

Minutes (draft) of Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council (TKCC)
Meeting held by Zoom at 7.30pm
Wednesday 5th October 2022

Present: Alpin Stewart (Acting Chair), Sue Whiting (Secretary), Steve Schnabel, Tom Forrest, Maud McIntyre, Colin Stevenson,
10 members of public.

- 1. Apologies** – Caroline Hamilton (Chair), Steve Schnabel (Treasurer), Councillor Chris Birt, Louise Pearson (Biosphere)

- 2. Minutes of the meeting on 1st September 2022**
Approved.

- 3. Matters arising from minutes of 1st September**

Bin opposite Torridon Stores- timber screen. MW confirmed that HC can provide a recycling bin and will discuss costings with AS for a wooden surround for both bins. *Action AS/ MW*

Finger Posts Torridon/Blether Bench Diabaig – deferred to next meeting.

Electricity Balgy Gap - Julia Wilken sent update from SSEN who stated that with regard to future network upgrades they have a five year financial plan for a proposed number of named North of Scotland Resilience Schemes, however the Balgy Gap is not included as a network improvement scheme within this financial year. Julia asked if support could be given to their request for the upgrade to be considered in a future budget. Matter to kept on the agenda to look at how TKCC can take this forward.

Planning Proposal to Erect House /Installation of Foul Drainage system Land at 8 Wester Alligin (deferred from last meeting) - members had reviewed by email and agreed no comment.

Road Verges – cutting of verges by HC in many parts of the area has now been done.

Speeding in Fasaig - HC has confirmed to MW that speeding signs of 30mph are approved and can be put up. HC to be contacted to arrange this. *Action MW*

Parking at Fuaran - MW confirmed that a simple No Parking Sign has been purchased for £10 and will be put up in due course. *Action MW*

- 4. Treasurer's report**

SS had circulated the Treasurers Report by email. Only change from the last report was the purchase of Armistice Day Wreaths for Kinlochewe and Fasaig for £76.80.

- 5. Guest Speaker – Fiona MacKenzie, Trustee of Slatterdale SCIO**

Fiona is one of three Trustees of Slatterdale SCIO and gave an informative and interesting presentation. Gairloch High School had leased the building on the site from Forest Land Scotland

for outdoor education and when the lease expired, they had the option to renew the lease or buy the building and land. The parent council chose to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) to facilitate a Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS). A CATS enables an organisation to take on the ownership of a publicly owned asset.

With the help of the Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS) a road plan for the CATS was made. Guiding factors were core values, education, community, wellbeing & employability. An options appraisal established the building was not fit for purpose due to its derelict state and they decided not to take that on, but instead the important aspects were space, woodland and loch-side location. The whole forest was too big, but a smaller manageable area of the forest was chosen within the picnic area near to the existing carpark and toilets.

There has been a lot of community involvement with ongoing fundraising and input from surrounding areas. Fiona feels this reflects a long held desire within the community to take on the area to fill a gap in the education system to prepare young people for local careers. Also to become connected with nature and where they live, and to learn rural skills such as path building, fencing, tree-planting in addition to recreation and outdoor activities, team building, photography and walking.

Forest Land Scotland (FLS) were asking for £3.5K for the site but the SCIO have offered £1 on the basis that the community benefit will offset the cost. FLS are soon to clear fell the sitka spruce on the site, and natural regeneration is part of the SCIO's plans for the long term future.

Fiona mentioned that although school numbers are declining in some areas, she felt it was important to provide the project as a community asset for parents and children who may wish to move to the area, for villages in the area including Kinlochewe, and visiting young groups such as Scouts. The SCIO is currently awaiting a decision from Forest Land Scotland.

6. WRSI Community Council Roads Meeting - 29th September

Meeting hosted by HC was for attendance by Ward 5 Councillors, HC Road Team members and representatives of Ward 5 Community Councils. SW & TF represented TKCC.

The consensus from all present was that Andrew Bone and his team (Roads Manager Iain Moncrieff was not present to comment) do their best with the resources they have, but the main problem is the enormous shortfall in funding from Central Government to HC for allocation to roads and a severe lack of manpower to carry out the work.

Ward Councillors in consultation with Roads Team are responsible for deciding which works are done for each area. The Capital Budget that is for major road improvements, chipping, inlaying and overlaying has an underspend from 2021/22 which will be carried over to the 2022/23 budget. The Revenue Budget, which is for winter maintenance, drainage, gullying, road restraint systems, crash barriers, bridges and cattle grids has an overspend in 2021/21 that will be carried over to the 2022/23 budget. EU funding has now been used and will no longer be available, HC are facing a very high overspend for the year 2023/24 and budgets are likely to decrease over the next few years.

