

Minutes of Meeting

Cawdor & West Nairnshire Community Council

Monday 9th October 2023 at 7.30pm

At Cawdor Community Centre

Present: CC Stevie Webster (SW), CC Alastair McGregor (AM), CC Dougie Fraser (DF), CC Lizzy Rose (LR), Robin Pope (RP) , Cllr Michael Green, Carlo Cabrelli, Joanna McGregor, Jenifer Walker, Alastair Noble (NWSCC), Hamish Bain (NRCC), Meg Robertson (MR), Pat Clifton, Liz Peck, Andy Peck, Alec Rose, Philip Arkell (PA), Cllr Barbara Jarvie

1. Apologies

Vanessa McGregor, James Cook

SW added his own apology to the meeting. Due to working away prior to the deadline for Community Council election nominations, he failed to submit his form to the Highland Council (HC) in time. This resulted in the CWNCC falling into abeyance due to not reaching the minimum membership required to operate. However, the CC will be allowed to re-establish in January 2024. Informal meetings as a community group are allowed, but no CC decisions or financial transactions can be made. Alastair Noble (NWSCC, also in abeyance) added that due to the issues around having to be quorate, there is to be a review of elections and the relationship between Community Councils and the HC.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th August 2023 and Matters arising

Proposed by Dougie Fraser Seconded by Robin Pope

a. Dog Fouling signs for Piperhill/Culcharry Woods

Invoice has been received by Signed Graphics, Forres and will be paid before the deadline for going into abeyance. SW will collect the finished signs this week for putting up at the 6 entrances to the woods. **Action:DF/SW**

b. Smiddy Brae, Cawdor

No response was received from Amey regarding the suggestion to assist with this due to the impact of the diverted traffic during the A96 roadworks. Ventures' quotes for resurfacing and for repairing the potholes were shared with the interested parties, but there has been no response. RP will ask for reviewed prices from the team working on the Howford Bridge approach road. Philip Arkell mentioned that the Cawdor Castle driveway is needing some repairs, so he will approach Graham Griffith to find out if they might be able to liaise on the two jobs. **Action:RP/PA**

c. Road Safety issues following report from the Highland Council

20mph signage at Clephanton is now in place in all directions, but the SID is still set to 30mph. The 50mph and 30mph signs at Brackla have not yet been restored following the diversions, so RP will pass the details to Cllr Jarvie. Cllr Green reported that road safety issues were raised with Police Inspector Craig Johnstone at their meeting on 15/08/23 and they will raise the issue again if there is no improvement. Cllr Jarvie urged residents to report speeding vehicles as this helps to build a picture of when it's happening, so that the Police can put out a vehicle at those times or catch up with

offenders further along the road. DF suggested checking the data taken from the speed monitor strips survey, which give times/speeds of vehicles.

MR questioned whether these measures are effective and suggested moving on to traffic calming/speed cushions, which has been successful elsewhere. **Action: RP/Cllrs**

d. Local Place Plan for Nairn & Nairnshire

An update from the recent public survey was given by Alastair Noble of Nairn West & Suburban CC. The initial survey received a good response and the next public consultation will focus on the priorities. With funding secured, this will result in a professional plan to be part of the Local Development Plan, the delivery mechanism for infrastructure like the new Academy, the Bypass, Sewage, Flood Prevention.

The completed initial survey results will be shared with us in due course.

In November/December, local residents will have the chance to contribute further at a drop-in Open Meeting in Cawdor Community Centre. Cllr Green urged participation. Date to be agreed. **Action: LR**

3. Police Report

There was no Police report to share with the meeting.

4. Treasurer's Report

DF gave the Treasurer's report a copy of which is shown at Annex A. Bank reconciled to 09/10/23 at **£3,422.23**

5. Retiring and New Members

Rowie MacWilliam has now stepped down and we thank her for the work she has done for the CWNCC.

SW is confident that a new committee will be formed in January 2024.

