

# Duror & Kentallen

## DUROR & KENTALLEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 14th JUNE 2021 HELD ONLINE (ZOOM MEETING) AT 7.00PM

**Present:**

Rachel Shepton (*Vice Chair*), Jonathan Baxter (*Treasurer*), Jeannie MacLeod, Steve Bignell, Becky Coope (*Secretary*), Pat Young.

**Apologies for absence:** Sandy Stoddart (*Chairman*); Chris Pearman

**In Attendance:** Lea Thomson, Joanne Baxter, Richard Wilkie, Alan Young

**Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous AGM on 9th November 2020 were approved without amendment.

**Chairman's Report**

AGM was delayed until November 2020 because of Covid, so the report is for a relatively shorter period than other years.

*Covid Resilience:* arrangements were set up and monitored by the Council. These were very successful and it was good to see a strong community spirit.

*Cuil Bay:* continues to be of concern in relation to antisocial camping, parking and mess. Various ideas have been discussed but eventually Jamie Malcolm began charging for parking on his land. There has since been intervention from the Highland Council and we are waiting to see how this develops.

*New noticeboards:* have been provided at the school, Achindarroch and Kentallen.

*Dog-poo bins and bags:* are now provided at Achindarroch, Lagnaha, the Holly Tree and Letir Mor.

*Sustrans Multi-user Track:* We've raised concerns about safety, removal of gates and lack of maintenance on the track and welcomed their financial support to replace the Memorial Bench.

*Other Matters:* We've raised residents' concerns about issues around the development of the Glen Duror Hydro Scheme, including ensuring that a track in Achindarroch forest was reinstated, reviewed Forest Plans, looked at Planning Applications in general, raised concern about road surfaces, undertaken the refurbishment of a bench on the main road, attended meetings about replacement of the Belford Hospital, arranged for provision of a British Legion Tommy statue to be displayed at Remembrance and other occasions, and followed up residents' concerns about Broadband Speeds.

The Chairman ended his report by thanking everybody for their ongoing support and encouraging community members to participate in Council meetings.

## Questions from the Floor

Rachel noted that she had spoken to PC Softley, who understood that Jamie had been challenged by a camper van owner who asserted that the roadside was owned by the council. The Council contacted their lawyers and said they own unfenced land 3m either side of the road - so not legal to ask for money. There was then a general discussion about whether the council should then be responsible for policing and cleaning the area. The Highland Council and Jamie's lawyers are in communication and, as Steve noted, there is nothing we can do until the legal situation is sorted out. Rachel noted that Glen Etive hired a full time ranger who will also be patrolling Cuil Bay approximately once a week. Jonathan requested Rachel ensures the ranger is aware of the legal situation.

- **Action: Rachel to speak to her Ranger contact to ensure they are aware of legal discussion in relation to Cuil Bay.**

## Treasurer's Report

The Accounts have not yet been formally checked and approved, so the Treasurer's Report cannot be formally accepted at this meeting. However, Jonathan gave a summary of the accounts as follows.

The total income for 2020/21 was £3,946.08. This was made up of £446.08 from a Highland Council Grant and a £3,500 contribution from the Hydro Power Scheme.

The expenditure in the year was £3,510.37. This consisted of £86 for insurance, £69.28 for Hi-Vis Tabards, £10.34 for Pickup Claws, £20.75 for a gift for the Accounts Checker, £108 for defibrillator pads and £3,216 for new notice boards for the villages. We also made a donation of £80 towards gifts for local key workers. This gave a surplus for the year of £355.71.

The balance brought forward was £6,137 which left a total balance in the Current Account at the year end of £6,493.43.

The Deposit Account has a balance of £3795 after the interest of £0.83 was added, leaving an overall balance of £10,288.

## Questions from the Floor

*Tommy Statue:* Steve queried the cost for the Tommy statue. Jonathan noted that the Tommy statue cost was expended in this year's accounts, so does not feature in the 2020/21 accounts included as part of his report. The statue has been received and is safe in the hall, ready for when Steve wants to install it.

*SSE Grant:* Becky queried when the Bealach Hydro Scheme money came in and what had happened with the SSE grants. Jonathan clarified that the Bealach money had been paid into the bank in the previous financial year, and explained that SSE were offering grants to community councils to cover emergencies like power cuts, or other community benefits. The Council had the idea of keeping a generator at the hall in case of power cuts - to provide heating for the community. SSE suggested instead having a fixed connection to a generator which would be started on an ad-hoc basis. However, we still have the original grant. Jonathan has suggested we absorb it into our existing funds. Steve agreed, suggesting that power cuts seem to be much fewer now than they were 6 years ago, so maybe it is not so important.

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*This Report:* Steve recommended we defer formal acceptance of the Treasurer's Report until the accounts are validated. Acceptance can be done ex-Committee.

## **Election of Office Bearers**

Rachel introduced this section by commenting there will be a number of changes to the committee this year, with a number of key members leaving. There was some discussion as to the number of members required to make quorum, with Jonathan suggesting this was 4. This will be clarified at the next meeting.

*Chair:* Sandy is remaining in the role for now but will be stepping down as chairman in November 2021. Nominated by Jonathan and seconded by Pat.

*Vice-Chair:* Rachel is stepping down after this meeting. Rebecca thanked Rachel on behalf of the Council for all her work and support. Steve agreed to take on the role, although he pointed out he would rather play a supporting role than a committee lead, so he definitely does not want to perform the role of Chairman in future. Nominated by Rachel and seconded by Jeannie.

*Treasurer:* Jonathan is happy to remain in the role of Treasurer for the coming year. Nominated by Rachel and seconded by Becky.

*Secretary:* Becky is stepping down after this meeting. Rachel thanked her for her service over the past few years as secretary. Lea to take over as minutes secretary from this meeting onwards. Nominated by Rachel and seconded by Jonathan.

Jeannie is stepping down after this meeting.

## **Any Other Business**

*Planning:* Jonathan commented that several residents have expressed concern about the application for 4 flats going in Cameron Brae in Kentallen. It is too early just yet to make a judgment but we should make a comment. Steve noted that we need to be careful regarding what we should be commenting on because it is probably an individual issue. Closing date for public comment is first week in July 2021.

*Fast Broadband:* Jonathan stated that the government has promised to provide everyone with fibre broadband by 2025, and it is unlikely to be any earlier.

*Play Equipment:* Jonathan has received a request from the hall committee to help pay for swings. These are expensive (around £8,000) as they need to be to a standard to be insurable. The money from the new 6 houses in Duror was supposed to go to play equipment. However, Rachel suggested this was supposed to be for maintenance of play equipment at Achindarroch, not new equipment at the hall. Jonathan will contact Andrew Baxter to look into this in more detail, and suggested that we may share the cost between the hall committee and the council. Steve asked who's responsible for insurance. Alan replied the hall is responsible for insurance and for safety inspections. It was suggested we fund the £8,000 1/3 by hall committee, 1/3 from council and 1/3 from a grant from the County Council discretionary fund. Rachel noted that £17,000 of equipment in the past was paid for by grants, so is possible to achieve. Jonathan suggested that the Highland Titles may also offer some money.

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*Village Planting Scheme:* Rachel informed the meeting that 2 half barrels have been placed under each sign into Duror and Kentallen, with bedding and conifers, and there is a plan to put barrels by the information signs and to add 6 hanging baskets along Achindarroch lamp-posts - but they are looking into the permissions for this to check it is ok. The bench halfway up the hill to Duror Forest needs to be replaced. (Jonathan suggested prices can range from £300 for a wooden bench to £800 for a recycled plastic bench. Alan noted that barrels at the hall cost £30 each then filling was around £20.) Based on these figures, Rachel indicated the total cost will be £800 - £900. Pat asked if both Council and Hall committees could contribute. Steve was all for both projects in principle, but wanted to wait until our outgoings are confirmed. Rachel stated we are in a strong financial position, and do have the funds to support these small community projects. She agreed to separate the costs for the bench and planting. Jeannie expressed concern about committing to annual charges for this, in relation to the ongoing maintenance and who is responsible.

Richard commented that it was great to see a group making positive changes. He noted concern about getting children to the Duror school safely across such a busy road.

## **Date of Next AGM**

A provisional date of June 13th 2022 was set for the next AGM.

As there was no other business the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.