

# Halkirk District Community Council

Minutes of HDCC meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 held in Ross Institute, Halkirk at 730pm

PRESENT: Chairman Stuart Mills, Dave Busby, Linda Levack, Katrine Coghill, Declan Gunn,

In attendance; Cllr Ron Gunn – HC, Alix Sutherland - Rural Development Officer (Watten & Halkirk)

Apologies:, Nicola Campbell, Laura Coghill, Peter Blackwood, Billy Manson, Cllr Ron Gunn, PC

## 1. Welcome

Vice Chairman Stuart Mills welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Declan Gunn, who was attending his first meeting with a view to joining the Community Council and Alex Sutherland, the new Community Development Officer for Watten and Halkirk.

### Alix Sutherland - Rural Development Officer (Watten & Halkirk)

Alix Sutherland gave HDCC an update on her new role within the Community as Rural Development Officer, Watten/Halkirk and surrounding areas. She will help manage projects from Windfarm funding, and will be consulting with people in and outwith the Village areas, sharing details and information. She asked HDCC to recommend any projects as they come up. She also gave an update on other areas and projects she had been looking into.

- Caithness Voluntary Group – food parcel distribution – members can recommend recipients to receive a food parcel, there was no qualification yet.
- Lanergil memorial – project by Young Farmers
- Rural Transport
- Green Hydrogen
- Bridge at Westerdale (across river)
- Near Me Clinic

Alix will leave her contact details and is happy to discuss any projects and share information as she gathers it. She also hopes to help with communication with other groups within the area.

## 2. Community Safety Report

No report received by email so far.

No concerns had been raised to report back. It had been relatively quiet in areas.

## 3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022 were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: Dave Busby; Seconded: Linda Levack.

## 4. Matters Arising from these Minutes

- Secretary – contact Mac re dog fouling – *no suggestions from HC*  
Link to report dog fouling  
[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1330/street\\_care\\_and\\_cleaning/473/dog\\_fouling](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1330/street_care_and_cleaning/473/dog_fouling)

## 5. Treasurer's Report

Peter Blackwood was unavailable due to ill health at the moment and there was one cheque outstanding to be paid to Spittal Village Hall from the Achlachan windfarm. Action: Secretary to contact Peter Blackwood regarding outstanding cheque.

**6. Village Warden's Report** – no work taking place until April/May.

**Action: Secretary to find out about funding for Village Officer for this year.**

**7. Area Representatives Reports•**

Forestry & SNH – Representative Linda Levack

- Achlachan road has been widened,
- No cutting, but carting has started.

• Roads

- Significant decay on roads in last week since the bad frost.
- Westerdale/Scotsclader/Loch More – roads are atrocious – question asked on when/who decides when a road is too unfit/unsafe to drive on.
- Culvert at Mybster had been done, but not the potholes.
- Cllr Ron Gunn updated the meeting that a Caithness roads meeting was due beginning of February and a List of Roads and priority is due to be published. The cost of bringing roads up to standard is £4.5M but budget for Caithness is £0.5M
- Discussion on timber carrying company's damaging roads and if they do pay into a fund but it seems this fund did not get spent on these road as Highland Council may not have bid to the fund. (Timber Strategic Road Fund).
- **Action: Cllr Ron Gunn will try to find out more about the Timber Strategic Road Fund**

• Dounreay Stakeholders

The minutes can be accessed from the Dounreay Stakeholder's Group website.

<http://www.dounreaystakeholdergroup.org/>

• Health – Representative Nicola Campbell

- Near Me Clinic (possibility of setting one up in Halkirk )
- Resilience group emails contain updated information on services

• Planning – Representative – Secretary

All emails from Planning are circulated weekly and any of interest picked out and brought to meeting. All planning applications can be accessed from the Highland.gov website.

Current applications – no objections raised.

Mr Alan Gow	Erection of a house, annexe and garage with self-contained residential unit
-------------	---

Proposal

Email from Fiona Milligan <a href="https://www.infinergy.co.uk/">https://www.infinergy.co.uk/</a>	Proposal of Application Notice - Loch Toftingall Wind Farm
--	--

It was noted that external lighting on houses was becoming bigger and brighter which goes against light pollution and saving energy. **Action: Chairman Stuart Mills will draft a letter to HC Planning on light pollution in area.**

## 8. Achlachan Microfund Applications

Top up of £3000 was put into funds.

- Scotscladder Blether and Bite application for funding for their regular social event providing soup, sandwiches and cakes once a month on a Friday. The full cost to run this was £480 for the year. HDCC agreed to fund this, with £300 to be given now and second cheque will be sent for remainder later in the year.
- Outstanding cheque to be sent to Spittal Village Hall for broken xmas light - £250.

## 9. Correspondence

Community Resilience Briefing		Email Updates on Health, funding and welfare	
Objective Connect, Caithness LMP		Caithness LMP (Land Management Plan) – pubic consultation – invite to zoom mtg	
Mackenzie Sutherland, HC		New online reporting tool for Dead Wild Birds	
George Ewing, Rural connections Highland		Cycling UK – offer to come to meeting <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cyclingukhighland">https://www.facebook.com/cyclingukhighland</a>	
Gail Prince, Caithness CPP (Planning Partnership)		Updates on <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Caithness Community Catch Up</li><li>• The Green Energy Advice Bureau</li><li>• Your Police, You Decide: Caithness</li><li>• Local Policing Plans</li><li>• 'Ready for Winter'</li></ul>	
Mackenzie Sutherland, HC		Assoc of community councils – next meeting 01/02/23	
The TEC Team		Flash Report – Near me clinics	

## 10. Any Other Business

### Electrical Car Points

Stuart attended a meeting with Ulbster Arms to discuss their plans to install Charging Points in the old Crazy Hogg building which will be converted to a Laundry. They are looking for help with funding. They propose to make the Points free to the local community. It was decided further information would be needed before a decision/letter of support could be made, and Stuart will request further information.

**Action: Stuart to get further information on Ulbster/EV Charging points proposal.**

### Defibrilators

Jim Sudd had replaced batteries and Starter pack in one of the Defbrilators at a cost of £114.56 which will be paid to Jim. He was having trouble finding out who actually owned the others from the official website.

**Action: Chairman Stuart Mills – ongoing action with Jim Sudd in pinpointing and taking over the running of defibs in the area.**

**Secretary to send Terms of Reference and any links on community councils to Declan Gunn.**

Cost for Hire of Hall

This was raised on last booking and it was confirmed that HDCC had not paid in the past but had no problem in paying now – Secretary will contact Village Council on cost of hire of hall for meetings.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is due to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023.