



Minutes of Caithness West Community Council

2.00pm Thursday 31st August 2023 in Reay Hall

Community Action Plan

Bill Mitchell of Frontline Consultants gave a brief background to the Community Action Plan.

Melvich SCIO appointed Frontline to produce a Community Action Plan for Bettyhill, Strathnaver & Altnaharra, Caithness West, Melvich and Strathy & Armadale. Each Community Council will have their own Plan. The first draft will be issued by the end of November and completed by the end of January. An implementation plan will be produced. It was suggested that short-, medium- and long- term plans should be put in place. A survey will be available by the second week in September with a face – to - face meeting with some people after the results of the survey are known. Once electricity starts to be produced there will be a large sum of money available over the next 25 – 30 years. A skill base might not be available to implement all the plans and it might be that people are appointed and paid to become, for example, the Town Manager.

- 1. Present:** Jillian Bundy (Chairperson), Patricia Groves (Secretary), Heather Thompson (Treasurer), Natasha Clugston, Nicky Herd, Bill Mitchell, Iain Turnbull

Apologies: David Craig, Donald Omand, Ron Gunn, Karl Rosie

- 2. Adoption of Minutes**

Proposed: Heather Thompson

Seconded: Nicky Herd

- 3. Correspondence**

All correspondence had been forwarded on to the Committee. Jillian will object again to the proposed Armadale wind farm.

Short discussion on the proposed tax levy on visitor accommodation.

- 4. Police Matters**

There was no report. Craig Sutherland, our Police Liaison Officer is thought to be off work.

- 5. Planning and Licensing Updates**

A porch on the house of Isauld Farm house and a sand paddock at Isauld Hill.

- 6. Treasurer's Report**

There is a balance of £5499.57 in the account.

Highland Council grant of £637.27 paid in.

£16.00 paid to Scottish Right of Way. The fee has gone up to £20.00.

Heather will find out what this entails.

7. Village Officer

Jillian will check how much money is due this year from the Village Officer fund.

8. Renewables Developments

More work is due to start on Limekiln the end of August, beginning of September. The work is six months behind. It is thought there was a problem with the cladding on the substation.

There was another meeting with the public about the proposed Battery Storage plant at Isauld Farm. The sighting of the plant has been moved slightly. Concern was raised about the traffic of heavy vehicles during construction.

Simon Henson has left Highland Council planning and has been replaced by Mark Fitzpatrick.

9. Dounreay Stakeholder's Group

There has not been a meeting.

10. Association of Community Councils' Update

Nothing to report. Jillian would have attended the meeting but it was to be held in Latheron and there was no online access.

Jillian will email the last minutes to everyone.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6th September at 7.00pm in Wick Town Hall.

Nicky and Natasha will attend the next meeting.

11. AOB

The removal of the layby on Scrabster Hill is of concern to motorists. The public were asked to object to the proposal but the layby has now been filled in and planted with grass and wild flowers.

The latest communication about the Brown Tourist Signs states that the flooding in Thurso and the capital roads plan takes precedence over the signs in Reay. There has still been no indication of a date when the work might be carried out. There was discussion about the way forward and perhaps going back to the John O' Groat Journal to get another article written might be helpful.

20mph signs have been erected in part of Reay village as a road safety measure. This will be revisited in 18 months' time and the signs will be replaced with larger signs if the measure is to be continued. The signage is inconsistent as only part of the village has had the speed reduced. The Road Safety Manager of HC, Ross Bartlett will speak to Heather in the next two weeks.

The trees blocking the signs are still a problem.

Highland Council indicated that Nature Scot is responsible for Reay Old Cemetery wall but Nature Scot have denied responsibility. They are responsible for getting the grass cut as damage may be done to the grave stones if any contractor strims it.

Contacting the Hall Committees from Scrabster, Forss and Lieurary is proving to be difficult. As they are all part of Caithness West Community Council area It is important that they are made aware of the upcoming Community Council elections. Ballot papers have to be returned by Tuesday 3rd October.

12. Date of next meeting

Thursday 9th November 2.00pm in Reay Hall

Actions

Jillian to restate our objection to the proposed wind farm at Armadale.

Jillian to check how much money is due from the Village Officer fund.

Jillian to email the minutes of ACC

Nicky to speak to Craig Sutherland and ask about the Police report.

Meeting closed at 4.00pm