6. Cawdor and West Nairnshire Community Benefit Organisation

Meg Robertson was pleased to report that next year's annual payment has been received and with inflation this has gone up to £76,502 Trustees meet on the 17th October, so any large applications need to be in for consideration at that meeting. So far, there are two large applications to be discussed. Other items funded since last meeting:

- Spare Defibrillator pads
- Cawdor Primary - from annual funding:
 1. Music stands
 2. Art workshop
 3. Dictaphones
 4. Yellow bibs for the playground
 5. Contribution to the P7 residential trip
- Wildflower project in Cawdor village
- Cawdor in Bloom planting

Joanna McGregor asked whether the Highland Cycle Ability Centre can apply - Trustees will meet her to discuss options.

7. Coronation Tree for Cawdor

The Lord Lieutenant has offered us a Commemorative tree for the Coronation, with a plaque, in recognition of our community event in May. The tree, a Chestnut which symbolises strength and endurance, will be supplied by Cawdor Estate and will be

planted in the Jubilee Wood at Ballichnockan. A date is to be agreed and we will ask some of the Cawdor pupils to help with the planting.

The saplings planted last November, which didn't survive the early frost in December, have all been replaced with similar Silver Birch and Rowan trees. **Action: LR**

8. AOB

- **Community Liaison Group Meeting with Haventus, Port of Ardersier** - DF gave a report of the community liaison meeting with the new owners of the Port of Ardersier, a copy of which is shown at Annex B.
- **Cawdor Shop** - John and Audrey Wallace have just retired after 10 years of running the shop and we wish them all the best for their retirement. Local residents gave them a fitting send off with gifts of vouchers and flowers. The business has been taken over by Nyomi, owner of Whisk Away in Inverness. She plans to add deli products and serve fresh coffee.
- **Temporary traffic lights for water main repairs** - The B9006 west of Croy will see temporary traffic lights from Monday 9th to Friday 13th October. The C1056 will be closed at Wester Galcantray for 2-5 days from Monday 16th October. SW added that once this work is complete, a further large section from Culloden Battlefield to Croy will begin, much of which will be on the road, with more disruption.
- **Repairs to Dava bridge on A939** - Ongoing repairs to the Dava Bridge on the A939 require it to remain closed to traffic with diversions in place until further notice.
- **Cawdor School Report** - Cawdor school received a very good report from the Schools Inspectorate and James Cook wanted to thank the CC for their support as a community partner.
- **Winter gritting on pavement in Cawdor village** - New volunteers are required to grit the pavement from the Cawdor Shop down to the school entrance during the winter months. A gritting machine was suggested. SW added that snow needs to be cleared first before the grit is spread. The HC gritter lorry can't keep the spreader running after they go down the school road, allowing the pavement to be gritted on the way back up, due to the tight budget. HC vehicles will be switching over to using brine solution in the future. It was agreed to seek funding from CWNCBO for a salt spreader and snow plough. **Action: SW/LR**
- **Kilravock Castle Community Trust** - A public consultation was recently held in Croy village hall where the group were seeking the support of both Croy and C&WN CC areas for a Community Right to Buy. There is a survey for local residents to share their views and the link is on the CWNCC website.
- **CCCA AGM** - The Cawdor Community Centre Association AGM takes place on Wednesday 25th October at 7.30pm in the Community Centre. The committee is seeking new members, as well as support from the many user groups.
- **John Rose-Miller** - John, a very well-respected local resident who did a lot for the community and raising funds for charity, sadly passed away last week and the funeral service takes place on Saturday 14th October in Cawdor Church.
- **Grain drying plant, Clephanton** - Residents of Clephanton have complained about the noise pollution from the grain drying plant. Noise studies have been carried out and the situation is ongoing.

