

Halkirk District Community Council

Minutes of HDCC meeting held on Wed 15th May 2024 held in Ross Institute, Halkirk at 700pm

PRESENT: Chairman Stuart Mills, Dave Busby, Linda Levack, Katrine Coghill; Laura Coghill,

In attendance: Robert Falconer, Cllr Matthew Reiss;

Apologies:—, Declan Gunn,

1. Welcome

Stuart Mills welcomed everyone to the meeting. He informed the committee that Nicola Campbell had resigned since the last meeting. He put on record his thanks to Nicola for her work as a community councillor. Numbers were becoming low and all asked to consider if they knew anyone interested in joining.

2. Infrastructure at Banniskirk/Achalone/Spittal

Cllr Matthew Reiss did not take part in the discussion and remained neutral as a councillor.

Edith Budge and Residents of Achalone attended to discuss their concerns in both SSEN and West of Orkney windfarm to build onshore substations in very close proximity to their homes. They presented a map and they raised concerns of proximity to 15 homes and lack of information given to them. They had attended meetings and voiced their concerns and objections and wondered if any further support could be given. They had already had meetings with several developers and local politicians and requested further meetings.

Chairman Stuart Mills confirmed HDCC were sympathetic and had already similar concerns and objections for the Tormsdale project. They had already contacted Jamie Stone and Edward Mountain and discussions ongoing. As a community council we can join up and support Achalone in all discussions going forward.

It was suggested to still put in objection letters even though a deadline had passed.

3. Community Safety Report

Report has come in for Caithness with no concerns for Halkirk.

20mph Speed Limit – no date known for enforcing yet.

Oil theft in county was a concern in Lybster area.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2024 were accepted as a true record.

Approved: Dave Busby, Seconded: Linda Levack

4. Matters Arising from these Minutes

Benches – Halkirk Football Club had offered to help in renovating the benches requiring some work. This could start in August and they could do Tues/Thu evenings for a couple of hours. This would be discussed further at the next meeting.

Secretary – to publish posts on Village Clean Ups to gain interest from local community -

Update - some interest but set dates to be arranged for big clean ups such as once a month. Cadets offered to join up as they already do the litter pick up weekly. It should be noted the Cadets are already doing great work in the Village.

5. Treasurer's Report

The end of year accounts had been sent round all community councillors and any comments had been included. The accounts were with the Auditor for approval and would be presented at the AGM.

6. Village Warden's Report

Funding received of £500 for last year and another £500 for this year.

No Village officer appointed yet as last years contractor was no longer available.

Village Clean up – Robert Falconer has approached Dounreay for the street sweeper – dates to be arranged and a full Village Clean up could be done on the same date. Possibly arranging lunch or teas/coffee for a full day clean up. Alix may be able to advise similar to the Watten days. It was suggested that someone was needed to run this from within the village.

As no permanent equipment we will push BYOB (Bring your own Brush).

The equipment from Allans of Gillock can also be arranged for the day for grass cutting if required.

It would be helpful to get a core group going for this but we need someone within the Village to help run this.

Community Equipment held at Allans of Gillock

Trailer / 2 Self-propelled Mowers / 2 Stroke brush cutters / Hedge Trimmer/ Backpack blower / Fuel cans

7. Area Representatives Reports •

Forestry & SNH – Representative Linda Levack

• Roads

- Log lorries are back transporting logs (Achlybster and Braehour)
- Junction at Westerdale is atrocious.

• Dounreay Stakeholders –

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

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

• Health

- Lack of dentistry
- Costs of psychiatric locums is a concern

• 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

- Email from Julia Marshall, WHP Telecoms Ltd,
 - o Pre Planning Consultation WIG B-R540-16

8. Achlachan Microfund Applications

- Rebecca Chitty – Halkirk Toddlers Group - £300
 - Lynne Read, Spittal Village Hall - £250
 - John Campbell - Sophie Campbell - £263.20
 - Gordy Levack - Robbie Levack - £133.99
- The two applications from last month were approved by all and the cheques would be sent out. All receipts had been received. (Sophie Campbell and Robbie Levack).
 - Halkirk Toddler Group – summer workshops – approved £300
 - The Spittal Village Hall application for plants did not meet the criteria for the Achlachan minifund and as the HDCC had no funds available at this time, the request could not be approved.

It is recorded that if any member is unsure of any application or the rules of the fund to contact the Chairman or Secretary directly for further detailed explanation on how the Fund is managed and how decisions are made. A reminder of the rules will be sent round with all further applications. All applications are thoroughly vetted before any payment is made.

9. Correspondence

Alistair Ferrier	Association of Caithness Community Councils 05.06.2024 Watten Village Hall	2 reps can go
HC	Local Place Plans – links and event	
SSE	Pathway to 2030 – event dates	Halkirk is on Mon 3 June 2-7pm
Jane Coll	Northern Pilgrims Way – funding letter to all CCs	
Allan Tait	Thistle Wind Partners	Contact and offer of discussions

10. Any Other Business

- Speed Monitors – funding is available from HDPF if interested
- Waste Changes – from September 2024 in Caithness – new bins and full details will be delivered to householders before then - see Highland Council website for further information

Update from Cllr Matthew Reiss

- £28bn expenditure announced – inc Thurso High School
- Thurso High School – the A block being demolished in summer and 8 portacabins will be provided (good quality). Changing rooms to be demolished after oil leak.
- Renewables = there is a good deal going on behind the scenes with many discussions on electricity supply required and renewables required. This is reassuring.
- Battery Energy – there has been no challenge in the risks, and should defer application till Fire and Rescue – queries, challenges and objections.
- Finance – a pause on the NHS Hubs – nature budget has been slashed
- Roads – 34M required per annum.

11. Date of Next Meeting

26th June (including AGM)