

# KINLOCHBERVIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## Minutes of Meeting held on 02/06/09 at Taigh Ceilidh

**Present:** Graham Wild (Chairman), John Mann (Vice-Chairman), Christine MacKenzie (Treasurer), Mairi Eastcroft, Murdo MacPherson, Sylvia Mackay, Michael Otter

**Members of the public present:** Stuart McHugh

**Also present:** Robbie Rowantree (Highland Councillor) George Farlow (Highland Councillor), Elaine McHugh (Secretary)

### **Agenda Items**

#### **(1) Apologies**

Apologies were received from Joan Mackay.

#### **(2) Minutes 05/05/09**

The Minutes were proposed for approval by Sylvia and seconded by John and duly approved.

#### **(3) Matters Arising from the Minutes**

##### **(a) Patient Transport Service**

Still awaiting the conclusion of the Consultation period. Cllr Farlow mentioned the case of an elderly chap living in Lairg, driving to Drumbeg to pick up a patient and back again, all for 40p per mile. He pointed out that up to 10K miles a year there is no tax liability, however, it would not take too long to reach this maximum if you lived on the East or West coast. Cllr Rowantree advised that an approach could be made to the Revenue to see if they felt that 40p per mile was a reasonable amount and whether it could be increased. Michael Otter mentioned a meeting he had had with John Thurso MP with a small delegation to put forward their concerns regarding patient transport. John Thurso was sympathetic and Michael has subsequently been corresponding with him. Michael asked the meeting if it was happy for him to pursue this issue on behalf of the Community Council, otherwise he would continue on his own. The meeting agreed but asked that they be kept updated.

##### **(b) Marina**

Cllr Farlow confirmed that consideration of the original of the three plans was in hand and he would seek Tony Usher's view. He also confirmed that there is no money in the Capital Plan and Cllr Rowantree added that there is increased pressure on revenue projects for the foreseeable future and it will be more difficult to progress issues. It might be necessary to attract match funding. The meeting enquired as to how much revenue the new jetty might attract and could it be monitored. It was considered possible, however, as there is no Harbourmaster present at the weekends it could be difficult to get a full picture. It might be possible to use the CCTV and Graham would speak to John George or Rachel. It was thought only fair that all who use the jetty should pay a mooring fee.

##### **(c) Fishermen's Mission**

The meeting was concerned that nothing appears to be happening with the Mission building and would welcome an update. Graham said he would be willing to speak to the owner to ascertain the situation.

##### **(d) Lay-by at Rhiconich**

Peter Gordon (Waste Management, Highland Council) confirmed that there were no plans to remove any bins and that bins are forthcoming for the Rhiconich Lay-by and the All-ability picnic area.

##### **(e) Store for slaughtered animals**

Graham reported that the individual concerned who first raised this issue is planning to organise his own store. However, the meeting will keep this initiative in mind.

#### **(f) Viewpoint**

A discussion took place following the receipt of a letter from a member of the Committee distancing themselves from this project. The member felt we should not continue given the feelings and refusal of the crofters concerned and thought it inappropriate to take it to the landowner. However, the Chairman felt strongly that the project would be an asset to the Community and the site was perfect. It was also stressed that taking it to the landowner was only an option and **every effort would be made to resolve the situation with the crofters themselves**. The meeting agreed that the Council carry on to achieve its aims and work with the people to examine their concerns in detail, discuss the pros and cons and come to a compromise if need be. It was felt that as a Community we need to be positive and welcome such projects to avoid being overlooked for any initiatives in the future.

#### **(g) Signs**

The go-ahead has been received through Ian Moncrieff's office and offers to erect these have been received.

#### **(h) Community Bus**

Funding has been approved by the TECS committee and we have the authority to go ahead and place an order for the bus to be available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. £73K has been awarded plus £3K from the Transport Forum.

#### **(i) Sheep**

Graham has spoken to the crofter concerned, who has been erecting fences, and he says that the situation will improve. The crofter did say he was also looking at ways to prevent the sheep entering KLB village. Graham invited him to attend a future meeting.

#### **(j) Police Cover**

Graham spoke with Ian Sutherland who confirmed arrangements were in place to cover his sick leave. However, the person responsible for this coming Thursday is unable to make it, therefore GW will speak again to Ian to address this.

#### **(k) Port Committee**

A successful meeting was held and reported upon. A copy is available from Graham or Christine who agreed to email a copy to Cllrs Rowantree and Farlow.

#### **(l) CDP/Community Company**

An AGM of the CDP will be held on Wednesday 3 June and will include discussions on whether the CDP should disband. Following on from this the inaugural meeting of the Community Company will take place on 8th July. A notice of this meeting will be served to individual members along with a displayed public notice.

### **(4) Treasurer's Report**

The brochure is reduced to £52 in the red, the Community Council bank account holds £1,164.00, the Christmas Lights Fund £1,083.00 and the War Memorial Fund £187.99.

### **(5) Correspondence**

The following items of correspondence had been received and those of a public nature were available for inspection at the North and West Sutherland Advice and Information Service at the harbour:

1. Email Andy Mackay reply with comments on Constitution. Plus Correspondence for next Ward Forum on 30 May.
2. Email Liz Manson - Notes of North West & Sutherland LHP Meeting of 02/04/09.
3. Letters Highland Council enclosing:
  - a) copy of *Development Plan Scheme 2009* plus summary leaflet.
  - b) copy of Draft Supplementary Guidance: Education & the New Residential Development
4. Email William Sutherland (Sutherland Partnership) re. "Village SOS" – BBC Initiative. A UK-wide rural regeneration project forming the basis of a BBC One six-part series.
5. Email, Anne Macrae with Agenda for CSER PARC Committee on 19 May 2009.
6. Email, Fran Loots – JMT – Updates on various things plus two new blogs.
7. Invite to attend Environmental Law Centre Seminar on *Common Good - Understanding law and accounting practices for common good*.

