

STAFFIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Minutes of Staffin Community Council held in Staffin School Monday 1st September 2008.

Present: Les Downes (Chairman), Sylvia Porter (Secretary), Sheena MacLeod, Maoilios Caimbeul, Janet Lamont, Norma Young, and Chrissie Ann Ross. Also present was Lachie Gillies, Stenscholl

Apologies: Isobel MacDonald

Les opened the meeting welcoming everybody and especially Lachie who attended the meeting as he wished to bring a problem to our attention. The previous minutes were proposed and seconded by Janet and Sheena

Lachie wished to speak, on behalf of members of the community who had spoken to him, regarding the new cemetery at Cille Na Bhealach. There has always been a problem with sheep at the cemetery. Over the past few years the matter has been getting worse, but this year has been particularly bad. This year they have been getting into the cemetery. It is not known whether they are getting through the fence somewhere, or whether when the grass cutters are in, they are leaving the gate open while they are working, and not removing the sheep when they finish. Lachie stated that at one time 15 sheep were in the cemetery for over a week. The owner of the sheep had been informed 3 times, before another crofter with dogs had removed the sheep back on to the common grazing. A few weeks later the sheep were in again. On the main gate someone had cut the chain and removed the padlock, which, since the last grass cut, has now been replaced, but the padlock from the small gate is now missing. On a hot summers night there are upwards of 100 sheep sleeping on the tarmac car park of the cemetery. The mess they leave is unsightly and smelly, and it is not possible for bereaved relatives, or tourists to visit the cemetery without wearing old shoes or boots. In the winter the wind and the rain wash the mess away, but a member of the community has previously had to clear culverts and grates to prevent flooding. It has been suggested that the road-side fence be continued for another 70 yards, and install a cattle grid, with a side gate for disabled access. Lachie then showed us a set of photos he had taken recently showing us the problem. After a discussion, it was decided that Sylvia will do a letter to Jan Laing (H/C) to highlight the problem and ask for it to be brought up at the next ward forum meeting, and asked Lachie and anybody else who has complaints regarding this matter to ring or write to the local councillor. Lachie stated he will pass the message on, and then left the meeting.

Matters Arising:

1. Keep left signs Lealt: We are not sure if the signs have been erected, but there are direction arrows painted in the road. H/C have also painted arrows at The Storr, and Kilt Rock. Kilt Rock also has a keep left sign, just before the approach to the road.
2. Subsidised taxi service: This matter was brought up at the ward forum meeting. The service is presently up for tender, and hopefully will operate, as it should be. There should be feed back at the next ward forum meeting.
3. A855: The work is supposed to be starting early winter widening the bends and blind hills into a two-lane road, but the budget allocated doesn't appear to be enough for the proposed work. We will keep on to the councillors.
4. Fire Brigade: Tony Wood is currently on holiday. His PA will chase the matter up and e-mail us an update. Nothing received as yet.
5. Cattle Grid C1400: We are still getting complaints about the noise from the cattle grid. Nothing appears to have been done. Members of the community need to complain direct to C1400 not to H/C, or CC. Sylvia to contact Norman Drummond direct and see if the matter can be resolved.

6. Village Officer: Graham has started to do the work we asked, but no invoice has been received as yet. A resident in Tigh Na Glebe has painted the bench, but where it is sited, water collects when it rains. Placing a few stone slabs underneath, or something similar to level the ground could sort this. Perhaps another job for village officer? Another Tigh Na Glebe resident has sorted the drainage problem in the war memorial park, and cut back the bushes. Thank you very much to you both everyone appreciates it.
7. Road sign at Culnacnoc: H/C have been informed
8. Sartle Cemetery access: H/C have been informed, but due to the fact that the cemetery is still used for internments, it does not comply with the Disability Act (Scotland), and access should be made easier.

Treasurers Report:

There is £2049 in the account. We have received the CC annual grant for this year – less the public liability insurance, taken out at source – which is £1004. This money also includes the secretarial allowance. In the explanatory letter attached it stated that we should let the 4 councillors have a copy of the minutes, that we should have a minimum of 6 meetings a year (we usually have 8 or 9), and the audited accounts should be sent to H/C (this was done 2 months ago). After discussion it was decided as previous years the allowance be split equally between Sylvia and Les, and they would get £175 each

Highland Council Business:

1. Planning: No planning applications received.
2. Ward Forum meeting: Young people drinking alcohol on the street, the police will act
3 Community Councils still dissolved
Transerve: new phone number given out for trunk road problems
Rapsons now run by Stage coach.
Next meeting 22nd September. Venue and time TBC
3. Licensing Application: Staffin Stores – Conversion application - no objections

NHS Business:

The Scottish Health council and NHS Team Leader newsletter have already been passed to Isobel. Scottish health council have also commissioned “outside the box”. Information to be passed to Isobel.

On another matter – but connected to NHS – it has come to Isobel’s notice about a potentially hazardous midwifery situation. Isobel has drafted a letter to NHS Highland about the incident, which Sylvia read out to the members, before typing and sending to Gary Coutts.

Other correspondence:

1. Scottish Government: Meeting regarding town centre/High Street problems to be held at H/C offices, Glen Urquart Rd, Inverness on 26/9
2. Public Sector Agency: Survey regarding the race equality scheme
3. Housing: New leaflets for options of house purchase in the highlands
4. Planning: Draft planning guidelines for multi occupancy housing.
5. Marches and Parades: Consultation paper
6. Invitation to meet Alec Salmond: A consultation and meeting at Sabhal mor Ostaig
7. Dr’s Surgery, Staffin: Dr MacCabe is trying to arrange a meeting between Uig, Kilmuir and Staffin CC regarding the future of the Dr’s surgery.
8. National Grid: Pre planning notice for an upgrade of Staffin mast to receive digital TV. It will need 3 new dishes at various heights to act as a relay receiver between Eitshal (Lewis) and Skriaig (Skye). Without the dishes some people wont receive TV reception after 2010.
9. INNIS Newsletter
10. Community Council Newsletter
11. Small Community Housing Trust AGM notice
12. Post Office Out reach Services (nothing our area)

13. Kilbraur Wind energy: Invitation to buy shares on the wind farm at Brora.
14. Crown Estates: Highlands and Islands Newsletter

AOCB:

1. School Gates: Complaints have been received regarding sheep and dog faeces in the school playing fields during the school holidays. It was suggested that the school gates be locked over a weekend and during holidays (with the Respite Centre having a key). There are locals and tourists have been using school playing field as a dog exercise area. Sylvia will do a letter for the school
2. Wandering sheep Clachan. Crofters are letting their sheep wander. Clachan sheep have been seen on the main road near Tigh Na Glebe, on the road towards Elishadder and on the campsite. Sylvia to bring matter to the attention of the township clerk

The Next Meeting is Monday 20th October 2008 at the school

Minutes subject to approval.

Les Downes (Chairman)

Sylvia Porter (Secretary)

Copies to:
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MacKenzie Stores
Staffin Hall
Staffin Stores
C1400
Highland Council
File