

Minutes - Scourie & District Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 31st March 2015 at 8pm in Scourie Village Hall

Present:- Mr Donald Fisher - Chair, Mr Neil MacDonald - Vice Chair, Mr George Leligdowicz - Secretary
Mr Alistair MacKay - Treasurer, Mr Angus Mackay, Mrs Myra Brauer,
Ms Glenda Cairncross - Scourie Development Officer, Cllr. Hugh Morrison, PC. Ian Sutherland

Apologies: - Julian Pearce

The Chairman welcomed Mrs V Crowsley in her role as minute secretary.

Minutes of previous meetings:

Agreement of the minutes was proposed by Neil MacDonald and seconded by Angus MacKay.

Scourie Web Site

The improvements outlined by Pete Tuck in February's meeting are progressing, but a further article is to appear in the next "Scourie News" prompting all interested parties to amend any out dated information and 'link in' new sites.

Highland Council

Information has been published online by the Council regarding the Public Consultation for Onshore Wind Energy. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed in April's meeting when councillors had acquainted themselves with the details

No new Planning Applications were received. The existing application of Mr D Bentley was approved at the last Council Planning meeting by 6 votes to 3.

The Council Ward Manager has issued general preliminary guidance to Community Councils regarding the Election of Officers and ratification of accounts during the period September to November 2015.

Mr M Dent (Access Officer) is aware that voluntary labour is available for footpath repairs at the Gen. Hugh MacKay Cairn and has requested a list of the materials required. Ms G Cairncross will liaise between the parties concerned. It was suggested that the rotten steps should be removed promptly as a safety precaution.

Cllr. Hugh Morrison is to arrange repair of the illuminated School Sign near the Village Hall and for a replacement road sign at Ledmore Junction.

A meeting was held at Betty Hill 27.03.15 to discuss the 15% funding cut in the transport budget over 5 years. The Council has issued a questionnaire as part of its review process and extended consultation until 3rd April. Both the Scourie Community Development Company and S&DCC will return questionnaires. The Development Officer and Secretary respectively are to complete these. Cllr. Morrison reported that other Community Councils have suggested a possible way forward. It seems likely that some routes will be discontinued but a way to alleviate some of the adverse impact is to use and extend the routes of the existing Ullapool/Inverness services. This option offers a daily service with a much wider catchment but a longer journey time.

It was noted that other local communities have a "dial-a-bus" service which is a community Taxi (on an advance booking only basis) subsidised by The Highland Council (for approx 50% of the costs). It was agreed that Scourie would benefit from this scheme and it will be explored further.

Maldie Burn Community Benefit Fund

The List of applicants for inclusion in the 2014 funding period is now complete. Mr G Leligdowicz will send it off before the deadline date of 14th April.

The proposed purchase of a Marquee at the changing rooms has been itemised & costed, details were circulated at the meeting. Up to £1200 was previously agreed by S&DCC, but in view of the updated information the financial assistance was increased by £1000 (i.e. up to £2200). This will cover the cost of 2 smaller but more manageable units and accessories. The Development Company will submit a formal application to the Benefit Fund in due course.

A new funding application is expected for the repair of Scourie's Emergency Landing Lights. At a recent incident some of the batteries failed. Purchase of similar lights by a neighbouring community cost approximately £5000. Mr A MacKay will liaise with Mr A MacKenzie to assess the situation.

Scourie Community Development Company - update

Douglas Murray the Geopark's appointed (architect from Strathpeffer) visited Scourie to look at the possible location of the Geopark Centre proposed Geocentre.

The Local Community Broadband Scheme is no further forward, there has been a delay because appointment of the new liaison officer has not yet occurred and there are 2 more Scottish Government consultations to be concluded following the funding extension. The initial Scourie Technical Options Report is to be made available to any interested parties.

North West Highland Geopark Ltd - update

Redecoration work is progressing at The Unapool Rock Stop. This pilot Geocentre is to be opened in the former Maryck Museum. It will house an exhibition & cafe.

Creag Riabhach Wind Farm Project

Following last month's S&DCC meeting Ron Shanks was informed of the split vote. The Wind Farm's solicitor for the North and West Sutherland Trust is to incorporate the suggestions made into the documentation. The question was raised as to whether there should be a public meeting to gauge local feeling for such a development. Cllr Morrison made the point that the project might not go ahead and therefore it would be better to wait & hold a meeting if & when planning permission is actually sought, if considered appropriate at that stage.

Scourie War Memorial

Repainting of the lettering will be done by a company that's working in this area in August, it was agreed that the memorial should be cleaned in the mean time.

AOCB

Cllr Morrison has had a response from the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service to the concerns he raised regarding the lack of emergency cover in the North West. Recruitment will be prioritised with the aim of getting staff numbers back up to operational levels in Lochinver.

Road drainage is to be addressed as soon as the winter schedule finishes.

NHS Highland would like a representative to attend an S&DCC meeting in April or May to discuss services. Care home provision was quoted as an example to be discussed. It was agreed that this should go ahead.

Friends of Sutherland Veterans have written to community councils requesting a donation for the forthcoming flag raising ceremony. A figure of £75 was sanctioned on this occasion

£1500 of community money (gifted payment by received from Jaguar Land Rover Plc) is still available for a suitable local project.

PC Ian Sutherland attended the meeting to express his thanks for all the support given by the communities within his patch over the years. He is moving to Alness shortly and his last day on duty is 31st March. The Chairman thanked PC Sutherland for his personable and very professional approach to policing in the area over the years, in particular for the trust and confidence he established locally amongst our communities. He wished him all the very best personally & professionally for the future.

The next meeting will be on Monday 27th April 2015 at 8.00pm in Scourie Village Hall.