8. Email, Geraldine Sutherland attaching Agendas for:
  - Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross Licensing Committee meeting 26.05.09, Golspie
  - Highland Licensing Board – Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross, 26.05.09, Golspie
9. Email, Liz Manson attaching Notes of N&WS LHP Meeting held 07/05/09.
10. Email, Robbie Rowantree with information on the Registration of Septic Tanks.
11. Email, Liz Manson with Agenda for N&WSLHP Meeting on 04/06/09 at Rhiconich Hotel.
12. Letter from *Enquire* (The Scottish Advice Service for Additional Support for Learning) enclosing a poster and request to display information on our website, etc.
13. Letter, Michael Otter with comments re Viewpoint project.
14. Email, NHS with Link to website for Team Update for May. This will be sent electronically in the future.
15. Email, Liz Manson attaching discussion papers for Thursday 04/06/09 LHP meeting:
  - a) "Concept Paper" on the future use of the Assynt Centre
  - b) Copy letter sent to Dr Andreas Herfurt re Bluebell Bed from Dr Macdougall and Gwen Gould, Community Nurse.
  - c) Email, Linda Munro, further discussion paper on Bluebell Bed

With regard to Item 1 – Constitution. Elections must be held this year and are due in October. Graham will pass to the Committee a copy of the Model Constitution sent by Andy Mackay.

## **(6) AOCB**

### **(a) Registration of Septic Tanks**

Cllr Rowantree updated the meeting on the need for residents to register their septic tank with SEPA, although many were not aware of this. There is currently a charge for this (around £100) however, in order to get people to register they are charging only £1.00 as an incentive. If a tank is not registered it could effect the future sale of the property. There is a Registration form, however, it is quite complex and some may feel they need help. One idea was for applicants, with assistance, to use the computer in the Ceilidh House to fill out the form online ([www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk)) but it might be easier to handwrite it. Anyone who does require help in completing the form can contact Frances Gunn or Ronnie Lansley at CVS North. Telephone number 01971 511783.

### **(b) Volunteer Car Drivers**

Michael Otter would like to hear from anyone who has experienced problems with patient transport, ie booking, cars not turning up on time, etc.

### **(c) Alarm Help Call System**

Michael Otter is concerned about the huge increase in the annual charge for this system and the fact that it is now based on what one can afford. Cllr Rowantree explained that in the past the service received an element of subsidy, however, the decision was taken by Highland Council Social Service to change this to a system based on ability to pay, thus spreading the costs overall and achieving full cost recovery. This has resulted in substantial savings that can be spent on a variety of other initiatives benefiting those with special needs. There are three levels of charges, all of which are capped. Michael will report back to those who raised the issue with him.

### **(d) NHS Endowment Funds**

Donations given to the KLB/Scourie Medical Practice are currently forwarded to NHS Highland for investment into Endowment Funds for the Practice. However, following the recent financial crisis, the value of these has been reduced by 25%. Therefore, it has been requested by the Practice that it sets up it own bank account into which these monies can be deposited in future and used to purchase equipment for the practice direct. The account, which could be a type of "Friends Of..." scheme, would require three external signatories to be appointed to authorise withdrawal of funds, two of these being Kinlochbervie Community Council committee members. The Community Council will not be involved in how the Practice uses the money. The Committee felt this was an excellent idea. Graham agreed to update Dr Berry and also discuss with which financial institution the money should be deposited, and whether we should publicise the scheme locally. Cllr Rowantree said he would write to NHS Highland to find out more about these endowments and also look at other "Friends Of" schemes.

**(e) Houses for Teachers**

A question was raised by a member of the meeting as to whether we could ask the Council to hold the current empty properties for imminent incoming teachers. It was pointed out by Cllr Farlow that Housing Allocation Policy criteria for allocating houses normally meant the name at the top of the list was the most eligible. Cllr Rowantree said that he would speak to the Regional Housing Manager but that it was impossible to promise a house to a teacher. Mention was made of the Key House whereby key workers to the area were given the opportunity to rent for a period of six months on the understanding that they were actively seeking to build, buy or rent a property in the community. Cllr Rowantree agreed to raise this issue with Ronnie Macrae of the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust.

**(f) Submarine incident**

Cllr Farlow asked for an update on the recent incident at sea involving a fishing boat and a French submarine. He expressed concern about no longer having a circling boat, which might have helped in avoiding the incident. Graham agreed to invite David Halpin, MOD Liaison Officer, once again to a future meeting.

**(g) Forthcoming Meetings**

Cllr Farlow brought to the Committee's attention forthcoming meetings of the Scottish Government's Draft Crofting Bill Consultation. These will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> June at Inverness (Craigmonie Hotel), 9<sup>th</sup> June at Lairg Community Hall, and 10<sup>th</sup> June at Durness Village Hall, 7.30 pm.

He also reported that the Highland Council's full report will be available at the end of July.

**(9) Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Community Council was scheduled for 7.00 p.m. on 07/07/09 at Taigh Ceilidh.

The meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.