

Minutes (draft) of Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council (TKCC) Meeting held by Zoom on Wednesday, 27 May 2020 at 8pm

Present: Caroline Hamilton (Chair), Anne Macrae (Secretary), Colin Stevenson, Tom Forrest, Mat Webster, Christine Davies, Cllr. Alex MacInnes, Ward Manager Robbie Bain, Firefighter Emily John

7 members of the public

1. Apologies: Cllr. Derek MacLeod.

2. Co-opted members and resignations

Carole MacIver and Margaret Smith have resigned from TKCC. CH thanked them for their service noting both had contributed a lot in previous years. We are pleased to welcome two new co-opted members, MW from Torridon and CD from Diabaig.

3. Minutes of meeting on 3rd April 2020

Approved.

4. Matters arising

Notices: CH confirmed that her contact number was correct on the TKCC notices that had been put up. If there is no mobile signal, calls automatically divert to her landline.

Torridon Play Park: In order for TKCC to access the £600 kindly offered by RB, we need to fill out the necessary form. RB agreed to liaise with AM about it.

Covid-19/SSE grant scheme: CH spoke to the TDCA and Community Car Scheme regarding applying for SSE funds, however neither felt they needed to.

Committee Roles: CH had collected the books from the previous Treasurer and given them to TF who had agreed to be Interim Treasurer. CH nominated TF to take on the role of Treasurer, this was seconded by CD with no objections, therefore TF is now the Treasurer.

Slatterdale toilets: TF spoke to Laura Turtle at the Forestry Commission. Unfortunately, it is clear they have little choice but to close the toilet facilities at the Slattadale car park principally because of the misuse of the facility by caravans and camper vans emptying chemical toilets into the septic tank. We understand Gairloch High School will make their own arrangements with the Commission to continue using the facilities.

5. Treasurer's report

The attached report was noted. TF stated that unfortunately the previous Treasurer did not produce a report for his period in office in 2019/20 and there was no formal handover or proper record of income and expenditure. In addition, TF currently has no access to bank statements since May 2019, as a result he is still trying to piece things together.

The outstanding invoice from Zurich insurance for £86 for this year's cover has now been paid.

Regarding the defibrillator at Kinlochewe Hotel, TF has spoken to Gerry McPartlin at MRT and established that it was taken over by TKCC some time ago, although there isn't any paperwork.

The battery for the defibrillator needs to be replaced soon, this is likely to cost over £300. Unfortunately TKCC does not have the funds to pay for this, therefore TF said he would look for funding from elsewhere. Whilst there is another defibrillator at Kinlochewe Hall, he feels it is a useful community asset that we should keep if possible.

It was noted that the defibrillator at Kinlochewe Hall is currently in a locked cupboard and requires a password to unlock it. The new hall chairman is taking steps to have the need for the code removed.

Having discussed the TKCC defibrillator with the Kinlochewe Hotel, TF suggested the Kinlochewe public toilets might be a better location, therefore we will talk to the COW Trust about this. RB suggested we check any maps/apps where defibrillators are marked before we move it.

6. Bank account signatories

TF has sent the bank the necessary forms to remove the previous signatories and replace them with TF and CH. It was agreed that CS should be added as a signatory.

7. Covid-19 and HIE grant application

CH said that since the last TKCC meeting, various grant schemes designed to help communities through the Covid-19 crisis have been announced. Members have had lots of discussions and debate amongst ourselves about possible applications, we have also been getting feedback from the community.

In view of the difficulty of getting Tesco click and collect delivery slots, MW had contacted Tesco. CH said she hoped the information that TKCC then circulated had helped people understand the situation. His call may also have had an effect as there do seem to be more slots available now.

Tom Mallows is looking at the possibility of getting broadband improved and extended in the area. He is in dialogue with BT, including discussing whether it might be possible to obtain grant money.

CH emphasised the desire to work with other organisations in the area. She has discussed ideas with the TDCA, Torridon Medical Centre, the Community Council and Shieldaig Community Council. She said all the above discussions culminated with an application to the HIE Supporting Communities Fund and she was pleased to say they have awarded us a £21,000 grant. This to fund the following:

- Driver screens for the Community Car Scheme £4,500
The car scheme is currently doing prescription and food deliveries, however due to social distancing rules, they are in most cases unable to transport individuals.

This problem could potentially be resolved if cars were fitted with appropriate removable polycarbonate plastic screens to act as a shield between drivers and passengers. CS has

sourced some commercially available screens that are compatible with most types of vehicle.

- PPE for volunteers £5,700
This is to pay for high grade facemasks, gloves and sanitiser etc for volunteers working in the area.
- New website £2,300
This will be developed and run by TKCC. It will focus on collating the large amount of information that exists in relation to Covid-19. Post Covid-19, it is intended the website will continue to be a useful source of information for the whole community.
- Food and Fuel Voucher Scheme £8,500
This is to assist people who, as the Covid-19 crisis continues, are finding it increasingly hard to cope financially.

