

Minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2006 in the Community Hall at 7.30pm

Present : Murdo Finlayson, Ishbel Ferguson, Ruairdh Cameron, Jonathan Hedges, Annie MacDonald, Gerry McPartlin

Councillor Ewen MacKinnon

Six members of the public

Treasurer's Report :

Balance £1534.23

Matters arising from previous minutes

Information leaflet 'Housing options in the Highlands':

This will be made available in the Post Office. The Community Council would like to extend their thanks to Councillor MacKinnon and Highland Council for producing the leaflet.

Proposed inner deer fence:

It was clarified that the Community Council were agreed on the benefit of the fence and would investigate potential avenues of funding.

Proposed Marine and Coastal National Park :

A public meeting was held in Lochcarron. At this time the only action has been a technical appraisal of the suitability of different areas by Scottish National Heritage. This is to be presented to Scottish Ministers. A public consultation should then be forthcoming.

There were two discussion groups held, focusing on the land and water based implications of the park.

Agenda

Woodland update:

Bob Wilson of Scottish Woodlands explained that the sudden felling of the 'Smiddy Wood' was due to dangerous trees near housing and roads. The current plan is for the area to be restocked with native and broadleaved trees. A replanting programme is to be submitted by August, with a view to planting by Spring 2007. It is also hoped, as previously minuted, that some of this land will be available for housing.

The 4,000 tons of timber are to be removed by the coast road, with approximately three loads a day. This had been referred to the Roads Department and there is an arrangement that any damage due to the transporting of the timber will be repaired.

Paths will also be reinstated as part of the Recreation Plan.

There was concern from the Community Council over the lack of consultation regarding the timber felling and extraction. Bob Wilson apologised for this and offered to attend future meetings when appropriate.

The need to repair damage to roads and walls due to the timber operations was noted and that the areas around timber stacks are to be cleared of any debris.

The windblown trees in the Arrina plantation are also to be removed, producing a further 1000 tons of timber.

It transpired that Applecross Rural Conservation (ARC) had applied for the felling licence for the Arrina plantation. There was concern noted that the directors of ARC were unaware of any consultation over this.

The Forest Plan was also discussed; this is currently 'on hold' due to problems with some of the grant funding. Concern was noted about the plan being implemented in a piecemeal fashion, with the risk of compromising possible community benefits. It was also felt that timber removal by sea is still the preferred option.

Out of hours medical cover:

Gerry McPartlin reported on the Wester Ross Out of Hours (WROOH) group. The group has a representative from each medical practice and has been formed to provide community input to re-planning the provision of out of hours medical cover.

The main trigger for this re-planning exercise is the substantial overspend (£650,000 spent on a budget of £190,000) on out of hours cover, for Wester Ross. This increase is a consequence of the new contract for GP's that has allowed GP's to "opt out" of responsibility for providing cover outside the hours of 8am - 6pm, Monday to Friday.

The changes under discussion that NHS Highland are proposing, would involve a substantial reduction in the number of doctors on call and an extended role for ambulance crews and nurses. The WROOH group is strongly of the opinion that out of hours cover should remain doctor based and has made this clear to NHS management.

We are extremely fortunate, in Applecross, that Dr Cargill and Dr Barber have not "opted out", and, consequently, unlike all the other Practices in Wester Ross, we are currently not directly threatened by the changes under consideration.

Any other business

Road repairs:

The damaged wall and undermining of the road leading to the Creag Darroch are being dealt with.

Public Toilets:

A quote has been requested for providing lighting in the toilets. Damage to the toilet seat in the ladies and graffiti in the gents was noted. The graffiti has since been removed.

Recycling and composting:

Highland Council Waste Services will be holding a meeting in the hall on Tues 18 th April to explain the effective use of the compost bins as well as answering questions on council recycling policy. The meeting is open to everyone.

It was noted that the paper-recycling bin was not yet in place.

Clachan Church :

A cleaning day is proposed for Sat 25 th March. Any help from members of the public will be much appreciated.

Planning application:

House site at Culduie. Noted.

Minutes of meetings:

It was noted that: items had been omitted from the previous minutes, there was concern that generally the minutes were too brief, and that there was difficulty in getting the minutes approved.

Community Council members were reminded that there was opportunity to offer feedback on the minutes before they are published.

It was proposed that the subjects to be included in the minutes are reviewed at the end of the Community Council meeting to prevent future omissions.

Next meeting: Tues 14 th March 7.30pm Applecross Community Hall

Agenda items to the secretary by Mon 6th March
