

Ardross Community Council

Minutes of Management Meeting

13th November 2023

8.00pm

Ardross Community Hall

Present: Emma Chisholm (Acting Chair), John Edmondson (Secretary), Alison Gordon (Treasurer) and Elliott Blauuw.

James McDougall

Meeting started at 8.00 pm.

The Secretary reminded everyone that although the Ardross Community Council was quorate, it was not quorate to make decisions on community benefit.

1. There were apologies from Peter Allen, David Bentley and George Mackay as well as Cllr Maxine Smith
2. The November Management Meeting Minutes and November Inaugural Meeting Minutes were approved.
3. There was some discussion about filling the vacancy on the Community Council. It would be good to get younger members onto the Community Council. It was decided to keep the situation under review. The Secretary reminded everyone that there was a process involved in appointing a new co-opted member including a requirement to publish our intention to co-opt in an Agenda.

The Safer Routes to School department had not responded to our request for the Report sent to Iain Moncrieff. We would just have to wait until the statutory period had expired before pursuing.

We had also not heard back from the Access Officer. The **Secretary** to chase.

4. The Treasurer explained that she had many thank you letters from households for the Energy Grant. It is obviously very much appreciated.

The Secretary explained that he had a telephone call from the Highland Council regarding not being able to register on the Planning Portal. This is because our domain name is more than 3 characters long. The Council Officer explained that it was a long convoluted process to get things changed, but admitted that this was a legacy from the first beginnings of the internet and times were changing and realised that it should be changed. THC along many other Local Authorities used IDOX which is one planning database. However it was likely such a request from THC would mean

that they would have to pay for it, and that might be the sticking point. Technically there was no reason to limit the Planning Portal to domain names of more than 3 characters.

Maree Todd MSP's letter was discussed about the upcoming consultation on water supplies. Maree Todd MSP and agreed to inform of us when the consultation was launched.

The Secretary reminded everyone of the upcoming Public Information Event on the Hydrogen Plant in the Hall on the afternoon of the 20th November 2023.

It was agreed to reply to RES' communication about their proposed Battery Storage Plant which was felt to be misleading, and not at all scientifically rigorous.

Other email correspondence previously circulated was duly noted.

5. The Treasurer distributed her report the contents of which were noted. Various payments and been received from two windfarms. The Treasurer took the opportunity to summarise the wind farms we were receiving payments from. None of them required spending all the annual payment, and money could be saved for future projects. Something that had benefited Ardross, both the Playpark and Broadband were examples of projects using these saved funds. Maybe a community energy saving initiative would be something that could come out of these saved funds,

Elliott Blauuw stated that he was supportive of not spending the money just for the hell of it. He was also concerned that in the long term future our revenue stream might dwindle, and that maybe we should be locking up some of this money for the long term and future generations. It was explained that this is something that the Community Council had wanted to do, whilst minded that repairs for instance to the Community Hall might need to be set aside; but had floundered at getting the right expertise to help with this investment. And of course there was always a risk that investments could fail. Emma Chisholm suggested in the meantime investigating putting some of the money in a 90 day account to achieve get better interest. It would have to be at a different bank to ensure that we were covered by the guarantee scheme.

Since April 1st 2023 we had spent £77,759.00 on community based projects.

The **Treasurer** was asked to confirm that there were three signatories on the Community Council account Peter Allen, Alison Gordon and John Edmondson. If using cheques became too onerous then there was an option on online banking to set floor limits for only one individual.

7. Some discussions took place surrounding application 23/0343/FUL. The only concern was the limited visibility for the access onto the B9176.

Elliott Blauuw had written some comments and observations previously circulated about the current Forest Plan about the woods at Cnoc Navie behind Achandunie. It was agreed that these should be sent to the Forestry in response to their consultation.

There being no other business the Acting Chair closed the meeting.

Next Meeting is a Management Meeting on the **11th December 2023 8.00pm** at the Ardross Community Hall.

