

Durness Community Council

Durness Village Hall, Smoo, Durness, Sutherland, IV27 4QA

Tuesday 2nd July 2024 following AGM

in the Village Hall

Minutes

- 1. Present**
 - Don Campbell (DC) - Chair
 - Ron Tucker (RT) – Secretary
 - Kristina Coulton (KC) - Treasurer
 - Anita Wilson (AW)
 - Barbara Sutherland (BS)
 - Ewen MacRae (EM)
 - Cllr Hugh Morrison (HM) - Ex-officio

Non-Council Members

 - Maj. Philip Curtis (PC)
- 2. Apologies** Scott Macpherson, Fiona Saywell, Steve Woodruff
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting 13th May 2024**

Proposed by BS; seconded by KC. Agreed.
- 4. Matters Arising**
 - 1. Smoo Cave and Road**

Still awaits action by the Highland Council.
 - 2. Fire Hydrants**

Still waiting Fire department.
 - 3. Defibrillators**

All three fitted. This issue is complete.
 - 4. Noticeboard**

Awaits fitting.
Action: Awaits
 - 5. Local Place Plan**

No update.
- 5. Bridge over burn at Clearance Village**

Awaits delivery. On arrival, volunteers from the community will be required to assist with installation.
- 6. Road on the Capeside**

There has been some remedial action, but the road still needs a full overhaul.
Action: Highland Council
- 7. Mothballing of Nursery**

This is continuing and will be closed for 12 months.
- 8. Fiag Wind Farm proposal**

DC stated that this refers to the Shinness wind farm which has already been agreed.

9. Ground Maintenance at the Cemetery

The vacancy for this position has yet to be filled. However, the condition of the cemetery is deteriorating. BS produced photos showing overgrown grass and debris. BS also stated that the two other cemeteries in the area are pristine and wanted to know why the Durness one is not. HM stated that there is an order in which the maintenance is carried out.

It was agreed by this Council that a letter should be sent requesting that the cemetery grass be cut and the area tidied as soon as possible.

Action: RT

10. MOD

PC gave the following outline of the military programme for this year:

Military programme for 2024

2-13 Sep	RAF Bombing. Timings TBC. 6 bombs
10-21 Sep	Apache gunnery. 0900-2330 with a potential refuelling site at Lerinbeg
30 Sep-4 Oct	RN Merlin helicopter flying training. No range restrictions.
7-11 Oct	RAF Bombing. Timings TBC. 6 Bombs
14-27 Oct	Ex JOINT WARRIOR. Exact schedule TBC but expected to be both bombing and Naval gunfire
4-5 Nov	USS Bulkeley Naval gunfire. Timings TBC but expect 0830 -1800.

There followed a discussion as to whether the RAF can bomb in August; they are unable to bomb in June due to Kittiwakes nesting on Garvie. This was given tentative approval.

PC also stated that the Cape Wrath trail is busy and he is updating their website with military activities.

The military also want to use refuelling tankers on Lerinbeg to refuel their helicopters. They will reinstate the road.

11. N.H.S.

The meeting on 30th May was attended by AW and HM and was very informative. However, it is apparent the NHS has no money and there will be more cuts.

The North Highland care home project is going ahead.

The self-directed support programme was discussed and more information on this project will be forthcoming.

The lack of information in the waiting room at the Durness Surgery was discussed and compared to the KLB and Scourie surgeries which are 'packed' with information. It was decided to wait and see if this improves over the next two weeks.

12. Police Matters (Police Constable Allan Cameron N0784)

A report from PC Cameron was read by RT.

It is stressed that all non-active crime should be reported to the Police by calling 101.

13. Reports

1. Durness Community Group

No update.

2. Geopark

The latest Geopark newsletter was circulated by DC.

3. Treasurer

KC stated that the new noticeboard and defibrillators have been paid for.

The current balance is £8,869.99.

4. Northwest2045

Ongoing.

5. N & W Sutherland Trust

Approval was given for the Durness Gathering shed to be replaced.

Two more applications are pending.

1. Katy Lee is asking for £500 to kit out the school with outdoor equipment.

2. The Hall Committee are asking for £6,000 for maintenance.

Both of these were approved by this Council and will now go forward to the Sutherland trust for consideration.

6. Windfarms

DC has a meeting next week about the Sallachy wind farm.

7. Christmas lights

HM stated that the posters would go up this week. There was a discussion as to who should run this project. It was noted that the lights would have to be insured so it should be this Council who run the project and KC will co-ordinate and take monies. KC will also hold the price list.

The lights must be ordered by the end of August.

14. Highland Council

HM stated that the additional 'keep left' signs need to be renewed. It was agreed that this Council will pay the cost. BS asked if there were any planned road repairs. HM said that only verge cutting was scheduled and that was taking place in KLB at present.

15. Planning

None.

16. Any other business

- AW asked if the gate to the beach at Balnakeil can be repaired and also mentioned that the mill is in a dangerous condition and should be boarded up.

Andrew Elliot is the owner of this land; therefore, a letter pointing out these problems should be sent to Mr Elliot.

Action: RT

- BS reported that the disabled toilet at the Smoo Cave car park is locked and asked why.

HM said that this is accessed with a 'Radar' key. It was noted that disabled tourists, especially foreign tourists, might not be aware of this system.

HM will raise this point with the Highland Council.

Action: HM

17. Date of next meeting

Monday 2nd September 2024

These Minutes were agreed at the meeting on...

DRAFT