



Minutes of Staffin Community Council held in Staffin School on 8th January 2008.

Present: Les Downes (Chair), Sylvia Porter (secretary), Janet Lamont, Sheena MacLeod

Apologies: Maolios Caimbeul, Norma Young, and Isobel MacDonald

Also present was Tony Wood, the Acting Chief of Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service.

Tony Wood was present to update us on the permanent fire station at Staffin. Les gave a brief resume of the current state of play as we see it. Members of the community were dismayed that at the same time that land was allocated for the fire station, the adjoining land was allocated for the Free Church continuing. The church has been fully operational for approximately 2 years, the surrounding area landscaped and yet there is still no sign of a fire station. It is our understanding that the initial planning application had elapsed and the land still not de-crofted. The temporary fire station has been in use for about a year, with no permanent fire station in the near future.

The reply was that the saga had been running for about 8 yrs. One of the main challenges is that 42 of the 127 fire stations need upgrading or replacing, the cost of which is between £250K and £400K. There is a budget of approximately £1.5m for our area, and just to do the building work that is required now could take 20 yrs due to the budget restraints. There is a strategic procedure in force, and we need to look at how many fire stations do we require on Skye, the risk/sustainability of a station, and how long a station will survive. Re the acquisition of the land – this had come to light after the HIFRS had received a letter from Staffin Community Council highlighting problems. In November the Fire Brigade were given approval in November to go ahead. It is now in the hands of the solicitors, and we are just waiting for signatures to finalise completion of the purchase of the land. Tony had hoped that this would have been done prior to the meeting tonight so he could give us good news, but due to the Christmas break it will be done within the next few days. He assures us he will ring us to inform us when the completion has been finalised, and also write to the landowner to keep him informed.

The HIFRS were informed about the need for a fire station in Staffin as a matter of some urgency. We have C1400, which is undergoing an expansion at the moment, and we have a larger growth of visitor numbers in the summer than we did 10 yrs ago. It was agreed that our fire tender wasn't fit for the area, and when fully loaded it struggles on the hills. A suggestion was made why couldn't we swap our tender with another area with a more powerful tender, which could cope with a smaller one. This could be looked at. It was also mentioned about the facilities at the temporary fire station, the fact that it is cold, draughty; that all electrical equipment is covered in polythene because of the leaks, and that there isn't basic sanitary facilities. These problems will be looked at. We asked for a time scale for a new station. Once the land was purchased, and funding for a new station was available, the application would go to the fireboard for approval. The Board would decide when building could start. Tony ended the meeting by stating that HIFRS are also looking at obtaining funding from other sources, which would alleviate some of the budget restraints. He then left the meeting.

The previous meeting minutes were approved and seconded by Janet and Sheena

Matters Arising:

1. Bins: Loch Langaig bin will not be done before the spring, the one at Rigg has blown away. Les will inform TEC services.
2. Charity Donations: Some letters of thanks have been received. Still waiting others.

Treasurers Report:

There is presently £1035 in the account. Nothing outstanding.

Highland Council Business

1. Ward Forum – The next meeting is Mon 4th Feb at Tigh Na Sgìre 7pm. The previous meeting Ross Notman from Portree Fire Stn pointed out that HIFRS are no longer allowed to do risk assessments for B&B's. It is now the responsibility of the B&B owners to do their own or have an independent one done. The Water board stated that as of the 10th December that the Staffin area (from Rigg to Flodigarry) has only the facility to supply 4 new builds with water. After that the house sites will have to provide their own water. This will not change unless more funding available for pipe/pump improvements. The single manning of ambulances: ambulance staff were paid 85p an hour for being on call, this has now stopped, so some staff are refusing to be on standby, hence ambulances are short staffed. It is hoped to recruit more staff, or in the interim time reinstate the standby wage. Finally expenses: All Community Councils should get mileage expenses for attending meetings, and the current amount is 35p a mile. This will come out of the CC budget, not a central fund.
2. Local Plan – Copies of the draft policy of the local plan have been forwarded to us. If anyone wishes to view them, they are available on line, on the council web site. Tim Stott wants to have a meeting with the CC prior to a public consultation.
3. Village Officer – We now have confirmation of a grant of £250 for village officer, although we haven't received the money yet.
4. School speed limits – Maligar Road in front of the school will be 30 miles an hour, and 20 miles an hour when children are going to or from school. Speed restriction signs will be going up
5. Planning – ½ 2 Valtos, application for house - no objections
Pre application notice for changes to the Clachan mast – no objections
6. Licensing – Change of licensee at Flodigarry Hotel

Other Matters:

1. Broadford Hospital Newsletter, NHS Scotland newsletter, NHS team updates and NHS annual report
2. Portree High School minutes
3. Postwatch Scotland newsletter and notice of post office closures – non our area
4. Skye and Lochalsh Community Care Newsletter

AOCB:

1. Murdo Beaton from Struan wished to come to a CC meeting to give a talk on his visit to the WW11 sites in France. As it may be of interest to the wider community it was suggested that arrange it for a night at C1400. Sheena, Janet and Sylvia to arrange
2. Culnacnoc cemetery – sheep in again, also some graves have sunk - Les will mention it to TEC services
3. Lay-by at Culnacnoc looking untidy again – to be mentioned to the Trust
4. Street Light by School sparking – Les will ring TEC Services
5. Complaints regarding the condition of The Harmony at Slip – Les rung Harbour authority in Lochaber who will do site visit next week

NEXT MEETING

Monday 18th February 7-30pm at the School