



Berriedale & Dunbeath

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held in Dunbeath Hall
on 05th June 2023 at 7.30pm

1) Welcome, Apologies & Conflict of Interest:

- a) Present:** Neil Buchanan, Donna Mathieson, Francis Allan, Trevor Filshie, Anson MacAuslan, Angus MacInnes, Andrew Jarvie (Cllr)
- b) Members of the public:** Mark Elder, Victor Cormack, Fiona Elder, John A Gunn, Frank Sutherland*, Graham Martin-Royle, Winifred Sutherland*, Davina Taylor*, Elizabeth Black*, Lorraine Mackay*, Sue Steven*, Jeanne Larksen, Jasmine Grant, Neil Mowat, Ellen Bain, William Young, Iain Fraser*, Belinda Hutchison*, Anne Macbeath.
- c) Apologies:** Jenna Irvin

2) Opening Remarks: Neil welcomed and thanked everyone for attending.

With so many members of the public that were there to discuss the Pylons and Dunbeath Nursery closure it was agreed we would discuss these items first. After these discussions most of the public left the meeting.

Neil read out the following Chairmans Report: It has been a difficult year for much being done by the Highland Council. Potholes, Wall at the harbour, repair to crash barrier at Portormin. The excessive noise at the bridge has been monitored and it is hoped that remedial work will happen later this year. The Community council received funding for the strath path and pond. Interpretation panels at the harbour and a warning radar sign at the end of the bridge. Bear have also agreed to look at the road markings from Laburnum to the Bay. The camels hump footpath was resurfaced with volunteers and materials and equipment supplied by Gerry Henderson. Many thanks to him. Different organisations with the community ran coronation events and they were much appreciated, and they have been thanked. The development company has raised partial funding for a new playpark and thankfully this will happen in the next two years.

After 18 years Neil has decided to retire as Chairman of the Community Council tonight, he thanked everyone for their support, and he thanked John Gunn for his service as secretary until he stood down. Angus thanked

* = Task added to action log

Neil for all the support Neil has given the community council over his 18 years. Trevor thanked everyone for all the support and donations given for the coronation weekend in Dunbeath.

Neil stood down as Chairman, Angus was nominated as chairman by Neil and seconded by Anson. Angus thanked both the council members and the public for attending the meeting.

The remaining office bearers were left as is at present as not all office bearers were there to accept their roles again.

There were no other issues under the AGM.

3) Action Log: See separate action log sheet.

4) Approval of Minutes: Minutes were proposed by Anson and seconded by Neil.

5) Police:

a) Police Report: This was circulated to the CC members. Angus is not happy with the format of the report.

b) A9 speed limit/no overtaking: Bear Scotland are going to carry out a detailed engineering assessment in the winter. No further update today. Mr Threipland has agreed the Speed sign can be put up but needs a legal document in place to protect the estate. Anson said that the Dunbeath estate is up for sale in its eternity.

6) Communities & Place:

a) Playpark: Jenna stated that Dunbeath and Berriedale Development Trust recently met with the chosen supplier Kompan. The Trust has identified the essential playpark equipment needed and is awaiting plans and final costs. – No update available.

b) Coronation Events: The coronation events were held and completed successfully.

c) Flowerpot Project: John has ordered new flowers for the flowerpots for Berriedale and Dunbeath, a cheque for these costs will be required when they arrive. 2 pots to be planted – this will be removed until next February 2024.

7) Education & Learning:

Dunbeath Nursery Closure: On Friday 2nd June the public were told the Dunbeath nursery is shutting down. There are 4 children due to start next

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term and 1 in January. The head teacher only found out about this on Friday. Ellen stated there was no consultation about this. It has been suggested that these children can go to Lybster. There has been no consultation at all. This will discourage people from moving into the area. A question was asked about is there not a legal limit on how far children under 5 can travel for education. The staff have been told they are being made redundant. Andrew is going to check and see what has been sent. There is a PTA meeting on Tuesday 13th June @ 09.30, Ellen asked Andrew if he would attend, and he said he would.

8) Health & Social Care: N/A

9) Infrastructure, Environment & Economy:

- a) Dunbeath Strath Path:** Neil has received funding for this work to continue. John asked if he had the landowner's approval for this and he said yes, this work will be carried out in June.

- b) Highland Council Road repair:** The conditions of the roads in Berriedale and Dunbeath maintained by the Highland Council are in a poor state. Andrew had no update on when these would be repaired. The Highland Council need to find more funding to complete the road repairs throughout Highland. Tracey Urry (tracey.urry@highland.gov.uk) is now head of Roads & Infrastructure. Andrew stated that most councillors are committed to the roads being repaired in Caithness. Highland council are to repair roads in Caithness, but we don't know which will be repaired or when. John said that the Smerral road has had hardcore put in a lot of the potholes after he wrote to Raymond Bremner. Anson said there has been some improvements made to the roads but still needs a lot more to be done.

- c) Harbour Wall Dunbeath:** The blocks of the small wall separating the carpark and harbour in front of the toilets is crumbling. The wall is to be repaired but no date available at present. Nothing further been done

- d) Camels Hump:** Foot path at the Camels hump has been updated and thanks were given to G Henderson for the supply of equipment and materials, thanks were also given to John Irvin and Jenna and Ellen and Gordon and the others that took part in this work. There will be a joint exercise to repair other paths in Dunbeath next year if the Camels hump survives the winter.

e) **Planning Applications:** No planning applications have been made for our area in the latest reports received.

