

# Ardross Community Council [ACC]

## Minutes of Management Meeting

10<sup>th</sup> June 2024

### After AGM

## Ardross Community Hall

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

Jen Campbell

Cllr Maxine Smith and Liam Clancy (Highland Council)

James McDougall, Claire Brett, Derek Russell, Clair Bale, Claire and Simon Walsh-Jones. Ian Duncan (later)

Meeting started at 8.00 pm.

1. There were apologies from Emma Chisholm and Sandra Cunliffe.
2. The May Management Meeting Minutes were approved.
3. The Secretary explains that he had written to Studio Lambert and the Highland Council [THC] about the road closures for filming the Traitors. THC admitted that that Studio Lambert did not have permission and were concerned about the road closure signs which should not have been put up. Studio Lambert had lied about the fact that they were doing road works. It all could have been handled better by Studio Lambert and had it all been a lot more low key and had we been consulted then most if us would have put up with a few minutes delay.

Another matter was the closure of the Core Paths and car park for the Fyrish monument. Closing a Core Path requires a particular process to be followed. It is a rare event. Clair Bale had sent a photo of a notice informing the closure of the Core Path at Fyrish otherwise we would not have known anything about it. This requires THC to be consulted, and in turn the Local Access Forum. Local Members were informed, but not the local community councils. A notice is meant to have been put up on THC website, which was not done until after the event. The Local Access Forum has not met since 2021, and the membership is not published. The Secretary has asked Liam Clancy from Support Team to find out who were members of the Local Access Forum. Again it is an example of how the local Community Council should have been consulted and Members should have suggested this. Summer time is a popular time for sponsored walks going up the Fyrish monument and something that the consultees would not know about. Neither had they thought about traffic going to visit the monument and not being able to turn round when they were turned away. It was agreed that the **Secretary** write to Studio Lambert and ask that if they are returning to film that they come and meet the ACC beforehand to try and iron out any

issues and ensure good channels of communication and ask that we be consulted in the future.

Iain Moncrieff had sent a reply to us which had been circulated after a prompting from Liam Clancy of THC. The email had been circulated earlier. For some reason Iain Moncrieff was offering the services of THC to draw up an acceptable solution to the Dalnavie cross-roads, but this would be some time in production. The Lealty Bridge was still with the engineers. The school lights had been mended so they were permanently on. And essentially someone was going to have to die on the bad stretch of the B9176 north of the snow gates before the Roads Authority would take any action. It was agreed that the **Secretary** write again to Iain Moncrieff. **Clair Bale** offered to write to THC and report back about the Lealty Bridge.

James McDougall mentioned that the position of the entrance to the Strathroy windfarm on a corner of the B9176 was down to SEPA and deep peat, so it wasn't EnergieKontor's fault. However John Edmondson argued that if the deep peat meant that a suitable entrance for the windfarm which was safe couldn't been found then maybe the windfarm shouldn't have been built as it was an unsuitable site.

4. Most of the correspondence received had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

Emma Chisholm had circulated an email regarding the Energy Efficiency Project and was asking for comments on an entry proposed for the next Newsletter.

The **Secretary** mentioned that there was a bus now going to and from Inverness from the Dalnavie cross-roads, it was the Durness service bus.

The Chair informed the ACC that he was going to a meeting between Scottish Power and the Directors of the Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm Community Benefit Ltd.

Other correspondence previously circulated was noted.

5. Elliott Blaauw gave an update on the Ecology Survey. Alison Gordon and David Bentley had met up with Cathel to interview him. Elliott had had a further meeting to go through the next steps and hand over the EIA's for the various windfarms in Ardross. It was hoped to also have various meeting with people in the community who have a special interest in the ecology of the area. It was suggested an open drop-in meeting to be held at the hall to get people's stories. Cathel was keen to meet people from the community. Cathel's first impression was there was a large variety of different environments within the ACC boundary.
6. There were long and varied discussions about the School Transport Report [STR] distributed earlier. The STR outlined the problems faced by the Ardross Primary in transporting pupils to activities outwith the school. Comparative costs between the current Community Bus and private hire were given. The Community Bus based in Alness was getting to end of life and couldn't be relied upon either mechanically or because of other bookings so the school was looking for alternatives. Everything was on the table. Including ad hoc private hire, lease of a vehicle or outright purchase of a vehicle. But the outright purchase of a vehicle meant that an almost dedicated person to manage it. There was also the problem that driving licences issued after 1997 were only valid for 8 passengers.

It still wasn't clear to the ACC how much funding the school actually received from THC to cover these costs via the DMS payments, nor whether the costs of the lease

quoted included VAT. Some community councillors were of the mind that some of actives requiring transport were activities that THC should be paying for, others were concerned that community funds were being used for running costs, and some wanted to see a solution for the wider community. Although there was some doubt as to whether a dedicated Ardrross community bus would be used very much.

