

Scoraig Community Association

Minutes of open meeting held on Sunday 11th June 2017

Present: Malcolm Alston, Nigel Rushforth, Luke Richards, Dale Nicholson, Lisa Nicholson, Jo Baker, Bev Beavitt, Jessie Millard, Paul Betts, Ian Hammons, Jan Betts, Aggie Brudenell, Tophers Dawson, Jill Beavitt, Cathy Dagg, Sandy Lamb, Zoe Spyropoulos

Apologies: Davy Forsyth

1. **Apology:** Cathy apologised for not remembering to advertise the agreed date for this meeting on May 14th

2. **Minutes:** Minutes of previous meeting were read, approved and signed by Malcolm

3. **Matters Arising:**

Badralloch footpath: Cathy reported that she had discussed the fire damage with Highland Council, and the Countryside Ranger had taken photographs on her last visit to the peninsula

Chippings: Douglas Miles has offered a load of free chippings. It was agreed to accept these, and that work should concentrate on the worst patches.

Fire beaters: Damaged ones have been taken by Luke for fixing, leaving 2 at the Ruigh'riabhach deer fence gate. As agreed in previous discussion, the beaters will be dispersed along the peninsula. Laurence will look for more backpacks

Badluarach pier area: Peter Young's trailer now belongs to SCA but the shed is still full of rubbish and only access is through the side. Agreed to have a clear out day but Laurence will contact Peter first.

4. **Road job:** Filling bags with pebbles work is available at 20p per bag, Ian offered to do some. Agreed that the best use of materials in holes is beach pebbles, then chippings, then optional sand from John Sangster's quarry. Bits done with this are holding out well, although other sections of track are deteriorating rapidly. Bev stated that limestone chippings are better than sand, but these are £500 per load.

5. **Local Grid proposals:** Malcolm summarised the proposal from Eddie Boyd, Highland Council and response from Hugh Piggott. A statement from Hugh was read out to the meeting, and there ensued a discussion on the pros and cons of the idea of a local grid. Comments were then noted from everyone present. The general feeling was that although not personally interested, people wouldn't stand in the way of others going ahead if they felt the need. The following individual comments were noted:

- Many people don't have the ability to maintain their own systems, and Hugh won't continue to do this job forever. There is a need for someone to train up to take over
- Any local grid of whatever extent would have issues of maintenance, potential meterage and bills, conflict if one user uses more than the rest or doesn't pay bills.
- This could lead to enforced connection to the national grid
- If you're in control of your own system, you police and limit your own consumption. A grid may inevitably lead to people ratchetting up their consumption
- Individual domestic systems are part of what makes Scoraig unique
- Although not interested in a grid, there should be some way of making better use of the school surplus power

Aggie felt that it could be a good thing and that we should find out more about what was on offer.

Topher pointed out that the major obstacle to any form of grid other than on a very small scale was the issue of transmission, which would only be practical within about 500m and therefore only relevant to 3 or 4 houses nearest the school. Costs of power lines would be way beyond the ability of Highland Council to fund and maintain and might have to be taken on by an outside, commercial company. There would have to be a large diesel back-up generator.

At the end of the discussion Laurence proposed, seconded by Jill, that we invite someone to Scoraig to talk about possibilities. This motion was carried 9 for, 5 against, 1 abstention

Malcolm proposed we tell Hugh we appreciate how much work he has done for us all over the years.

6. **Lochbroom Community Council:** The council has not functioned for some time but there is the opportunity to revive it in September. It requires 20 signatures (form was passed round and signed)

7. **Scrap metal:** Bev wondered if it was time for a scrap metal collection. Laurence offered to ferry away while ferrying aggregate to Scoraig, and will phone the scrappie.

8. **EMF:** Andy Cox had wanted to discuss this but wasn't present. Agreed that it doesn't pose a health risk

Next meeting will be AGM, provisionally on Sunday 20th August

Cathy