

Minutes of Meeting held on 14th October, 2004 in the Community Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Present : Alistair McCowan; George Graham; Murdo Finlayson;
Councillor Ewen Mackinnon; Police Constable Ian Campbell;
Robin Phillips (HSCHT); Bob Wilson (Scottish Woodlands);
2 Members of the Public

Apologies

Apologies were received from Ishbel Ferguson, Juliet Mellor and Inspector Andy Brown.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Agreed as a true record - proposed Murdo Finlayson, seconded George Graham.

Treasurer's Report

The financial statement provided by the treasurer shows a balance on the account of £1,724.91.

Applecross Woodlands

The Chairman welcomed Bob Wilson and invited him to give the up-to-date position on the woodlands/community benefit project. (Richard Munday, representing the trustees, was also expected but was not able to be present). Bob explained that delays in starting the feasibility study were due to administrative matters in setting up the new company (Applecross Rural Conservation Ltd.) but this is now complete, and the feasibility study will be under way before 1st November. The community will be consulted at a day-long drop-in session at the community hall.

During discussion, Bob explained the currently favoured means of removing felled timber is by sea by constructing a jetty at the site of the old pier near the post office.

It was agreed that Bob will attend our next regular meeting on 11th November to explain and discuss progress. In answer to a question, Bob Wilson confirmed that there may be work opportunities locally on the rhododendron clearance project currently under way and scheduled to continue until the new year. Anyone interested should make contact with Bob Wilson who can be accessed via the estate office (at Applecross House).

The Chairman thanked Bob who withdrew.

Housing Needs Survey

The Chairman welcomed Robin Phillips. Discussion took place on the draft questionnaire document which it is proposed HSCHT will circulate to all households in the community. Members suggested that all male adults should be included in the survey and expressed concerns about how the results would be verified. Robin will

amend the draft questionnaire to address these matters and provide a revised draft for our consideration.

At this point, the Chairman circulated a copy of an item picked up from the internet and drawn to his attention to the effect that a 200-unit housing development was out to tender at Home Farm, Applecross. He had been very concerned and had contacted Ewen Mackinnon and spoken to Isabel Moore of Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association. Ewen confirmed that there is no relevant planning application for any such development. The general conclusion is that wires have been crossed and the development which exists is at the Home Farm site, Portree. Robin Phillips confirmed that the description fits the Portree development and that the planning application quoted appears to be the Portree one.

Robin was thanked by the Chairman and withdrew.

Revised Post Office Hours

The Chairman read a letter received from Post Office (Customer Care), Sunderland which made it clear that the decision to reduce hours is based on "low levels of custom in the office" and that it is permanent not temporary.

Members are not satisfied with the new hours or the explanations, and the Secretary was instructed to write again emphasising the community's serious concerns.

Water Supply Problems

It was generally agreed that there has been no worsening of the situation locally but we still experience black bits in the water and chlorine smells. The Chairman reported that he had been invited to meet the Board of Scottish Water in Oban on 27th October but he would not be able to accept. There were no volunteers to deputise, so the invitation will be declined.

Sheep Droppings at School

Councillor Mackinnon reported that he had raised the matter of an external water supply at the school at Highland Council so that a local clean up and wash down arrangement can be started. It was agreed that Murdo Finlayson will ensure that the school is aware of these proposals.

Any Other Competent Business

- a. Craite Barn lighting : Letters have been received from Highland Council Lighting Department and Albyn Housing complaining that someone (presumably from Craite Barn housing) has removed fuses from two lighting bollards on the right-of-way path and warned of the dangers of dealing with live electrical installations. Constable Campbell pointed out that this could be a criminal offence and Ewen Mackinnon expressed disappointment that a scheme installed for community benefit at considerable expense should be interfered with.

- b. Annual Community Council Conference in Dingwall : It was noted that the annual conference which is traditionally held in Dingwall in October/November is this year postponed to early 2005.
- c. Wester Ross Local Plan : All correspondence recently received from the planning team was handed to Murdo Finlayson who will deal, on our behalf, with outstanding or further issues. It was noted that a pre-consultation meeting will take place in Kinlochewe in early November.

It was also noted that while changes requested by us, and discussed with the team, in various villages have been implemented, the changes at Home Farm do not appear to be as we expected.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, 11th November, 2004.

The Chairman thanked all those present for their attendance and the meeting closed at 21.10 hours.