CH said she had researched similar schemes in other areas and discussed how our scheme should operate with HIE. They have considerable experience of how schemes are operating elsewhere and they advised it should be as simple and with as few barriers as possible. Our scheme will therefore simply require people to ring up and ask.

Information leaflets will be distributed to households and posted on noticeboards by the end of the week. Those using the vouchers (maximum per week: £20 per adult, £10 per child 12 and under) will be able nominate the local shop they wish to buy essential household items from. Alcohol, cigarettes, tobacco, vaping products, petrol and lottery cards will not be allowed. Shopkeepers will be told who to expect and will keep a log of how much is spent. TKCC will then pay the shops at the end of each week.

It is not known how long the scheme will last for as it will depend on how many people use it.

Tom Mallows asked whether, from HIE's point of view, the aim of the grant was to help people in need, or to encourage people to shop locally and thereby promote local sustainability. CH said it was the former.

CH said she also discussed with HIE several ideas we had around physical activity to help people maintain physical and mental wellbeing. HIE advised this would be more appropriate for their Wellbeing fund. Since TKCC did not fit all the criteria required for the grant, CH had helped the TDCA to apply.

8. Website and communications

CD spoke about the TKCC website. For historical reasons, she understood it evolved in certain ways but she feels it now needs to be re-vamped. Information from TKCC has tended to be posted in various places including the TKCC Facebook page, whereas there should be a central repository of information available to the community. CD also pointed out that not everyone uses Facebook, therefore we should not rely on this alone.

MW, TF and CH agreed we need a new website. MW also reminded members that not everyone in the community uses the internet, therefore leafleting is important.

CH said she felt TKCC needs to be consistent in its messaging. She will therefore draw up a draft protocol on this and on communications in general to be discussed at a future meeting.

9. Roads

We have been contacted by Mackenzie Sutherland from HC who is in charge of roads in our area. He has sent spreadsheets to Community Councils to complete to inform HC about potholes and other work that needs doing. CH said she would circulate this to members, so someone could take this on and become the point person.

RB said Mr Sutherland has a good understanding of local issues and knows the roads well. AlexM stated that the road crew at Lochcarron were finding the information provided very useful and it was making a positive difference.

10. Proposed emergency services mast

CD reported that planning permission has previously been given for an emergency services mast to be installed close to the path to Craig. The planning application stated that the mast would not be visible from the path, however this is not true. It also made no mention of power lines.

As Clerk to the Diabaig Grazings Committee, CD was contacted by Bell Ingram asking for permission for an SSE team to survey the headland on behalf of the Home Office for a planned overhead power cable to the mast. This will run over 2.5km over beautiful, isolated moorland alongside one of the most popular walking paths in the area. As Clerk, CD strongly objected to the overhead powerline and advised that further discussions and a site meeting with the Home Office must take place before this progressed any further.

The overhead power cable is opposed by the local landowner and by the Grazings Committee. In the meantime, we understand the SSE survey has gone ahead so they can estimate costs for an overhead or underground power cable.

It was agreed that TKCC should get involved. Representatives from the Home Office have still to visit the site and CH agreed to accompany them with CD and the landowner when they do.

AlexM said he was not aware of the mast but would investigate.

11. Planning

There have been no comments or objections related to the following planning applications:

Section 42 to amend condition 1 of planning permission 11/04695/FUL at Torridon Salmon Farm

Upper Loch Torridon Ref. No. 20/01745/542

Demolition of derelict building and erection of house, Mary Rankin Cottage, Annat, Torridon Ref. No. 20/01500/FUL

Erection of boat shed Land 1100M SW of West Lodge, Torridon Ref. No. 20/01346/FUL

Erection holiday letting cabin Land 80M SE of 8 Diabaig Ref No. 20/01189/FUL Passed

12. AOB

Fire Service: Torridon Firefighter Emily John gave an update from the local fire crews and said that with more people now confined to home during lockdown, the Fire Service are calling on communities to help stop preventable deaths in house fires by making a five-minute phone call – see attached for details and phone numbers.

Station activity since 3 April has been as follows: Kinlochewe - 21 April small wildfire, Balnacra; 4 May extensive wildfire, Achintraid; 6 May garage fire, Aultbea. Torridon - 4,5,6 May extensive wildfire, Achintraid.

CH thanked the Fire Service for all their work, and AlexM thanked them for their work at Achintraid in particular.

Holiday Lets: Sue Snow wondered what the community was feeling about holiday lets opening up as lockdown eases as she did not want to do anything that people were not happy with.

It was agreed that feelings were mixed. On the one hand, people were concerned about income, but on the other, many in the area are elderly or vulnerable and the thought of strangers arriving is causing apprehension.

Speeding: Lilah Ford asked if the outstanding traffic calming measures in Kinlochewe could be brought to Mackenzie Sutherland's attention.

13. Date for AGM and of next meetings

AGM - Wednesday 10th June at 8pm to be followed by an ordinary meeting, all by Zoom.
Further meeting - Wednesday 1st July at 8pm by Zoom.