

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 26th February 2018 at 8.00pm in Scourie Village Hall

**Present:** - Donald Fisher - Chair, Neil MacDonald - Vice-Chair, Alistair Mackay - Treasurer, Julie Allen - Secretary, George Leligdowicz, Julian Pearce, Vanessa Crowsley, Cllr. Hugh Morrison and Jean MacKay

**Apologies:** - PC Frazer Mitchell.

**Minutes of the previous meeting -**

*Approval:* - Proposed by Alistair MacKay and seconded by Julian Pierce.

*Matters arising:* -

- *Scourie Big Drain:* - Cllr Morrison reported that council staff claim to have cleared the drain; however as there is no evidence of activity at the site, there may be some confusion as to the location. Hugh will clarify this.
- *Robb Donn Trail:* - Alistair's information regarding local history will be forwarded to Ronnie Lansley as it stands.
- *New Village Entry Signs:* - Cllr Morrison will chase this again.

**Police Matters:** - none to our knowledge.

**Highland Council -**

- *Planning Applications:* - None
- *Rock fall on A894 north of Kylesku:* - Sections of the crag remain unstable and Donald expressed concerns that the potential risk to motorists is significant. Cllr Morrison was able to confirm that the contract has been awarded to a Drumnadrochit firm who are due to start work imminently. Space at Duartmore quarry has been made available for the spoil. It was noted that traffic will be increasing with the start of the tourist season only four weeks away.
- *Recently approved cuts to grant-funding for community councils and implications for Scourie:* - THC cut the budget by 50% effectively making S&DCC insolvent; £429 will not cover average standing costs of £680 per annum. Cllr Morrison reported that THC has a fifty million pound 'black hole' in its budget for the 2018/19 financial year and in its eagerness to slash costs has wrongly assumed that all community councils can dip into generous benefit schemes to offset the shortfall. Whilst this may be the case in many East Coast communities it is not so in the West. The following questions were raised; what happens when a community council faces insolvency, why isn't means testing applied by THC, what happens when a bill cannot be paid, how are small community costs to be met such as painting picnic benches and cleaning war memorials etc. and what body is ultimately responsible for Community Councils across Highland. Donald will compose a letter to the Chief Executive and George will scrutinize the literature available to see where THC responsibilities lie in this respect. The Ward Discretionary Fund has also been reduced to just £16,000 which will also have an impact on small community projects.
- *Future Operation of Scourie Public Toilet:* - THC has decided to close public toilets from Achmelvich to Bettyhill; it quotes incurred costs of £7000 per toilet for the 6 summer months as justification for the cuts. Without consultation it intends to introduce a 'comfort scheme' paying for public access to toilets in business premises and amenity buildings. The calculation of cost was disputed at the meeting, various money saving methods could be employed such as sensor operated lighting, cleaning by existing salaried council staff and donation boxes etc. Cllr Morrison advised that the measure is being vehemently fought and that closure is not imminent.

**Maldie Burn Community Fund:** - Completion of the application for a traffic calming sign is still ongoing, match funding is awaited from the Ward Discretionary Fund and Cllr. Morrison will take this forward. Alistair recently sent a monitoring report to R.W.E. in respect of the outstanding balance. A notice will be placed in the Scourie News in April requesting applications for the 2018/19 round of funding.

**Scourie Community Development Co. Ltd:** -

- *Geo Centre:* - Neil reported that storage and insurance are in place for the Shelley Collection which is now being catalogued prior to removal. The new Geo-Centre building will be subject to 'proof of concept' testing to assist in grant funding.
- *The additional AGM* held in February was again poorly attended.

**North West Highlands Geopark Ltd:** - Jean MacKay reported that a partial refurbishment of the Rock Stop kitchen is underway. Possible new business from two separate touring companies seems likely; enquiries have recently been received from a bus company and a bike company. The 'Geobus' (a travelling exhibition/education centre) might be in our area this year. Graham Phillips will be contacting Scourie businesses to enhance the business network he is creating

**Scourie Resilience Plan:** - The Table Top exercise has been rearranged (and subject to Hall availability) it will be on Monday 23rd April at 18:30. As soon as Pete confirms the booking participants will be notified of the new date.

**Scourie Childrens' Play Park:** - Linda MacDonald sent an email enquiring if the swings (recently removed) will be returned and whether much needed enhancements can be arranged. In view of THC recent statement that it intends to sell off its play parks (as part of a cost cutting exercise) this seems highly unlikely. Donald will respond suggesting an application to SCDC and/or the Maldie Burn Fund.

**A.O.C.B:** -

- *Surface water* was again discussed at the meeting. Cllr Morrison has notified THC several times of this problem. He will chase this again.
- *The Community Bus:* - Julie enquired how we as a community can access it, costs and if it can be used for community trips to concerts, plays etc. Also if this is a service the community would like.
- *Defibrillators:* - George reported that his application for the funding of 4 units is ongoing and looks very hopeful.
- *Storm Caroline:* -Alistair asked Hugh to chase THC for completion of storm debris clearance at Scourie Beach
- *Road Signs:* - Vee asked about improved signage for the toilets to stop motorists urinating in the village.

**Action Point Review:** - All action points not carried forward below were completed.

**The next meeting is on Monday 26th March 2018 at 8:00pm in Scourie Village Hall**

The meeting closed at 21:55

Action 1	Chase THC re drain, offlet and beach clearance.	Hugh
Action 2	Send information for Robb Donn Panel to Ronnie	Donald
Action 3	Chase THC re village entry signs	Hugh
Action 4	Advertise Scourie Resilience meeting again.	Vee
Action 5	Write to Chief Executive re statutory responsibility for community democracy	Donald
Action 6	Check available information on THC responsibilities re cc's	George
Action 7	Pursue match funding request for interactive traffic sign	Hugh
Action 8	Invite MBF applications via an advert in the Scourie News	Alistair
Action 9	Respond to Linda MacDonald re play park equipment	Donald