

## Minutes of the Meeting of Durness Community Council, Monday 1st December

### at 7.30pm Durness Village Hall.

1. **Present:** Kevin Crowe *Chair*, Donald Mitchell *Vice Chair*, Scott Macpherson, Anne Mackenzie *Treasurer*, Alan Andrews, Cllr. Hugh Morrison, PC Ian Sutherland and Sarah Fuller *Secretary*.  
**Apologies:** Neil Fuller, Eddie Meyer.
2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** The Minutes of the October meeting were passed by Anne Mackenzie & Scott Macpherson. The minutes of the November meeting could not be passed.
3. **Matters Arising.**
  - Ambulance & Air Ambulance Provision. Cllr. Morrison reported that the ambulance will now be staffed by 4 full time and 1 relief position and that all of the posts should be filled by mid January.
  - Lynx Bone, Smoo & Borralie Caves. Carbon dating of Human, Lynx, bear and wild boar bones is due to take place soon.
  - Puffin Link. Peter Mackay has refused the offer of expenses for maintaining the puffin link this Year. **Action:** Sarah to send thank you note.
  - Telephone List. The list is almost ready to print.
  - School Playing Field. An email has been received from the H.C. outlining the land they own around the school playing field.
  - M.o.D. The Liaison Meeting took place last week and was a useful and positive meeting. The Marine Mammals Autopsy Report has still not been published, **Action:** Kevin to lobby Govt. Minister for publication ASAP. The M.o.D. denied interfering with Internet and mobile reception, they asked to be notified immediately next time it occurs and Mobile Providers are to be asked to put in writing any interference. The M.o.D. stated that they contribute every year to the upkeep of the Cape Wrath road, **Action:** Kevin to write to the H.C. asking for clarification of amount and that it should be ring fenced for this road only. The M.o.D. apologised for the disturbance to sites of Primula Scotica on Faraid Head. Scott is contacting the administration responsible for the contract with the private landlord in order to clarify how to report these concerns. Future Liaison meetings are to take place annually along side the Environmental Group Meetings and will be organised by the C.C. Scott raised the issue of the state of the pier on the Capeside and the loose rock on the overhanging rock face above the car parking area, **Action:** Hugh will raise with the H.C.
  - Bus Shelter. The H.C. will not commit until after the budget consultation which will take place next month.
  - Kyle of Durness oyster farm. Nothing further to report.
  - Speed restrictions in Laid. P.C. Sutherland suggested contacting our MSP. Alan stated that Laid Grazing Committee are looking into putting up "Welcome to Laid Please Drive Carefully" signs and will ask the H.C. for permission to erect.
4. **Police Matters.**

P.C. Sutherland reported that there have been two high value frauds recently in our area, both of these have subsequently been tracked and dealt with by the relevant police Authorities. Both P.C. Sutherland and the C.C. urge people to be aware of this threat and be circumspect when buying from cold calls and on line.

## 5. Reports.

- **D.D.G.**

Eriboll Harbour; The next stage will be to raise funds for the wave study which will inform the design of the harbour. Health Hub; the Taster day on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November was very successful and well attended. Bard Terrace Albyn Enterprises have advertised the property and there are currently 2 interested parties.

- **N.W.H.Geopark**

The recent A.G.M. was well attended and Donald Mitchell was Co-opted as a Director. The Geopark have had a very active year and have a great new website. This year the focus will be on Revaluation as a European Geopark.

- **Treasurers Report.**

C.C. balance is £ 2117.62. Income- £30 from website. Expenditure - £144.40 Poppy Wreaths and £18.17 Stationary.

- **North West Sutherland Local Health Partnership ( NWSLHP).**

NHS Highland has new plans for respite care along the north west coast and a representative will attend a C.C. meeting. Kevin has emailed an invitation and asked for a copy of the draft plans in advance; no reply has been received as yet.

**The North West Sutherland Trust**, Creag Riabhach Wind farm. Nothing further to report.

## 6. Planning Applications.

Alexander Morrison has applied for retrospective Planning permission to reduce the size of his mussel farm on the East of Loch Eriboll. There were no objections.

## 7. Uncollected Refuse in Laid.

A holiday home in Laid is not paying for rubbish collection and it is piling up. **Action:** Alan to take photo's and to find out the owners address in case he is unaware that he has to pay for this service. **Action:** Kevin to contact protective services.

## 8. Publicising the work of the C.C.

**Action:** Kevin to send abridged copies of the minutes to the Northern Times and Am Bratach.

## 9. Quad Bikes on Balnakeil beach.

Kevin has been contacted by Andrew Elliot regarding Quad bikes on the beach and dunes at Balnakeil; he wishes to lock the access gate. P.C.Sutherland suggested that this action would just mean that another route would be sought, the C.C. agreed. **Action:** Kevin to contact Andrew Elliot and S.N.H. to suggest putting up signage indicating the delicate nature of dune systems.

## 10. A.O.B.

- **Andy Mackay.** Hugh reported that Andy Mackay will begin a phased return to work as Ward Manager this month and will be full time again by April.
- **Friends of Sutherland Veterans.** Action: Sarah to contact Don Campbell about the recent letter from the Friends of Sutherland Veterans.
- **Core Paths Review.** Comments are invited before March 2015.
- **Smoo Cave.** Path repairs are to take place this month.
- **Broadband at the Hall.** Broadband provision at the Hall is currently on a restricted contract, DDG are looking into unrestricted packages in order to make broadband provision more accessible. Action: Sarah to report back with best deal in the New Year.

**11. Date of next meeting.** Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm.