



**DUROR & KENTALLEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING 8th March 2021**

**Zoom Session
AT 7.00PM**

Present: Sandy Stoddart (*Chairman*), Rachel Shepton (*Vice Chairman*), Jonathan Baxter (*Treasurer*), Steve Bignell, Jeannie Macleod, Chris Pearman, Pat Young, Becky Coope (*Secretary*)

In Attendance: Dave Chrystal, Sandra Jamieson, Charlotte Mair, Jamie Malcolm, Geoff Nix, Liz Paul, Lis Roberston.

Minutes

There was a question regarding the topic of Broadband in the previous minutes, however it was agreed that the point raised was not relevant to the previous minutes and would be discussed later and the minutes were duly approved.

Matters arising

Cuil Bay Sandy said he was delighted to have Jamie Malcolm present and also thanked Jeannie for contacting most Cuil Bay residents prior to the meeting to gauge their opinion re the problems of visitor pressure. Jeannie confirmed that many she spoke to wished to try to limit parking in some way, as parked vehicles cause problems for access for those that live in the area and emergency services, but there is also a strongly held view that we should not act to stop people visiting the area. Sandy confirmed that under the Access Code, people have a right to roam, but overnight parking is a grey area. Access rights do not extend to motorised vehicles, however parking within 15m of a public road is permitted. Parking is essentially a Highland Council issue, unless the road is being blocked, when it becomes a Police issue. There has been much discussion surrounding various options open to the CC in the past, and a further wide-ranging discussion followed. The topics covered were: **putting large boulders on the verge** to limit parking - opinion on this was divided as it would also make passing other traffic more difficult for locals towing trailers and would make parking more difficult for locals as well as visitors; **hygiene** - this was Jamie's and many others' main concern. It was pointed out that most campervans have onboard facilities and may not be the main culprits in this respect. Certainly it was felt that you can't tar all visitors with the same brush. Rachel raised the possibility of providing a composting toilet - it had been ruled out in the past but may be an option for the future?; it was felt that large groups staying for a prolonged period were perhaps the main culprits in soiling the beach; **long-term group parking** - certain groups return to the bay annually and stay for a number of days. The right to park up overnight has been extended by default from HGV drivers to campervans, but the purpose of this is to allow drivers to rest and move on the next day, not to have a holiday; **potholes** - these are bad at the best of times, but when cars and campers are parked, drivers are pushed on to the verge causing break up of the road edge and no matter how often holes are patched, they appear again quickly; **internet promotion of Cuil Bay** - many internet sites list Cuil Bay as a good place for campervans to visit, Jamie said that after one particularly bad weekend last year his daughter contacted one of the sites she found promoting the bay and asked them to stop. They agreed, and took down references to it and said they would block further posts. Charlotte offered to do a web search to identify other sites that could be approached in this way. Sandra noted that Cuil Bay has a caravan symbol shown on the OS map for the area, can this be addressed?; **signage** - whilst it was acknowledged that it is illegal for a landowner to put up signs with the express object of stopping people taking access, it was felt that some appropriate signage could help alleviate the parking problem. 'No Overnight Parking' signs are not legally enforceable. Liz also pointed out that many who now live here first came to know the area as visitors to the bay and it would be wrong to try and stop others doing the same. In some areas farmers free up land to provide parking for locals at busy times. This could be explored in the future, but would require careful thought.

Following this lengthy discussion, Sandy moved on to the topic of appointing a Warden or Ranger. He has consulted the members of the CC regarding to this. Initial opinion had been split quite evenly, but both Chris and Jonathan have now indicated that they had changed their minds when listening to this discussion. Those on the CC in favour had agreed that a rate of £15 per hour could be offered. It was suggested that the role of the Warden could be to liaise with visitors and to record numbers of vehicles and any instances of the law being broken and report these to 101 to build up a record of the problem with the authorities; PC Softley has offered to provide some relevant training. Sandy summed up by saying that there appeared to be a reasonable willingness to try a Warden for a trial period. He put this to a vote of the CC Members and a majority voted in favour. Dave offered to take on the role, but said that he would appreciate some assistance so he would not be tied throughout the summer. He further noted that a similar job had been advertised locally at a lower rate and that perhaps a lower rate would be acceptable. Jamie offered to keep a

record of the number of parked vehicles at any time and keep Sandy informed. It was agreed to proceed with the appointment of a Warden for a trial period - perhaps a season, and to back this up with some appropriate signage.

- ***Dog Poo Bins and Bags*** These have been ordered and should arrive soon. Sandy confirmed that volunteers have come forward to empty the bins.
- ***Post of Secretary*** Members of the CC have agreed to offer a sum of £60 per month to anyone taking on the post. Becky has produced a Job Description and this will be advertised.
- ***Road Surface*** The holes in Achindarroch Road have been patched. David had contacted the Roads Dept and had been given a job number and asked to contact them again if the job had not been completed in 28 days. Chris felt that some further work needed to be done, Sandy suggested he contact the Roads Dept with reference to the job number.
- ***Broadband Speeds*** Geoff asked for clarification of whether the CC had tried the Community Fibre Scheme. Jonathan confirmed that this is the scheme which he is pursuing. He has been in contact with OpenReach who undertook to respond within 28 days. He is awaiting a reply.

Planning

The application for 3 houses at Greenacre, Duror has been recommended for refusal by HC and the applicant has been asked to consider other sites on their land nearer to Greenacre.

Highland Council Correspondence

Weekly Covid Update: £1.5m has been made available to HC to enhance visitor facilities.

AOCB

Village Noticeboards

The new noticeboards have now been delivered. Steve has volunteered to put them up with the help of Christian.

Tracks in Glen Duror Forest

Liz noted that some of the tracks in the forest have been badly affected by work on the Hydro scheme and asked if they are to be reinstated. Sandy will follow this up with John Heaton. She also asked about the possibility of reinstating the bridge below the dam which was washed away some years back. Sandy confirmed that considerable effort had gone into this in the past, and that funding had been found but the project failed on the issue of insurance. Liz pointed out that areas like the Nevis Range appear to have found a way to have new bridges installed, so a solution may be possible.

Village Tidy

Jeannie raised the possibility of a Village Tidy this year. Sandy confirmed that it would not be possible to hold an organised event due to restrictions, but that litter pickers, bags and tabards will be made available and publicised so people can be invited to go out in their own time and gather litter.

Memorial Bench

Jonathan has still not heard back from Sustrans as to whether or not they will fund a new bench.

Glen Duror Hydro

Steve has heard that the current work will finish at the end of March. Work on the final part of the project will be carried out later in the summer and should take around 6 weeks. There hasn't been an update recently from John Heaton - Sandy will follow this up. Steve asked if dates could be put on the work as this would be helpful.

Cycle Track Maintenance

David raised the maintenance of the cycle track which is deteriorating badly in places. Sandy confirmed that while capital funds are available for the construction of the track, Sustrans have no funds for ongoing maintenance, so it is highly unlikely to happen.

Charlotte further raised a question about the safety of the new stretch of track at Achara which runs very close to the edge of the road with no barrier. It was agreed that this is highly dangerous especially for children. Sandy will contact Paul Cronin to see if work is finished here or if barriers are to be added.

Achara House

Sandy has contacted the Planning Department regarding the earthworks at Achara House. He was told that a planning official has visited the site and had no concerns. He wrote again questioning the extent of the works.

The meeting was closed at 8.30pm.

Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on 12th April 2021 at 7pm.