



**DUROR & KENTALLEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING 11th January 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: Sara McNeill, William Burke, Ann Burke, Neill Malcolm, Sally Cameron, Campbell Thomson, Charlotte Mair.

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters arising

- **Covid Resilience Group** As we are now in a new lockdown phase of the Covid pandemic, Sandy has put out a reminder on the Community e-mail and Facebook page to remind people that everything that was put in place in the villages last March/April to cope with any difficulties people may find themselves in, is still in place and available. Sandy, Rachel and Sara are the main contacts in the first instance should any help be needed. All help given will be treated as confidential. Rachel asked if the 'thumbs up' scheme should be put in place again, but it was felt that whereas this had been useful in the early days of the Spring lockdown when nominated people patrolled their areas on a regular basis - this was not now the case and therefore the signs are not so relevant. People can however use them if they wish and they do have contact details on the reverse should people need help.
- **Sustrans** Sandy has contacted Paul Cronin of Sustrans regarding the pedestrian gates on the cycle track in the section between Lagnaha Cottage and Cameron Brae. The gates have been removed however there are still a number of sheep grazing the area around the cycle track here and there is concern that the sheep could get on to the main road or into gardens in Cameron Brae. Paul will investigate.
- **Duror Primary School/Nursery** Charlotte had asked D&KCC to give their support to parents seeking to have Nursery provision re-instated in the village. As she was unable to take things further herself she had handed the task over to other parents in the village. Having heard nothing more, Sandy had contacted those involved to ascertain the current situation, but has heard nothing back to date. The CC are very supportive of the wish to see a nursery in the village again, but should only act at the request of parents.
- **Glen Duror Hydro Scheme** The various problems with construction at the site seem to have been resolved and John Heaton's regular updates to the community are welcome. Ewan Campbell-Lendrum has apologised for the late payment of the previous 2 year's annual donations to K&DCC and Jonathan reported that £3,500 has now been deposited in the bank account. This was very welcome.
- **Cuil Bay Tourism** Sandy was encouraged to write to Fergus Ewing to add the voice of D&KCC to other CCs calling for a national approach to the pressure that camper vans and 'wild' campers are putting on beauty spots around the country with regard to litter and human waste in particular. This is a problem in Cuil Bay, but we are not alone, and many rural areas are experiencing great pressure. The suggestion that the CC create a post of Warden for Cuil Bay has been welcomed by Jamie Malcolm as the landowner and Highland Council. However, although HC offered encouragement, they cannot offer any support. There was a lengthy discussion on measures which could be taken to limit the number of vehicles parking (47 were counted one day in the bay), and other measures which could be taken to discourage these huge numbers of visitors whilst leaving the bay accessible to locals. As vehicles are deemed to be parked on private land then the Police cannot intervene. It was decided that the option of a Warden should be explored further. Sandy will contact PC Stephen Softley to ascertain the views of the Police. There was concern about certain aspects of the CC appointing a Warden, particularly with regard to their employment status. The matter will be looked into further to see how the CC would stand. The possibility of some signage on the Cuil Bay road will also be explored.
- **Cuil Bay Bench** Sandy has spoken to Jamie and Hamish Petrie about the erosion of the shoreline around the memorial bench at the west end of the beach. As soon as restrictions allow, the CC will purchase some gabion baskets to help to halt the erosion. Hamish and Jamie have offered to assist with placing and filling these using a digger.

- ***Dog Poo Bins and Bags*** At a previous meeting, Ann Wyer had requested that dog poo bins be placed along the cycle track between Achindarroch Road and the junction at Lagnaha, as there is a lot of dog waste left on this stretch. Sandy confirmed that he had checked this section of the track and it does seem to be a significant problem but it could be cheap and easy to fix. He has got prices for bins and bags and they will be purchased once the emptying regime has been confirmed.
- ***SCIO for Community Council*** With an increase in the annual donation due to come on stream when the Glen Duror Hydro Scheme is completed, it is felt that a SCIO should be formed. Sandy has contacted Voluntary Action Lochaber for help with this.
- ***Broadband Speeds*** Jonathan has spoken with a senior BT engineer who has suggested that letters should be written by as many villagers as possible to the Scottish Government, MPs, MSPs and BT management expressing concern at the situation. Many houses in the villages only have 2MB of broadband and this makes life for those working from home difficult especially where there are also children in the household also having to receive their education online through lockdown. It was also felt that a petition would be a good idea. Where possible, hand-written individual letters were felt to be the most effective. Rachel will put a post on Facebook to try to gauge how many people are having a problem with Broadband speeds and to try and encourage people to write and raise the issue. Jonathan will arrange a petition.

Highland Council Correspondence

Covid Grant Support: Funding is available for CCs to help with the Covid situation if needed.

Community Asset Transfer: 2 webinars are coming up regarding this, however this is not relevant to K&DCC.

Winter Gritting: HC have written to CCs to try and encourage them to get involved in winter gritting in their villages. Grit, shovels etc can be provided. In general it was felt that this was not something that people wanted to take further.

Glenachulish Forest Plan

FLS have circulated their proposed plan for Glenachulish Forest. Due to COVID there will be no community meetings to discuss this, however views are welcome from all. The plan can be viewed at <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/what-we-do/planning/consultations/glenachulish-land-management-plan>. Comments should be sent to Sandy in the first instance to allow K&DCC to forward a comment.

Planning

Mr & Mrs William Burke. Application for 3 houses on their land at Greenacre, Duror. The application is for Planning in Principle for 3 houses. Access would be via a new entrance road to the north of Greenacre. There was a discussion about the application. Since the application is for Planning in Principle the CC is happy, in principle, to support it though we may wish to comment further on detailed building plans.

AOCB

FaceBook Page

Jonathan asked if acknowledgement could be given to the contribution some locals are making by posting wonderful, uplifting photographs on the community FaceBook page. Rachel will arrange this.

Village Spirit

William wished to acknowledge the great help and support that had been given to those in need in recent times. As a relative newcomer to Duror he praised the outstanding community spirit.

Rachel said that a lot of people in the villages have been willing to cook meals for those that needed some help recently. She wondered if this could be stretched out? There must be many people that would appreciate a rest from cooking every night. Sandy suggested that he, Rachel and Sara form a steering group in the first instance.

Road Surfaces

Chris said that whilst it was welcomed that a parked van that had been causing a bottleneck on Achindarroch Road has been moved, the pothole that it caused is quite considerable. Steve added that the general condition of the surface of Achindarroch Road as it rises towards the forest is also in very poor condition - the heavy timber and construction traffic involved in the Hydro scheme and felling operations are causing break-up of the surface. Chris further raised the matter of the memorial bench on the side of the cycle track by the end of the new bridge opposite the Cuil Bay junction which has still not been replaced following completion of the cycle track works. Jonathan had asked Paul Cronin in the past if Sustrans could supply a new bench as the old one is in a dilapidated state - he will chase this up.

New Noticeboards

Becky has been in contact with the company that are to supply the new noticeboards, but they are having some problems with lockdown. It was felt we should give them a while longer to see if they can supply.

Defibrillator Training

It has been a while since defibrillator training has been offered in the Hall and it was felt that a refresher course could be valuable. David Doogan who has kindly carried out excellent training in the past has now retired, but Becky has attended a course recently in Fort William and can provide a contact if needed. It was felt that we should wait for a few weeks to see how restrictions progress.

The meeting was closed at 8.25pm.

Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting will on 8th February 2021 at 7pm.