It was unclear from which community benefit funds any money could be granted.

The Ardrross Primary Parent Council [APPC] and not really considered the wider community use as this would take time for consultations and the School's need was more immediate. The APPC would raise funds but the possible purchase of a vehicle was impossible without the promise of funding from elsewhere. Kiltearn Primary with a similar roll call [actually 117 compared to Ardrross Primary's 27] had had £6,000 donated by the Kiltearn Community Council. This compared to the £3,000 donated by the ACC.

The APPC were wanting to get a dedicated bus for the school, but there were not any firm proposals before the ACC yet and the APPC promised to go away and refine their request.

The **Chair** suggested that he mention whether SSE [Scottish Power] would sponsor the proposed school bus at the meeting he was going to on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

7. The Treasurer distributed and presented her Report the contents of which were noted. The Treasurer had also in the immediately proceeding meeting gone through the accounts.

A total of £500 since April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 had been made to eligible projects.

The Santander Account was yet to be opened.

8. David Bentley presented a briefing paper about Local Place plans. These were plans and aspirations as to how the land should be used for the community that fed in to the Highland Wide Local Development Plan. It was a proactive way of shaping the community of Ardrross across many facets: planning, ecology, recreation etc. This would require significant community engagement. Some communities have already done this. It was an opportunity to shape the area, and THC would require to take this into account when making decisions. THC had resources to help.

It was suggested that a drop-in meeting was held to capture views from the community. This could be combined with the Ecology Survey and Energy Efficiency Project. One effective way of collecting these views was to have large maps and lots of post-it notes where people could make simple comments. There was general agreement that this was an essential idea to move forward. John Edmondson offered to help with this all as Elliott Blaauw with David Bentley leading.

Cllr Maxine Smith left the meeting.

9. The first matter for discussion was an application for a telecommunication mast by EE sited on the Kildermorie Estate. Ian Duncan gave a brief resumé of the iterative process to get to the final application. Initially he explained he was opposed to a mast overlooking his house, he hated things being built on top of hills including wind turbines in the wrong place. Ian Duncan then explained that he had been told that landlines were being discontinued in the near future, and the landlines at Kildermorie

were not good, being at the very limit of distance from the exchange that can provide a service. John Edmondson explained that there had been a roll back on the cessation of landline provision. A mast at Kildermorie would ensure emergency cover for anyone in the surrounding hills and estate and the mast was definitely going to be shared by all networks. The mast was no longer to be powered by diesel generators and the track had been rerouted to be less obtrusive. And it was also to be 15m and not 20m whilst still achieving 98% of the higher mast's coverage. With all this achieved Ian Duncan explained that he was supportive of the application for the mast in Kildermorie Estate which did not visually effect any other properties.

Having considered the details of the application and having listened to the comments of Ian Duncan the ACC was happy to raise no objection to this application.

A second mast on the Glencalvie Estate by Eagle Rock was also considered. There was no objection raised.

The Secretary explained that he had spoken to the Project Manager of the Strathroy windfarm he had confirmed that EnergieKontor were planning on cutting some of the trees along the Golf Course Road and the Scots pine on its junction with the B9176 "to the sky". There was general consternation at this prospect. It was thought that there were only 4 places where they were going to have to lift the blades and one these was at the site entrance. The telephone lines also needed to come down and be buried. Elliott Blaauw thought that it was a disaster. The Secretary explained that RJ Macleod had contacted him about construction traffic, but they were unable to give any information on the turbine movements which was our main concern. So unless anyone had any objection there was no need to take up their offer to come to the ACC and explain about the construction traffic, we would just receive their monthly updates. It was anticipated that EnergieKontor would get back to us in a few months with more details of the abnormal loads.

SEN were holding an event at the Hall on the 11th June regarding the OHL.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting.

Next Meeting is a Management Meeting on the **8<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 8.00pm** at the Ardross Community Hall

ITEM	To Whom	WHO	Date	Status
CAR PARK SIGN	Matt Dent HC	JME	April	OPEN
FLS	FLS	EB	April	WATCHING

ITEM	To Whom	WHO	Date	Status
BANK ACCOUNT	Santander	AG	Feb	OPEN
ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY	Conservation Group	EB	March	OPEN
DALNAVIE CROSS-ROADS	Roads Department	JME	April	OPEN
LEALTY BRIDGE	Iain Moncrieff	JME	April	OPEN
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT	Ardross Primary Parent Forum	JW	March	OPEN
CUILICH BRIDGES	Novar	?	April	OPEN
ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT	THC Climate Change Environment Team	EC	May	OPEN
GOLF COURSE ROAD	THC and EnergieKontor	ALL	May	OPEN
ROAD AND CORE PATH CLOSURES	THC and Studio Lambert	JME	June	OPEN
LOCAL PLACE PLAN	Ardross and THC	DB	June	OPEN

