

KINLOCHBERVIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on 03/03/09 at Taigh Ceilidh

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

Members of the public present: Elaine McHugh

Also present: Robbie Rowantree (Highland Councillor) and Isobel Patience (Secretary)

Agenda Items

(1) Apologies

None.

(2) Minutes 03/02/09

The Minutes were proposed for approval by Michael, seconded by Murdo and duly approved.

(3) Matters Arising from the Minutes

(a) Marina

Tony Usher had confirmed that the new pontoons would be complete by the end of March.

(b) Website

Members indicated their appreciation of the quality of the new website, although more information needed to be supplied to the webmaster and he still required passwords to access the data on the old website. As the new site was being run at no cost, it was suggested that a charge of £15.00 should be levied on advertisers and the proceeds passed on to the webmaster as an honorarium.

(c) Fences at Oldshoremore

Matt Dent had advised that the provision of a new fence with access gate was now in hand.

(d) Royal Mail

A letter had been received from Royal Mail confirming that the scheduled collection time for postboxes in the Community Council area was 12 noon, and that mail collected was taken to Inverness via Lairg for 4.50 p.m. There was no longer any earlier collection, either ad hoc or official.

(e) Community Bus

Cllr Rowantree advised that the grant monies would not now be rubber-stamped until the TECS Committee meeting in May. He was currently investigating whether funds processing could nevertheless start now subject to the terms of a letter of comfort and undertook to confirm the position.

(f) Robert MacBeath Memorial Project

Cllr Rowantree reported that the project had received maximum points from the scoring panel and he looked forward to being able to report further on an award of funds for this initiative.

(g) Viewpoint

This proposal was being discussed by the Badcall Inchard crofters and had received some initially favourable reactions, although it was understood that contacting some of the crofters may be problematic. The Clerk had agreed to reply to Graham with a collective response.

(4) Patient Transport Service

Linda Kennedy of the PTS was unable to travel to Kinlochbervie in the evening but had provided some suitable dates during the day. It was agreed to meet her on Monday 23 March at 1 p.m. in the village hall and to invite attendance from members of the public, other Community Councils, the Local Health Partnership, one of the Councillors for the ward, the Ward Manager and Jamie Stone MSP.

There followed some debate about why some drivers had given up volunteering. It was unclear whether this was because of the time commitment involved or the expense of providing the service, leading to divided opinions on whether the payment of 40p per mile actually covered expenses or resulted in a net loss.

As proposed by Michael, it was agreed to compile a list of matters for discussion for issue to Ms Kennedy in advance to enable her to prepare fully for the meeting. This could include (a) more attractive remuneration for volunteer drivers, (b) details of actual monies spent on the services in remote rural areas, (c) provision of a PTS minibus based in the north-west and (d) clear advance communication between driver and patient.

(5) Kinlochbervie Community Company

Graham invited Members to propose a suitable project for the community company to undertake, such as a community buyout of Kinlochbervie Estate. It was also suggested that if the Bijou shop were to be offered for sale, it might make a good Tourist Information point and community office for the village.

Some debate took place over whether any further undertakings would require the appointment of a Project Officer or whether volunteers could be found to help out. It was acknowledged that volunteers were hard to find, but similarly recruitment of an employee could not be guaranteed to deliver a suitable candidate.

Michael took the view that priority should be given to completing existing community initiatives satisfactorily on before moving onto other things. At that stage, a realistic project which was readily achievable with voluntary help could be embarked upon rather than risk public money on a venture that may not succeed.

Cllr Rowantree suggested that it would be helpful to discuss any ideas at the Sutherland Summit to be held in Lairg in April. Further inspiration could be had from the report produced by Issie MacPhail following community consultation some years ago.

It was agreed that Graham should call an AGM of the Community Company in the near future so that this matter and others could be discussed by Directors and company members.

(6) Treasurer's Report

There was no change to the position reported as at 03/02/09.

(7) 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. Letter from Scottish Gas: Scottish Government Central Heating Programme
2. E-mail from Andy Mackay: Keep Scotland Beautiful 2009 Springclean
3. Invitation to Community Council Seminar, Lairg, 05/03/09
4. E-mail from CVS North: Sutherland Summit for Community Councils 27/04/09
5. Letter from Royal Mail re collection and delivery times
6. Highland Environmental Network Newsletter, February 2009
7. NHS Highland Team Update newsletter, Issue 55
8. E-mail from Cllr Farlow: Stagecoach bus service
9. North and West Sutherland Local Health Partnership Agenda, 05/03/09.

(8) AOCB

(a) Mission Memorial Plaques

These had been removed from the former Mission building and were in store at the Harbour Office pending relocation to a suitable new home. Christine agreed to list the families concerned with a view to seeking consent to display them in the foyer of the Kinlochbervie Fishselling building.

(b) James McGrory Smith

Ronnie Lansley was understood to be looking for people who had known James McGrory Smith, formerly of Strathcailleach and Kinlochbervie, in connection with a proposed book about his life.

(c) Ceilidh House

It was agreed to donate £50.00 to the Ceilidh House in return for its use as a venue for meetings.

(d) MOD

Graham undertook to invite David Halpin of the MOD to a future meeting of the Community Council to discuss concerns over the safety of small boats in the vicinity of Cape Wrath during military exercises.

(9) Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Community Council was scheduled for 7.00 p.m. on 07/04/09 at Taigh Ceilidh.

The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.