- **Commercial dumping at Cawdor bottle bank** - MR said commercial dumping of bottles is still happening at Cawdor. Extra bins have been put in place to alleviate the problem, but they are not being used. The HC will remove surplus bottles, leaving Biffa to empty the recycle bins.
- **Padlocked Gate to Cawdor Wood in village** - MR asked, now that Cawdor Castle is closed for the winter, is the padlocked gate in the village open for access to the wood? This was a proposal by the access officer, but not formally agreed. SW will find out and report back. **Action: SW**
- **Cawdor Church** - PA asked if there was any update regarding a sale, including the Mound? No updates have been received.
- **Balmore to Drynachan road** - This was getting badly potholed, and was reported to the HC with photographic evidence. Within a week, this had been repaired.
- **Cawdor Bonfire Event** - No event in Cawdor again this year. There will be a fireworks display at the football club in Nairn and a bonfire at the Links.
- **Abandoned Caravan** - Cllr Jarvie reported that the abandoned caravan at an entrance to Dallaschyle Wood will be removed by the HC.
- **Wildflower Meadow** - Carlo Cabrelli reported that the seeds are now in the ground.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

The date of the next meeting is **Monday 11th December 2023**. This will be hosted by the Cawdor & West Nairnshire Community Group and will include festive refreshments. We hope you can join us.

Note: Update since the meeting:

- Padlocked gate to Cawdor Wood in the village - It has been confirmed that this gate leading to the woods will be left unlocked out of visitor season.

Annex A - Treasurer's Report

C&WNCC Treasurer's Report for Meeting 09/10/2023 – No. 11

Bank reconciled at last meeting 14/08/2023	=£3,043.97
Income	=£555.12
Expenditure	=£59.98

Since the last meeting the following has happened:

Income Highland Council Grant	=£555.12
Expenditure for Treasurer's Expenses	=£4.98
Expenditure for Defibrillator Pads	=£55.00
Expenditure for 6 x Printed Signs	=£116.88

Bank reconciled to 09/10/2023	=£3,422.23
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There are no further outstanding transactions.

D Fraser

C&WNCC Treasurer

Community Liaison Group Meeting with Haventus, Port of Ardersier.

On Tuesday, 5th Sep 23, on behalf of C&WNCC, I attended the Community Liaison Group meeting at the Golf View Hotel, Nairn, hosted by Haventus, Port of Ardersier.

Representatives from the other Nairnshire Community Councils also attended.

The presentation of the meeting was given by Lewis Gillies, Chief Executive Officer, and Johnathan Milne, Government & Public Affairs Director.

It was explained that Haventus had bought out the Port from the previous owners and were supported by Quantum Energy Partners. Michael MacDougall, QEP, has made a £300 million investment.

The two officers went on to give a progress update. The site works will be carried out in timed phases.

Phase 1. Gateway to the sea.

This involves building the quay or harbour wall. This is ongoing now. The quay is being built on dry land and on completion the land on the seaward side will be removed.

Installation of a Sarens ring crane.

A new road down the middle of the site has already been completed.

In the last quarter of 2024 the initial 600m of quay will be opened.

The Port will open after completion of Phase 1.

Works ongoing between 2024 - 2028:

Phase 1a. There will be functional improvement to the inner spit protection.

Phase 2. Harbour extension.

Phase 3. Erection of harbour wall to create an Environcentre. This will involve a Salt Marsh restoration plan. And to add biodiversity to the site will be the creation of a predator free island. Protected species are already present.

At present, planning is in for the Port entrance. This includes a new roundabout on the B9092 and a Heritage Centre. This last item was discussed openly and the consensus was that £50K should be given to help establish a heritage centre in Ardersier rather than at the Port road entrance.

Ongoing there will be new developments to support decommissioning of end of life wind turbines.

Also the production of floating platforms for wind turbines.

The aspirations of what Haventus wants to achieve for itself and the community are:

No harm to people.

Work with fairness, integrity and respect as we move from energy today to energy tomorrow.

The access to site road exists, working on access road to the sea.

Consideration of the environment. Challenge and call us out if we do not measure up.

Safety is paramount and requires community engagement.

Working with NATURESCOT.

After the presentation there was a question & answer session.

On numbers of jobs available, over 200 employed at the moment but as workload increases Haventus hopes to employ thousands. This would include opportunities for young person skills training. This item was highlighted by a number of concerned guests in the audience. Haventus will act on this.

It was also made clear that Haventus will be here for the long haul.

There is a video available which shows proposals for serial fabrication plant for the production of floating wind turbine bases. This could be done at the Port of Ardersier. Go to BWIDEOL

Dougie Fraser

C&WNCC