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Minutes of Sunart Community Council

Meeting held Thursday 11th February 2021 (7:30pm), video meeting

Attending: D Anderson (DA) (Chair) J Jones (JJ) (secretary), F Christian (FC), J Hilder (JH) (Treasurer), Cllr A Baxter

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: E Sneddon-Hughes ESH

2. Minutes of meeting held 14th January 2020: Proposed: J Hilder, Seconded: F Christian
Amendments: None

3. Matters arising from the previous minutes: None

Police Matters: None

Heritage: Free Church Anchor – on going.

Monument Park Drinking Water Supply: on-going. The secretary has emailed Scottish Water and an update is awaited, however, the situation is likely to remain as it is during the Covid pandemic

Dail Mhor House: Situation remains and the Community Council remind people about the Urram public survey for the Dail Mhor Care Hub Concept and Vision for the site, and encourage everyone to complete the survey. Hard copies of the survey are available at the Village Store, the Post Office and on line via the website <http://urram.net>. If you prefer, it can be completed by phone on 07517 035005. Please complete the questionnaire.

Longrigg Woodland: The consultant's report was presented to the Community Company directors on the 1st February. The Board has agreed to launch the consultation and recommend purchase of the woodland subject to consultation. The consultation with the community will be arranged in March. Meetings will be virtual, as COVID restrictions will likely still apply.

Correspondence: Drimnatorran Cemetery – The Secretary has written to the Highland Council to ask for a copy of their letter to the landowners. A reply is awaited.

AOB: Corran Ferry –The Corran Ferry committee and Community Councils ask local residents to lobby the Minister to express the need for this service and for the replacement ferries. It was agreed the Secretary will write to the Transport Minister and to Kate Forbes, in her capacity as Finance Minister and, separately as constituency MSP. Cllr Baxter has a meeting with both ministers on the 12th March. After discussion, it was agreed that we should emphasise the importance of the Corran Ferry and urge them to recognise that the Corran Ferry as not just a life-line link for the peninsulas, as it is also an important link for the whole of the West Highlands, including Mull and Skye. Further, it was agreed that for the longer term a study for a fixed link crossing should be included in the Transport Review 2024, the review is currently be drawn up.

4. Planning Matters –

20/05131/FUL Extension of the existing borrow pit to form quarry and extraction process of hard rock - Midland Bank Quarry – Two written comments were received and the points were included in the Community Council's response. It was noted that there had been an additional comment posted on the Highland Council planning portal

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21/00291/FUL | Alterations to The Old Manse and Conversion/Extension of Outbuilding to Form Self Contained Unit | The Old Manse Strontian Acharacle PH36 4JB - Noted

5. Correspondence

- a. Email complaint – An email was received with regard to item 5)j) in the January Minutes, complaining about the wording, specifically the use of the word “demanding”, stating none of the “communications included any demands”. Having discussed this matter in detail and with Highland Council, it was agreed by all Community Councillors that the wording remain - 5 emails plus telephone calls and a Facebook comment on the CC Facebook page – was seen to be demanding.
- b. Glencripesdale – RSPB – Response from RSPB thanking the Community Council for their reply, and advising that RSPB are meeting with NatureScot to take advice on the next steps for their proposed acquisition of the land. The envisaged time frame would mean the process would not be completed before July 2021 and might be longer given the current pandemic. They noted our suggestion of participating with Morvern CC in a joint management board and our nominee, Elaine Sneddon-Hughes.
- c. Community Resilience Group Briefings - 21/1/21 – The Community Council were previously unaware of these briefings and Cllr Baxter explained that he had raised this and asked that weekly briefings be held. Information from HC is being posted on the CC website
- d. Morvern CC AGM – Noted
- e. Email re Zoom meetings – This matter has been raised with Highland Council and the situation explained to Cllr Baxter. The Sunart Community Council is in the process of finalising Zoom meeting protocols and guidelines for both Community Councillors and attendees. There will then training for the Community Councillors and the March meeting will be open to people requesting a log-in details. Currently the meetings have been using a private Zoom account to help save the community money, however, Cllr Baxter explained that funding can be available through the Discretionary Budget and a couple of community councils have purchased joint “Community-Use” accounts with their community company - the account has then been made available for various community meetings and the costs shared. The Community Council will approach the Community Company about obtaining a joint Zoom account.
- f. Webinars from Texthelp – Circulated to Councillors for consideration
- g. Highland Council Community Resilience Group Meeting 5/2/21 – Posted on website
- h. Sunart Community Council – Grant application for Ewen’s Room for Light Up The Dark project – A request for £500 – Application approved.
- i. K6 Telephone Kiosk in Scotstown – the completion notice has been received and passed to the Community Company who will hold this asset on behalf of the Sunart community, this procedure is required as the Community Council is not allowed to hold assets. The kiosk has been obtained as part of the heritage of the community. Please let us know if you have any ideas for future use of the kiosk – for the one in Polloch, it is hoped to use it a site for a defibrillator. If you wish to be involved in the cleaning or maintenance of the Scotstown kiosk then please let us know. The request to own the kiosk in Polloch is still being pursued and we are attempting to clarify the owner of the land on which this kiosk stands.
- j. National Planning Framework 4 – Position Statement: Community Discussion Workshops – Extra Dates – Noted
- k. Police Scotland Corporate Communications seeking views on the use of Body Worn Video – Forwarded for Facebook
- l. News [Update] from Carnegie Trust UK – Noted
- m. Zurich Insurance Renewal – Insurance renewal notice – Treasurer to pay

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6. Treasurer's Report

Deposit Account is £10,587.99; Current Account is £3,206.33. The deposit account will decrease by £5,000 for the loan to the Scotstown Common Grazings. The loan is subject to the Grazings Committee confirming that their application for a grant will be paid on completion of the work. The Treasurer is finalising loan documents with reference to the grant confirmation from SGRPID.

The Community Council is awaiting reimbursement from the Community Company for costs incurred for COVID work.

J Hilder will be handing over the treasurer's role to Elaine Sneddon-Hughes next month. The Chair expressed thanks, on behalf of the Community Council, for all his work in this role over the recent years.

7. Any other Business (AoB)

- a) The Sunday dinners have restarted again - and two complements have been received
- b) Corran Ferry Replacement: A reminder, we ask members of our community to lobby Kate Forbes, as Finance Minister and the Transport Minister about the urgent need to agree funds the replacement ferries.
- c) Corran Ferry Fare: In November 2020 a Highland Council Officer let slip that a further £100,000 needed to be found from the Corran Ferry. Cllr Baxter has informed Malcolm MacLeod that he will not support a 3% uplift and instead has suggested:
 - Increase in drive up fares for motorhomes – the same as for caravans
 - That the increase in staycations in the next few years will mean an increase in motorhomes visiting the area and hence using the ferry
 - Introduction of SMART ticketing with people being able to charge the cards and pay on line
 - Discounts for permanent residents in Lochaber – people with holiday homes would not be eligible. This would be easily monitored through the Council Tax systemThe question of charging foot passengers was raised: it was explained that this has been dropped, as it would only raise about £10,000 pa.
- d) The question of what is happening with the old Primary School Building was raised, as there had been a meeting with Highland Council officers several months ago. Cllr Baxter said a meeting had been arranged with officers but he was unable to attend on that occasion so will make enquiries.
- e) Community Council Zoom account – the cost of purchasing an account was approved – JH to progress

Date of next meeting: The Sunart Community Council is scheduled for Thursday 11th March 2021 at 7:30pm via Zoom as Covid 19 restrictions apply.

You can contact the Sunart Community Council by:

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