

Applecross Community Council

Unapproved Minutes of Meeting Tuesday 14th Nov 2006.

Present : Murdo Finlayson Ishbel Ferguson Ruaridh Cameron
Gerry McPartlin Tim Williams

Mark Stewart.

3 members of the public.

[1] APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :

Councillor Ewen McKinnon, who was prevented en route from reaching the meeting because of snow on the road.

[2] MINUTES OF 12TH SEPT MEETING :

Adopted as an accurate record.

Proposed : Ruaridh Cameron.

Seconded : Ishbel Ferguson.

[3] TREASURER'S REPORT :

(a). Accounts.

The account balance is : £2476.18.

(b). Secretary's Allowance.

The Secretary informed the meeting that an annual allowance of £250 is provided by Highland Council, for the post holder, which must be drawn down from the C.C. account as part of the grant provisions.

The Secretary further informed the meeting that it is his wish to use the funds accrued from both the current year's allowance, and the next, for the purchase of a laptop computer which would then be donated to the Community Council for its use.

The meeting discussed how the equipment might contribute to the C.C.'s work and the generosity of the proposal.

ACTION : The Secretary will pursue the acquisition.

[4] ROAD SIGNS AT SMITHY CORNER AND AT WHITE GATE :

A problem is identified in visitors entering the road into the Campsite and at the White Gate, by mistake. The Chair circulated photographs showing the poor signage at these points.

Given the absence of Councillor Ewen McKinnon consideration of this item was deferred till the December meeting.

ACTION : The members will consider what might be appropriate options ahead of the next meeting.

[5] REVIEW OF RURAL SPEED LIMITS :

The number of complaints from the public, relating to the speed of road traffic, was noted.

The meeting would like to be advised on the posture of Highland Council in the context of the speed limit review, and, how the Community Council might be involved in any consultation exercise.

Given the absence of Councillor Ewen McKinnon consideration of this item was deferred till the December meeting.

ACTION : The members will consider what might be appropriate responses to the exercise ahead of the next meeting.

[6] CLACHAN CHURCH :

(a) Replacement Windows :

In the interests of preventing further damage to the building from any winter storm, the windows are to be boarded up for a few months.

Although this is likely to be considered unsightly, and to detract from the impressive nature of Clachan Church, it is regarded as both necessary and, perhaps helpful, in focusing the community's attention on the structural problems of the building.

Applecross Trust has secured funding for the replacement of the church windows but would like to enlist the views of the community in terms of replacement options. Accordingly a tick-sheet will be provided at the Post Office together with illustrative photographs detailing the replacement options as :

- Option [1] original style.
- Option [2] current style.
- Option [3] tinted or clear glass.

The Trust will implement the Community's decision.

(b) Sub-committee & Costs :

A subcommittee of the community Council is proposed to co-ordinate the renovation work at Clachan Church with a remit for Fundraising Events and Scheduling Activities.

Estimated costs for works are :

£100,000 for roof work, where funds are not currently in place.

£15,000 for remedial work to the Gallery, where funds are not in place.

(It was suggested that local professionals may be approached to donate time to this aspect of the project).

ACTION : Community Council will meantime consider nominees from the community for the formation of a subcommittee.

[7] AVAILABILITY OF WATER FOR NEW HOUSING :

A question has arisen over whether the existing water facility has excess capacity sufficient to any additional demand arising from new housing.

ACTION : The Chair will write to Scottish Water seeking clarification.

[8] HIGHLAND SMALL COMMUNITIES HOUSING TRUST AGM:

(a). Report .

Results are pending from a consultation exercise regarding the proposed transfer of Highland Council's Council Housing Stock to a new body.

Concerns include the desirability of publicly owned housing assets being transferred to a non-accountable quango and the implications of a new operational context which may be implemented by possible social landlords.

Highland Council's housing stock valuation is estimated at £16 million. The associated operational deficit is estimated at £160 million. This deficit would be written off by the Scottish Executive if the proposal is implemented.

(b). Affordable Housing Sites .

It was reported that HSCHT has experienced difficulty in attracting interest in these sites since people are reluctant to accept the restrictions associated with ownership and future sale. There is a dichotomy between potential owners not wishing their home to be excluded from normal market forces, and HSCHT's responsibility to landowners who have provided land for house sites on the basis of them remaining affordable in perpetuity.

[9] WINTER TOILET OPENING :

The Chair noted that in the past the post salary had been funded by Councillor McKinnon's discretionary budget.

ACTION : The Community Council will seek to engage a cleaner for the winter months and will investigate funding options.

[10] A.O.C.B :

(a). Disposal of Cars.

The Community Council noted both its appreciation and thanks to Jamie Seel for organising the collection and removal from Applecross of unwanted cars.

(b). Consultation Document.

Community Councils have now been added to the consultation list of those with whom the Marine National Park proposal will be discussed. The consultation document has now been received and will be circulated around Community Councillors.

(c). Single Track Road Advice.

Multi-lingual advice leaflets could be adopted and distributed by the Council.

(d). Litter Hot Spots on Bealach.

Tim Williams reported that the Viewpoint and Roadmen's Shed were particular litter hot spots and wondered if part of the removed litter might be associated with cycle events.

ACTION : Gerry McPartlin will mention the general litter problem to event organisers.

(e). Proposed 2007 Cycle Events.

Gerry McPartlin reported that events are proposed for May and for September because greater demand is in future expected, and that a number of participants exceeding 500 would be considered excessive for any single event.

Ongoing organisational details are logged at the event web site :

http://bealach-na-ba.co.uk/bealach-na-ba/event_BNB.htm

(searching bealach-na-ba.co.uk will locate the site immediately)

ACTION : The meeting was very pleased to hear of continuing interest in staging further events and will encourage the organisers to consider Applecross as a starting location, with perhaps the start being selected from neighbouring communities on a rotational basis.

(f). Old Naval Signaling Shed at Camusteel.

Gerry McPartlin provided photographs of the derelict facility and suggested that the Council seek to have it removed before total collapse.

ACTION : Gerry to write to relevant body requesting demolition.

(g). Interpretation Feature at Sand.

Implementation of facility is progressing.

[11] DATE OF NEXT MEETING :

Tuesday 12th December 2006.