

Minutes of the first meeting of new Brora Community Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015 in Brora Community Centre at 7.15pm.

1.Welcome	The newly appointed Chair, Margaret Mackintosh welcomed new council members. She conveyed the Council 's sympathies to G. McBeath on the death of Gordon McBeath former independent examiner. She thanked Cllr Mackay for taking the chair at the inaugural meeting.
2. Apologies	There were no apologies for absence
3.New Members Business Matters	<p>a) Minutes Secretary- Jennifer Wilson – nominated by Margaret Mackintosh, seconded by Lee Bright. Jennifer Wilson agreed to continue.</p> <p>b) Independent Examiner – R. Sim nominated by Lee Bright, seconded by Kathleen Cunningham. R. Sim agreed to be appointed.</p> <p>c) Kilbraur Windfarm Representatives – R, Sim and B, Honeyman agreed to continue, The role for representatives was explained. They make up part of the Trustees of Windfarm Community Fund. There are 2 more representatives from Rogart, and 2 from Golspie. The trustees are responsible for annual accounts and distribution of grants. The representatives report back to BCC twice a year. BCC gat a fund of £4,000 to distribute as micro-grants. Trustees are in place of 6 years. Chairmanship is in rotation, and is now Rogart's turn. R. Sim is treasurer. The Gordonbush Windfarm representatives are Robin Wilson, Russell Rekhy and Margaret Mackintosh.</p> <p>c) Associate members – Community councils may have a maximum of 2 associate members, as per the Constitution, to act as advisors in a given area of skill/expertise. They hold no position and have no voting rights on the council. Councils may co-opt members should numbers fall below the required number, BCC currently has full number of 8 members.</p>
Agenda item 5 – Highland Council Report (as Cllr Mackay had to leave)	<b>Fuel Poverty</b> – this is being addressed through the District Partnership. The Task Group, including SSE, H.C. Housing Dept. and Health met 2 weeks ago. There is a shortage of volunteer advisors. 1 day's training being rolled out to volunteers, but nothing scheduled for Sutherland. After some pressure, a course for volunteers to be held on 2 <sup>nd</sup> December from 10 – 3pm in Brora Rangers Social Club . This will be followed by a 3 day training (which is City and Guilds accredited). Service in Sutherland is patchy.

	<p><b>Launch of the development of School – Employment Boards</b> which will focus on school leavers and local employers to keep youngsters locally employed.</p> <p><b>Cuts to Bus services</b> – between Lairg and Helmsdale - impacting on Core providers such as Key Housing, The Head of transport looking at options to keep services. Consultations were extensive, but changes went through.</p> <p><b>Blythwood Food Bank</b> – have urgent need of UHT milk, tinned fruit, vegetables and fish, long-life fruit juices. The collection point is Church of Scotland, from where it is delivered to Blythwood.</p> <p><b>Education</b> – school closures – schools can be closed only on grounds of educational benefit, and then only after consultation process of 6 weeks. The results go to Committee for debate and the Scottish ministers can decide if the evidence for closure is robust and acceptable, or rejected. If consultations are due to happen, they are publicised widely.</p> <p>K. Cunningham asked about the shortening of Friday to a half-day. This suggestion argues that saves on light and fuel, but Department buys energy as a package so no cost savings. A decision about spending is awaited from Westminster and Edinburgh before further financial decisions are made.</p> <p><b>Council Service Point</b> - Brora is closing on 24<sup>th</sup> December. BCC recognise the insensitivity of this date for the Service point employee. There is an Access Point open during Library Opening hours. This is an automated service, Golspie the nearest manned Service Point.</p> <p>Cllr Mackay pointed out that if a Registrar was needed one will come by appointment.</p> <p>The Highland council to put a notice in the Northern Times announcing the closure.</p>
<p>Item 4 is Police Report</p>	<p>Thefts at Loth Beach, where caravans have been broken into and low value goods taken.</p> <p>Volkswagen parked at Scout Hall on 12<sup>th</sup> November had its tyres slashed and the knife found in a garden in Mill Wynd.</p> <p>On 1<sup>st</sup> November a disturbance caused by 2 males.</p> <p>A sudden death in Victoria Drive</p> <p>A serious Child Protection issue in the Doll</p> <p>22 fixed Penalty notices issued</p> <p>Gangs of E. Europeans targeting shops in the Highland area, but not as for north as E. Sutherland.</p> <p>BCC expressed appreciation to Police Scotland for their handling of traffic in the village for Remembrance Sunday.</p>

6. Minutes of October Meeting.	Proposed to accept as true record – G. MacBeath, seconded by K. Cunningham.
7. Matters Arising	<p>a) Mini-bus – Badag agreed to be responsible for carrying out a consultation regarding the possible application to “Cash for Kids” The next step is a survey. Interest boards were in the Library and have now moved to the Primary school. Interest was expressed by potential user groups and from volunteers interested in driver training.</p> <p>b) Resilience Sub-Group of BCC – a leaflet distributed was information taken from a Scottish Government Emergency plan leaflet regarding general emergency not just power outage. It did not say who had produced it, and some residents felt that it was scaremongering. Posters continue to go up re-assuring the public and notices in the Northern Times and social media being sent out with apologies for distress caused. The next meeting of the Sub- Group is Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30 in the Scout Hall.</p> <p>c) No further report on Sputie Burn bridge to date.</p> <p>d) - An excellent attendance on Remembrance Sunday by public and parade. The Youngsters on Parade were a credit to the community. The pipers and bugler were complimented. A de-brief is currently underway. Comments need to go to Secretary. Refreshments at the Golf Club were much enjoyed A vote of thanks to the caterer and staff for their generosity. The Poppy collections raised £1,601.98 Thanks to all the willing volunteers, and to R Sim for handling money collected.</p>
8. Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional information on the proposed West Garty Wind Farm</li> <li>• LGOWIT Train the Trainer Course November 2015-11-26</li> <li>• VG-ES Bulletin -1) Free Fuel Poverty Energy Awareness Training; 2) Women at Work Pathways to success Event. 3) Action Earth – Grab a grant; 4)Volunteer Training Opportunity</li> <li>• Response to Gordonbush Windfarm Extension</li> <li>• Digital Engagement for Community Council workshops</li> <li>• