to be gritted on Sundays.

Other proposals specific to Assynt included a better share of the workload. An Ullapool-based vehicle would take over responsibility for the stretch of road between Ledmore and Craggie. There would also be a

small pick-up truck in place to grit the road between Lochinver village and the primary school ahead of the scheduled run later in the morning.

LT pointed out these proposals are the first positive responses to suggestions made by the local community on how HC can improve the service. Graham Mackenzie will map out the schedules for all gritting vehicles and DS asked that the ACC be given advance notice of the new timetable before it is set in stone to ensure it is practical and effective for both the gritter drivers and the local community.

The new salt stance will also help reduce the loss of road salt through exposure to the weather. RP pointed out that despite apparent concerns, no weather-proof curtain across the opening is necessary.

10) Community Services

The following were discussed:

- i Road signs at Ardvreck Castle warning drivers of pedestrians
- ii The cutting back of trees overhanging various stretches of footpath in the village
- iii The large pothole in front of the cattle grid along the approaches to Lochinver
Action: DS to contact TU for an update on the cattle grid replacement
- iv The split in the Duke's Stone at the roadside en route to Strathan.
Action: KA to ask Robbie Ardroy or Gordon Nairn whether or not this can be repaired.

11) AOCB

i Proposed shift changes to Scottish Ambulance crews are likely to have a negative impact on local cover. There could well be an increase in the number of instances where crew members have to stand down in order to fulfil their break periods, placing greater strain on existing resources. Despite a recruitment campaign, the lack of trained paramedics to replace a retiring crew member might also result in more single-driver ambulances operating in the area. In the case of certain emergency situations, technicians will have to wait for trained paramedics to decide on the appropriate treatment, and single-manned ambulances cannot be used to transport patients.

Action: DS to contact the SAS on behalf of the ACC to express our concerns.

ii Residents in Drumbeg have expressed concern about the deterioration in their Broadband speeds. RK has made several complaints to BT and each time the engineers carry out tests they assure him there is no problem. PJ added that the weekly outreach Post Office service to Drumbeg has also suffered due to this issue and complaints have been made to BT.

iii MH asked if the litter from the foreshore then placed in a skip at the harbour will be sorted into recycling and landfill waste prior to collection.

Action: LT believes the waste is sorted once it's delivered to the waste handling site, but he will check with Andy Shaw,

iv LT referred to the fence at the playpark that blew down following a recent storm.

Action: LT to get prices for green twine and fence posts needed for repair and to pass the information on to all ACC members so a decision can be made whether or not to fund the purchase.

The meeting closed at 21.20.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 25th October at Stoer Community Hall at 19.30.

PJ August 2018