

Minutes (draft) of Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council (TKCC)
Meeting held by Zoom at 7.00pm
Tuesday 25th April 2023

Present: Caroline Hamilton (Chair), Steve Schnabel (Treasurer), Sue Whiting (Secretary), Colin Stevenson, Alpin Stewart, Mat Webster, Maud McIntyre, Councillor Chris Birt
2 members of public.

- 1. Apologies** – Tom Forrest.
- 2. Minutes of the meeting on 29th March 2023**
Approved.
- 3. Matters arising from minutes of 29th March**
Blether Bench Diabaig – In hand.

Action: CH

30mph signs in Fasaig – SW will find out when HC plan to install their 20mph signs. If this is not imminent, she will put up the 30mph signs as a temporary measure.

Action: SW

Kishorn Port & Dry Dock – The notice for accommodation wanted has been circulated.

Community Map Scotland/ Parish Online – TKCC has now signed up for the free trial and has provided access to members of the Community Development Plan Action Group. Any other community organisations who are interested, please contact CH.

Torridon School – Highland Council statutory consultation – CH submitted comments to HC as agreed.

TKCC has since been contacted by the inspector from Education Scotland. Her role is to provide a report on the educational benefits of closing the school after the public consultation is complete. This will be used to help inform HC's decision. She is visiting Shieldaig school and speaking to staff, pupils and parents there on 9th May and has asked to meet with community representatives to gain a community perspective. MW has spoken to her and arranged for MW and AS to meet her on the same day.

Kinlochewe post office/shop – MM reported that the public meeting on 31st March was well attended and generated a good discussion. Notes of the meeting are on COW Trust's website. Since then, further discussions have taken place within the community and there appears to be a lot of positivity towards the idea of community buyout.

4. Treasurer's report

Since the last report, £926 has been received from SCDC to finance various items connected to the community development plan, including the recent feedback events. Of this, £364 has been spent so far. The annual Zoom fee has been paid, half of which TDCA has paid us for.

Last year's accounts have been prepared and are out for independent review. Current bank balance is £2,527.

5. Roads

Ward 5 Roads Meeting -27th March 2023 – this item was deferred from the last meeting.

SW attended on behalf of TKCC. Cllr Birt also. HC Roads Team Manager Iain Moncrieff (IM) acknowledged the lack of maintenance and underspending over recent years to the roads in Ward 5, but said they are doing their best with the resources they have. They are trying to recruit more people and more equipment, such as potholing and road scanning machines. Works are agreed by determining Priority of Need, which is not simple, very fluid, and they have to balance need with costs – for example, top dressing roads with chippings costs £6 per metre and helps to improve the condition of the road, however the thick tarmac overlay costs £20 per metre which strengthens the road and gives it a longer life.

The positive news is that more funding has been allocated to Ward 5 this year. CB also confirmed that the annual budget for all Highland roads has been increased from £7.2 million last year to £21.6 million this year, with a £1.63 million emergency fund for potholes. Ward 5 will receive a percentage of this based on the total length of all roads in Ward 5 against those within the whole Highland region.

The meeting format was more focused this year, with participants given the opportunity to ask questions ahead of the meeting so the roads team could prepare relevant answers. On behalf of TKCC, SW submitted three specific questions and received the following replies:

- The resurfacing work to the 5km section of the A896 Torrison Glen road, that was delayed from last year due to tarmac supplies and the collapsed culvert, is now scheduled to begin in June/July 2023.
- IM stated that if the roads team has not completed the repair to the damaged bridge parapet on the Torrison to Wester Alligin road by the end of April 2023, he has given permission for a local contractor to carry out the repair.
- IM confirmed there are no plans to repair the badly deteriorating (already repaired) road surface to the Coire Mhic Nobuil bridge, however this could change easily, and he would have a look and see what is required.

Parts of the A890 road from Achnasheen to Achnashellach is in a shocking state and funding has been allocated for repairs to it. No further funding has been proposed yet for the Torrison Glen A896 road despite the enormity of use/ ongoing wear and tear. The problem continues that excessively large and heavy vehicles still use the A896 because they are too large to pass underneath the railway bridge at Achnashellach. There is no proposal to resolve this issue.

Overall, the message is that the roads team have regular meetings with Ward 5 Councillors and rely on feedback to determine Priority of Need, so good communication and information between all parties is vital and welcomed.

Cllr Birt offered to chase the matter of the parapet repair (ref above) if the work is not completed by the end of April.

Action: SW

20 mph zones

SW wrote to Transport Scotland as agreed to request a re-assessment of the decision to exclude Kinlochewe from the 20mph programme. A list of reasons was given why Kinlochewe clearly meets many aspects of the Place Criteria – the main requirement being the number of residential and business premises fronting the road on both sides must exceed 20 over a continuous length of between 400m and 600m. There are 21 premises in Kinlochewe.