SW and TF asked about the Torridon Glen road, and AB stated that although some of the re-surfacing work has been started, the rest will be scheduled for completion next year. Ward Councillors were asked to consider a possible twin track road for Torridon Glen in the future to get it onto a finance agenda, but although they agreed that lobbying is needed beyond HC to Holyrood and Westminster they have no plan to do this.

HC have made a transport bid for the NC500 to the UK Levelling Up Fund Round 2 which includes improvements to the A890 route from Achnasheen to Kishorn; NC500 tourist route and Kishorn Port. If this work is done, it will relieve some of the heavy vehicle traffic on the Kinlochewe to Torridon route, however it will not resolve the ongoing problem of high seasonal congestion, nor the insufficient essential maintenance and repair this road requires.

7. Kishorn Port & Dry Dock Community Liaison group meeting - 20th September

Meeting attended by SW representing TKCC.

Voyager Spirit has now been moved out of dry dock and will be berthed alongside the dock -the project was very successful. Overall, the port felt it has well managed and successful projects, they are doing well, managing to recruit staff and have good on- site accommodation. Port activities will increase as the Scot Wind roll out begins and with the manufacture & provision of concrete floating structures for Offshore Wind companies.

SW asked how they advertise for staff - jobs at the port are advertised on their website, they like to recruit locally and have a pool of specialists they draw on. They offer apprenticeships and are linking with Plockton High School for potential work experience placement.

Noise reduction and light pollution reduction methods have been put in place to minimise the negative impact locally.

Their fisheries officer reported prawn fishing has been poor over the summer, possibly due to higher water temperatures. From 1st October to 1st April the loch will be closed to trawling.

8. GALE - Planning 4 Real - Coastal Communities Fund

Maria Leslie from Planning 4 Real wished to inform TKCC regarding GALE's plans to apply for funding from the Coastal Communities Fund for a housing needs survey/analysis. The application was due by 7th October.

Because TKCC would qualify within the Coastal Communities location and Kinlochewe is part of the GALE area, Maria offered to submit a funding application for a survey of both areas.

MW and AS stated that Torridon already has plans with Community Housing Trust (CHT) for a project at Fasaig/Inveralligin and surveys have already been done. Plans are also progressing within the Community Development plan.

After some discussion, it was agreed it would be appropriate to exclude Torrison but to include Kinlochewe in the application. Maria agreed to enquire if Kinlochewe could be treated as a separate entity from Torrison and suggested the application could be for CHT to do the housing needs analysis across Aultbea/WLE/Gairloch + Kinlochewe. Maria will keep us updated.

Action: MW

9. Correspondence Received

Celtman Celtman Solo Point Five. Notification from Paul McGreal that Celtman will be held on Saturday 17th June 2023 and Celtman Solo will be on Saturday 24th June 2023. Changes are proposed in recognition of local concerns, to move Transition 2 from Inveralligin to a location closer to Torrison to simplify logistics, and to remove the increased traffic on the narrow road.

ASC audit for Sgeir Dughall Fish Farm. Email inviting contributions to the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) audits for the Bakkafrøst fish farm at Sgeir Dughall. Bakkafrøst is the Icelandic parent company of Scottish Salmon Company, and they have rebranded SSC to be Bakkafrøst Scotland. Onsite ASC assessment will be carried out during the week of 21st November. The farm is to be assessed against the ASC Salmon v1.3 – copy of the standard can be found on ASC website <https://www.asc-aqua.org/what-we-do/our-standards/farm-standards/the-salmon-standard/>. Information and comments relating to the assessment are invited from TKCC and the wider community.

Action SW/CH

Scottish Government Cost of Living Support: New website is available with advice, information and support on the cost of living crisis - see <http://gov.scot/costoflivingsupport> [Link](#) to be posted on TKCC website.

Action SW

10. Planning applications

22/04147/FUL | Erection of extensions to house | Rowan Cottage Torrison Achnasheen IV22 2EZ
Because this application was submitted by AS he left the meeting while the application was discussed. No comment.

22/02498/FUL | Installation of 6m high extension to mast, antennas, and associated works | Mast Site Letterewe Loch Maree Achnasheen. No comment.

11. Any Other Competent Business

- TF advised the Armistice Day Service at Kinlochewe will be on 11th November at 11am. Lillah Ford thanked TF for taking over organisation of this service from her.
- Councillor Birt forwarded an enquiry regarding the Kinlochewe Toilet signage from Mary Peart of the COW Trust. MM will speak to Mary.

Action MM

Date of next meeting – revised to Wednesday 9th November at 7.30pm on Zoom