- i. **Phone mast Berriedale:** There are 2 applications in for masts 1 on the Glutt road and the other on Conacraig. Anson said someone is looking to put a mast up 400m from an existing mast in Berriedale.
- ii. **Proposed Pylons:** Sue Steven asked what the community council's stance on the pylons? She said she was disappointed that no members of the BDCC were at the meeting that was held in Brora where about 200 people attended. Neil read out what he had submitted to SSE. Sue said this was not read out at the meeting. Andrew stated that Neil said that it should be local people that object not county wide, Jeanne said we needed as many people as possible. Andrew said that it can give the SSE the ability to reduce the numbers because it is not local objections.

It was stated that the power cables are going to be subsea when they get to England. Neil talked about how much community benefit could be, but Winifred, Elizabeth and Sue said this would give the impression that we would accept the pylons.

Iain said that they could use the West line that was used for Dounreay. Iain said that he understands this will go ahead but we need to try and get a route that is suitable. Anson said that Beaully can't handle this, and another line will then run East through Aberdeenshire. Iain stated that they are looking to create a ring so if anything happened, they would still have a working power line.

Ellen said that the wind farms in Caithness created 400 times the electricity that Caithness uses but we get no reduction in our costs. Andrew stated that as of March they had looked at prices and the Highlands get the cheapest rate for electricity.

Anne said that when she asked at the public meeting in Dunbeath hall they said it was too expensive for repairs in a subsea line. Jasmine said that we should state that there is no interest in these being on land and the community objects to this and SSEN should put these offshore. Belinda said that we should all stand together and be stronger.

Elizabeth said that the letter from Jamie Stone said these might not happen with England getting modular reactors, so they won't need the power generated from the wind turbines. Jasmine suggested

that everybody should write to Jamie Stone stating we object to the pylons. Elizabeth and several others at the meeting said that they didn't get the flyers for the public meeting that was held in Dunbeath.

Jasmine wants the Community Council to publish a name for everyone to write their objections to. Winifred said that the plans that SSEN were using were out of date and were missing houses from them.

*The process SSEN have used needs to be challenged

*Write to be local MPS and Councillors

*Action Group to help pressure the authority to stop these being built.

*Angus suggested that a working group between the community council and members of the public to be set up to change the route and the process SSEN have used. A survey could also be carried out. Francis asked if Latheron, Halkirk, Wick etc had joined Brora's objection group. A public survey was suggested by Survey Monkey and Frank said a paper survey should be conducted as well and not everyone used computers.

Andrew stated that we should put on the survey that we want these offshore and this would make SSEN have a look at this option. The visual of the pylon should be included.

Iain said that even if they cables are subsea, they would still have to come to shore somewhere.

Jeanne stated that Denmark can't get spares for turbines and in years we could end up with pylons and turbines that we can't get spares for.

Anson said that in Skye to protect the Cuillin's the cables are being put underground. Jasmine stated that why would the pylons get planning permission when the turbines were rejected in Dunbeath. Neil said that all community Councils should get together from Caithness to Aberdeen this would give us a more united members.

Members of the public were asked to put an asterisk against their name if they wanted to be part of the working group.

f) **Berriedale Broadband:** No update

g) **Dunbeath Bridge – noise pollution:** Following the March community council meeting where it was agreed we would communicate with Transport Scotland to highlight the noise pollution from the bridge. The individuals who initiated these conversations received confirmation of acknowledgement that there is an issue and that repairs will be completed to resolve this. There has not yet been confirmation of when works will be commenced. Still no date for this work.

10) Performance & Governance:

a) **Website:** Neil has removed most of the information about covid from the website but still has some to be removed. Angus and Neil are to get together next week.

11) Property & Housing:

a) **Affordable Housing:** There are currently 4 houses empty in Dunbeath there is 2 X 2 Bedroom and 2 X 1 Bedroom.

12) Resources and Finance:

a) **Financial Statement:** No changes

b) **Future Funding Streams:** Known funding sources are Halsary Windfarm and Crown Estate fund for coastal communities. Possibly funding from the Pylons but this will be some time away.

c) **Correspondence:** Dunbeath District centre have e-mailed Neil regarding his suggestion that all organisations work together for future events to avoid clashes.

13) Any Other Business:

a. The moving of the phone box- The phone box needs to be moved from the door of the ladies' toilets.

b. Collection boxes at the harbour: there is an app that is discouraging people from putting money in the box for the trust. There are several boxes at the harbour for Christmas lights, the trust and the flower project this item needs added to the agenda.

14) Date of next meeting: 3rd 2023 at 7.30pm in Dunbeath Community Centre

Public meeting closed at 9.30pm

* = Task added to action log

ACTION LOG

Action	By Whom	Date Added	Update from meeting
Explore joining other CC's in expressing views on Pylons and submit views by 14.04.2023		03.04.2023	It was agreed that BDCC would join the other Council's in their objections to the pylons.
Set up working Group	Angus MacInnes	05.06.23	
Check what has been issued about the closure of Dunbeath Nursery	Andrew Jarvine		

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