SW thanked MM and TF for supplying details of the key buildings, locations, and relevant information.

Kinlochewe Toilet Signage

Eric Morrison in HC Roads Department has confirmed to MM that the sign has been made but due to higher priority matters he has not had the resources to put it in place. It was noted that he has promised to install it many times and now the chemical waste disposal facility is operational at the toilet site, the sign is urgently needed, especially as more campervans are arriving for the tourist season. CS offered to put the sign up if it can be located. MM will chase again and CB offered to intervene directly if MM does not receive a satisfactory response within 2 weeks.

Action: MM

6. Community Development Plan

MW reported that feedback from the two community open day events was very positive. As a result of suggestions made, a few changes have been made to the final version of the plan and this will be published soon. The plan will also be updated as necessary in the future.

MW thanked everyone who has been involved for their thought and hard work, and emphasised the invaluable input from the community. He believes we now have the foundation for the plan to make a real impact.

The appointment of one or more development/ project officer(s) to help deliver the plan is very important in order to reduce the community's reliance on volunteers. MW and CH have met with HIE (Highlands and Islands Enterprise) to discuss possible funding for this, and whilst it will not be straightforward, they are hopeful that funding will be available from somewhere. The action plan group has also been working with other partner groups in the area, including in Shieldaig where services and activities are shared – for example Woodland Trust, NHS Scotland and Nature Scot.

It was agreed now may be a good time to invite someone from Woodland Trust to a TKCC meeting to talk about their work in the area.

Action: CH/SW

7. SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency) opinion survey – item deferred from last meeting.

MM completed the survey on behalf of TKCC. This was a general questionnaire to establish perceptions of what SEPA does. She reported it was a useful exercise to make contact with them and clarify some of the work they are required to carry out.

8. Correspondence Received

- Torridon residents – two submissions received through the TKCC website requesting that the additional bin bought by TKCC and placed opposite Torridon Stores during Covid lockdown be removed. The bin is emptied by HC, therefore has required HC's approval to move. HC has now agreed this, so MW has arranged for the bin to be placed on a trial basis near the NTS Countryside Centre and secured HC's agreement to continue to empty it.

It was agreed TKCC should resume plans to put a wooden surround around the other smaller bin opposite Torridon Stores.

Action: AS/MW

- Gairloch CC – The Chair would like to organise a regular (say, semi-annual) meeting of local CC members. This would be to share information and approaches to dealing with local issues, eg. toilets, landfill, potholes, where we know we have concerns in common. TKCC members have agreed this is a good idea and CH has responded accordingly.

- Highland Council – HC is updating its Local Transport Strategy, which sets out how it will manage and modernise the transport network across the region in the coming years. As the first stage in the process, they have prepared a Case for Change Report and would like to hear views on it. Feedback will be used to help develop a draft of the updated strategy, which itself will go out for consultation later in the year.

Individuals and organisations throughout the area are encouraged to complete the survey that is available at: https://forms.microsoft.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=brXwiRZt6E-duhdvqUD3yRU_Ny5tojZBsGOkcE6jtm5UNUdYRDIXViZKNUsxQVY3VIFaSEVJREYxTyQIQCN0P_Wcu The consultation closes on Monday 29th May.

MM agreed to complete the survey on behalf of TKCC.

Action: MM

9. Planning Applications

23/01535/FUL | *Erection of extension to house | Heights Cottage, Incheril, Kinlochewe IV22 2PA.* No comments.

23/01775/FUL | *Change of use of land to form allotments with parking area | Land 125M East of Anancaun Field Station Kinlochewe.* TKCC members were pleased to see this proposal from NatureScot progressing. CH will send some brief comments supporting it.

Action: CH

10. Any Other Business

HC has published a self-service online training guide which aims to provide an easy reference guide on the planning system. See [Guide to the planning system for Community Councils](#)

The guide aims to help CCs understand the planning system and the processes involved in decision-making. It covers three key strands: Development Plans, Development Management (including Planning Application Committees) and Planning Enforcement. It also includes chapters on Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Reviews and Appeals.

Based on her experience of planning, MM said she thought it is a good go-to guide and a useful tool that ties in with community development planning.

Also available to CCs is a new system – Consultee Access - designed to enable responses to planning applications/ issues to be managed in a consistent and efficient way, and give consultees access to documents that would not normally be available to the general public.

Action SW

Cllr Birt mentioned that Cllr Liz Kraft is on the HC Planning Committee and if we draft a request, he will invite her to attend a future TKCC meeting to give us some background, especially on Local Place Plans.

Action SW

Next meetings: Wednesday 24th May, 7.00pm on Zoom

Wednesday 21st June, 7.00pm with AGM – in person at Kinlochewe Village Hall