**Minutes of the Durness Community Council - DRAFT**

Durness Village Hall, Durness, Sutherland, IV27 4QA

**Monday 10th August 2020 7pm Durness Village Hall**

**The meeting was held in the hall’s lounge and all complied with social distancing**

1. **Present**: Don Campbell (DC) - Chair

 Scott Macpherson (SM) – Vice Chair

 Ron Tucker (RT) - Secretary

Barbara Sutherland (BS)

Anita Wilson (AW)

Ewen MacRae (EM)

Janet Hollands (JH)

Cllr Hugh Morrison (HM)

 Also present: Kathy Parker

1. **Apologies**

Sarah Fuller (SF) – Treasurer, PC Mitchell, Maj. Philip Curtis

1. **Minutes of the last meeting**

Proposed by SM and JH. Agreed and passed.

1. **Matters Arising**

Open Letter, Skips-Letter, Coping with the Pandemic and return of tourism

A long discussion took place regarding both letters. RT had received a reply regarding the bins and skips which reiterated what has already become apparent, i.e. that the skips will initially return for two days a week; this is the same procedure across the Highlands. For Durness, the days are Tuesday and Thursday, 10am – 2pm. The blue recycling skip is permanent. Roadside bins will be emptied twice a week.

It was agreed that a bin at Keodale was required.

Neil Fuller’s twitter plea to Nicola Sturgeon for help was posted on 8th August. This was picked up by the BBC on 9th August. SF has sent an email stating that Radio Scotland would like to talk with someone at 11am on Wednesday 12th; DC volunteered to do this.

The Caa was blocked by campers’ vehicles last Saturday and campers were on the machair.

A suggestion was made that the machair should be fenced off, but this was deemed impracticable. As a long-term solution, it was suggested that Scottish Natural Heritage should be consulted re protecting the area.

The question of extra toilet facilities was discussed, and it was suggested that a composting toilet be constructed on Lerinbeg. Permission would be required from the Grazing Committee for this. RT was tasked with writing a letter to the Chair of the committee with this request.

**Action: RT & DC**

Signage

The signage was agreed, and SM will obtain another proof for signs to be erected at Ceannabeinne, Balnakiel and Keodale.

**Action: SM**

TBRRF - BIDs application

This was applied for through the Durness Development Group (DDG). £2000 has been granted to help local businesses reopen. The DDG stated that it should be the DCC who decide on how the money is disbursed. After careful consideration, it was decided that £1000 be spent on ‘fogger’ units and refills and £1000 be disbursed on individual application up to a maximum of £50 for sanitiser units and refills. All purchases must be accompanied by receipts.

RT to arrange this disbursement through Sheila Fraser (Durness Development Group) and DC on approval by them.

SM reported that six sanitiser machines and refills have been installed in public places around the village and the system is working well. £434 funding has been obtained through ward discretionary means.

**Action: RT**

Sallachy Wind Farm

There was a zoom presentation watched by DC. He has slides available. These can also be seen on the SWF website.

Children’s Play Area

Parents wanted to improve the facilities. We need to ascertain who owns the site. HM said he would make enquires.

**Action: HM**

Beach fencing and notice boards

This needs action after the tourist season.

New locks are required for the Sango board; other boards wait purchase.

**Action: RT, HM & EM**

Petition re Roads, particularly by the Hostel

No update due to the pandemic.

(Post meeting note: Ron and Jo Tucker met with Jamie Stone MP on 11th August to restart the discussion with him – initiated on 19 February 2020 - regarding the sourcing of funding for improvements to the Cape Wrath road and Highland roads in general.)

Community Composter

It is proposed that this should be sited between the skip site and the builder’s workshop on Lerinbeg.

Action: DC

Cemetery Extension

A site visit was made to the cemetery by the Highland Council and they are proposing to dig test pits to ascertain a suitable area.

1. **Reports**

Durness Development Group

RT reported that the Group has applied for SCIO status which is charity status similar to the Cape Wrath Challenge.

Geopark

DC reported that there are no updates.

The Geopod at Keodale is now complete.

Treasurer

Reported by email. The balance brought forward is £4816.47.

1. **M.O.D**

Maj. Curtis sent an email to RT which was read out to the meeting, as follows:

Exercise dates

Exercise JOINT WARRIOR is planned to take place between 21st September and 16th October as outside dates, although whether there will be any activity at Cape Wrath between 21st September and 5th October is still to be seen.

There are 2 periods of bombing booked: 14th – 18th September (with slip dates of 21st – 25th September).  Potentially 4 bombs per day (but I do not know how many in total).  9th – 20th November, 8 bombs in total.  As ever, these represent the outside dates, depending upon weather and engineering, they will try to drop as quickly as possible and then hand the range back.

Communications

EE are pushing ahead with the installation of a mobile phone mast just inside the MoD boundary at the lighthouse.  Construction will start on Monday 17th August and is estimated to take 4 weeks.  Once in service, most of the cape, less the area around inshore, should have mobile phone coverage.

Happy to take any queries.

1. **N.H.S.**

No updates.

1. **Police Matters**

PC Mitchell is now back at work and was seen in the last week clearing the Caa and moving on other campers incorrectly parked.

It was stressed that ALL crime must be reported to the police on the 101 number.

1. **Planning**

Nothing noted.

1. **Highland Council**

HM confirmed the information re the skips and bins.

White lining on the roads is coming north.

The salt has been put in the appropriate places.

1. **Any Other Business**

‘NC500 The Land Weeps’

EM raised the issue of this Facebook page. Apparently, there are a lot of abusive comments on the site and pictures of Durness. It was agreed that the DCC does not agree with the comments and dissociates from the abuse being expressed.

Fires on Lerinbeg

BS reported fires being seen on this area. HM will deal with this but stressed that any crime should be reported to police.

VJ day (15th August)

RT raised this issue. DC stated there will be a small ceremony at 11am with a one-minute silence; social distancing will be observed. RT will post a notice to this effect.

1. **Date of next meeting**:

To be arranged subject to current pandemic restrictions.

These Minutes were agreed at the meeting on…………………………………………..