



Minutes of Caithness West Community Council

3.00pm Thursday 9th November 2023 in Reay Hall

1. As this is the inaugural meeting of Caithness West Community Council, Councillor Rosie opened and chaired the meeting until the appointment of the office bearers. The members of the new CWCC are the same as at the AGM held on the 5th June 2023, therefore it was suggested that the Office Bearers need not be re-elected and could remain the same as at the recent AGM.

Chair Jillian Bundy

Secretary Patrica Groves

Treasurer Heather Thompson

2. **Present:** Jillian Bundy (Chairperson), Patricia Groves (Secretary), Heather Thompson (Treasurer), Natasha Clugston, Nicky Herd, Karl Rosie (Councillor, Highland Council).

3. **Apologies:** none

4. **Adoption of Minutes**

Proposed: Heather Thompson

Seconded: Natasha Clugston

5. **Correspondence**

All correspondence had been forwarded on to the Committee.

Lisa Marchi, Community Liaison Manager at SSE has asked if the Community Council would like her to attend a CC meeting to explain Bettyhill Phase 2 Wind. Pat to notify her of the date of the next meeting.

Alastair Ferrier, Chair Person of ACCC would like to attend a CC meeting. Pat to notify him of the date of the next meeting.

6. **Police Matters**

There was no report. Craig Sutherland, our Police Liaison Officer, is still off work. It might be possible, in the short term, for Reay School Liaison Officer to also act as our Liaison Officer. Nicky offered to speak to Stephen Mezals about the matter.

7. Planning and Licensing Updates

Nothing to report

8. Treasurer's Report

There is a balance of £5438.82 in the account.
Hall Rent paid out £60.75

9. Village Officer

The Fund has been greatly reduced to £500 this year. Karl will clarify if Council members voted for this reduction.

There is grass cutting equipment that the CC can borrow for use in the CWCC area. It would require someone with a tow bar on their car to collect the equipment and return it and volunteers to carry out the work. Unfortunately, the CC was not consulted on the idea. It appears to solve the problem of keeping the CC areas neat and tidy but doesn't take into consideration the practicalities of doing so.

James McAdie has continued to cut the verges in the Village throughout the summer. Jillian will purchase a Gift Voucher to give to him in recognition for his work.

It is important that the Village Officer money is used by the end of March.

10. Renewables Development

The following are wind farms that are going through the planning process and the heights of the turbines are in brackets.

Armadale 12
Kirkton 11 (149m)
Forsinain 17
Bettyhill Phase 2
Forss phase 3 1
Tormsdale 12
Pentland Floating 6 (250m)
Ackron 11
West of Orkney 125 (360m)
Cairnmore 5
Melvich Wind Hub 12 (149.9m)

A discussion ensued about the prevalence of the wind farms in the area and how the accumulative effect would soon turn us into an industrial desert. It was felt that the local councillors had not truly represented the wishes of the local electorate and the CC felt very let down by those who are supposed to represent us.

Jillian and Heather met with Craig Donn of RJ MacLeod on the 8th November. Blasting will begin again at the borrow pit. There is a poster on the Village

notice board, giving dates. Heather will scan the poster and send to Nicky so that she can post it on the CC FB page.

Lorries continue to speed through the village.

Work has recommenced on Limekiln project. It has been delayed by six months.

11. Dounreay Stakeholder's Group

See David's email from the 16th October with the attached draft minutes from the 20th September Meeting.

12. Association of Community Councils' Update

The next meeting was scheduled for December but as some of the other Community Councils had not yet elected their members, it was to be postponed until next year.

13. AOB

Heather gave a brief outline of Frontline and the Community Action Plan. The assessment of data from the questionnaire and the stakeholders was nearing completion. Frontline were continuing to consult with Stakeholders. It is hoped that our unique Community Action Plan will be completed by the end of November.

An update was given about the brown tourist signs for the village. It appears that it is still unknown whether the Roads Department have actually ordered the passive posts. Rachel, from the Customer Relations and Resolution Team is supposed to be finding out what is actually happening.

Karl will ask the Roads Department for a date for the erection of the signs. There has been £3m spent from the Caithness Capital Spend on five pothole menders, grass cutters, gully gulpers, white lining machine and hot tar boxes. Priority is to be given to the rural roads.

Money is given to the Council by the logging lorry companies to try to offset the damage inflicted on the roads.

It was thought that the number of vehicles speeding through the village was down.

Ross Barclay from Road Safety had not contacted Heather to discuss contradictory road signs, road conditions, logging lorries or the brown signs.

14. Date of next meeting

Thursday 11th January 2024 at 3.00pm in Reay Hall

Actions

Pat to email Lisa Marchi

Pat to email Alastair Ferrier

Nicky to contact Stephen Mezals

Karl to find out about Village Officer Funding

Jillian to purchase gift voucher for James McAdie

Karl to ascertain date for erection of the tourist signs.

Meeting closed at 5.00pm