

Ardross Community Council

Minutes of Management Meeting

11th March 2024

8.00pm

Ardross Community Hall

Present: Peter Allen (Chair), John Edmondson (Secretary), Alison Gordon (Treasurer), David Bentley, George Mackay and Elliott Blaauw.

Jen Campbell and Jenny Wychrij (Ardross Primary Parent Council)

James McDougall, Claire Brett, Derek Russell, Clair Bale, Sheila Campbell-Lloyd and Richard Smith

Meeting started at 8.00 pm.

1. There were apologies from Emma Chisholm, Cllr Maxine Smith and Sandra Cunliffe.
2. The February Management Meeting Minutes were approved. David Bentley had attended and the Minutes were amended.
3. The Secretary had approached Edderton CC to see some improvement on the B9176 maintenance and safety improvement. Unfortunately Ardgay CC was in abeyance. But the Secretary wanted to know if there were any key issues that should be discussed other than the slippery roads. Drainage and potholes were the main problems.

Elliott Blaauw gave an update and explanation about the Nature Sites programme being run by the Highland Environment Forum. They wrote and asked about any nature sites we had in terms of flora and fauna. The idea was to map these areas to ensure that they were protected and helped along. Elliott Blaauw suggested that we commission an audit, a desktop survey to basically know what we got and explained how to go about it. This would have to be funded by the Ardross Community Council. There was a lot that could be done as a desktop study based on local knowledge and of course the Ardross History Project to feed into this. Elliot Blaauw offered to find out information as to who could do it, how much it would cost, and think about the brief if this is what the Community Council wanted. Clare Bale pointed out that there some very interesting bird species for instance. Peter Allen suggested that everyone feed into this information, David Bentley also thought that the high level information was from the people who live and work in Ardross. It was agreed that **Elliott Blaauw** should continue with driving this forward and to begin to make enquiries as to how to get the Audit done.

We are still waiting to hear back from Iain Moncrieff regarding the Dalnavie cross-roads and other matters.

4. Jen Campbell gave a brief resumé of the Community Transport situation referring to an email previously circulated. The idea was that the School would have responsibility for the mini-bus but the idea it was for the whole community to use. But this would allow the Primary School to do more extra-curricular activities. The level of the funding from the Highland Council was not clear and **Jen Campbell** was to find out. But leasing a vehicle would cost at least £8,000 (+VAT?) per year. Peter Allen said that whilst funding the initial outlay could be a possibility, the ongoing running costs and administration would have to be sustainable and come from other sources. These were the conditions of community benefit. The Highland Council sometimes give money towards community transport. The Community Council had looked at this some time ago and the legislation and logistics was complicated. So how it was all going to work practically was important. It was agreed that **Jen Campbell** to try and get more information and financial details as to how it would all work, and the possible demand from the community for transport. What were the options for renting the bus out as they do in Moray for instance and of course all ability access would be an important aspect of any choice of option too. And of course for 12 weeks a year the bus would not be used by the school, so may be it would be cheaper to hire a bus every week during school time rather than lease.

Clair Bale wanted to express her concern about the bridge at Lealty that was collapsing, it's a lifeline bridge important to those in Boath. Some work had been done, but an important keystone had fallen, and remedial work stopped. So urgent attention was required. The **Secretary** agreed to chase this.

Coire Na Cloiche Wind Farm was being sold. We had received reassurances that the Community Benefit would continue as normal and be an obligation on the purchaser to continue with these.

Other correspondence previously circulated was noted.

5. The Treasurer distributed and presented her Report the contents of which were noted.

Applications were still coming in for Energy Payment Grants. There had been no income.

A total of £109,277.83 since April 1st 2023 had been made to eligible projects.

6. David Bentley mentioned that the bridges at Cuillich had been swept away. This was a not uncommon occurrence. The bridges were Novar Estate for their fishing. The **Secretary** agreed to make enquiries.
7. An application for a 120m met mast on Glancalvie had been received, with the intention of building a wind farm on a site close to the Glenmorie wind farm. It was important that the met mast was only a temporary structure.

There was a separate application for a new 20km water mains being submitted, but at pre-application stage. This was only being built because of the hydrogen plant, and there had been a Public Information Event. There was general dismay about the Hydrogen Plant was in totally the wrong place and it was the only reason that the water pipes were being installed. The Scotsburn will be closed for up to 6 months. And 12 months of single file traffic on the B9176. The Cromarty Hydrogen Project would be constructed at the same time and there was nothing in the Traffic Management Plan about the conflation of these two. There was concern about the flora on the Scotsburn road. In places the road would need to be opened up and repaired.

There was concern that the water pipe would not be required and the Cromarty Hydrogen Plant would go for an water extraction licence which is why we asked for a condition to be placed so that a public consultation took place, which wouldn't happen if just SEPA was asked.

The whole project would be extremely disruptive, and there was no community payback. The Ardross water mains relied on an old and too small a cistern. We should be getting improvements to our water system on the back of this.

On another matter there was a Public Information Event being held by SSEN on March 19th at the Hall about the pylons.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting.

Next Meeting is a Management Meeting on the **8th April 2024 8.00pm** at the Ardross Community Hall

ITEM	To Whom	WHO	Date	Status
ACCESS	Matt Dent HC	JME	Feb	OPEN
FLS	FLS	EB	Feb	OPEN
B9176	Edderton CC	JME	Feb	OPEN
BANK ACCOUNT	Santander	AG	Feb	OPEN
ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY	Conservation Group	EB	March	OPEN
DALNAVIE CROSS-ROADS	Roads Department	JME	March	OPEN
B9176	Edderton CC	JME	March	OPEN
LEALTY BRIDGE	Iain Moncrieff	JME	March	OPEN

