

Minutes of the Meeting of Durness Community Council, Monday 7th January at 7.30pm Durness Village Hall.

1. **Present:** Kevin Crowe *Chair*, Anne Mackenzie *Treasurer*, Donald Mitchell, Denise McNamara, Neil Fuller, Nick Barth Sarah Fuller *Secretary*, Cllr. Hugh Morrison, Kevin Arrowsmith(DDG) Morven Taylor (Highland Small Communities Housing Trust).

Apologies: PC. Ian Sutherland.

Absent: Francis Keith

2. **Discussion on Housing with Morven Taylor.**

The Old Village Hall site is already owned by the H.S.C.H.T. and plans for 3 two bedroom houses exist for this site, Morven gave the C.C. a breakdown of the options which would enable the site to be developed. The C.C. favoured the Rent to buy or shared equity schemes where the H.S.C.H.T. and the Highland Council would work in partnership. The C.C. felt that these options would give more control over allocation of the housing . Morven is to speak to Ronnie Macrae about the next steps. Kevin thanked Morven for attending.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved with 2 alterations by Anne Mackenzie and seconded by Hugh Morrison.

4. **Matters Arising.**

- Ratifying decisions of the last Meeting. Kevin moved that all decisions be ratified, all agreed.
- Nick Barth. Nick stated that he wished to remain a member of the C.C.
- Cape Wrath & M.O.D. Kevin read out the letter from the Minister from the M.O.D. which has been widely quoted in the press. As a result of this a petition to retain access to Cape Wrath is available to sign in local shops and businesses and also online at www.ipetitions.com (enter Cape Wrath into the search box to access the relevant petition). Kevin stressed that these campaigns are not anti-M.O.D. as whatever the outcome, the community will need to continue working with the M.O.D. to ensure access to the Capeside for local business users. The Commander for Defence training is to be invited to the next C.C. meeting.

Kevin Arrowsmith suggested that the Durness Development Group and the general populace also be invited. Kevin A. also stated that there is still nothing to report about the proposed buyout from official channels.

The C.C. has received a letter from Community land Scotland as a result of all the publicity surrounding this issue. The letter offers advice and support regarding land buyouts and the C.C. are invited to the next meeting of C.L.S. in Inverness in March.

- Core Paths. No further progress.
- Puffin Link. There has been no response from the Sutherland Partnership re- help with further funding, Kevin will chase this up.
- Balnakeil Sign. The sign is ready for installation, Cllr. Morrison will follow this up.

- Rob Donn Memorial. Cllr. Morrison is to enquire about brown signs for the signpost in village square and outside of the Cemetery. Neil suggested concreting in the railings as there is no way to cut the grass inside of them and also noted that the railings have started to rust. As there is money in hand to remedy these issues Kevin is to source quotes.
- Ambulance & Air Ambulance Provision. On-going.
- Erection of Flagpole. Kevin is to source quotes.
- Light up a Life. This event was very successful and well attended.
- School transport. On-going.
- Public Bins at the Cape Wrath Ferry point. Cllr. Morrison stated that bins can only be emptied on this side of the Ferry point, but black bags can be provided for the Capeside.
- Whales. Donald is to chase up the final report on the whales stranded in the Kyle.

5. Police Matters.

Between Dec 29th and Jan 1st damage occurred to the Air Conditioning Unit at Cocoa Mountain, it is not known if this was due to vandalism or weather conditions. If anyone has any relevant information please contact P.C. Sutherland at Rhiconich.

6. Reports.

- **D.D.G.**

The Loch Eriboll pier sub Committee are to meet later this month and a meeting is to be sought with the landowner to tie down the verbal agreements already in place. Hugh asked that the Loch Eriboll memorial proposed by David Hird be included in the new pier development.

The returning of the D.D.G. house at bard Terrace to social housing is moving forward with all quotes for renovations in, funding is now being sought.

Neil also reported that the graduate intern Niamh O'Driscoll began her 6 month employment today and will be developing plans for the Bike Hub and North Highland Way projects.

- **Geopark.**

The next meeting will take place on Friday 11th January at 10.30am in Scourie.

- **Treasurers Report.**

Anne Mackenzie reported that after paying bills for Remembrance day, Light up a Life, new Christmas Lights and Kevin's travelling expenses the Durness C.C. bank balance currently stands at £3904.76.

7. Planning Applications.

- An application has been received for replacing an existing house with a new house at 54 Sangomore.
- An application has been made for removal of caravans and replacement with a timber clad portacabin with profile roof at 90 Laid.

There were no objections raised to these applications.

8. A.O.B.

- The H.C. has set aside money to aid volunteers for clearing paths this winter. Full details are available on the H.C. website.
- Anne suggested that the cost of website adverts be increased to £30 this year. All agreed.
- Neil & Kevin are to attend the Creag Riahbach Wind Farm meeting on Saturday 26th January.

13. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting will take place on Monday 4th February at 7.30pm, Durness Village Hall.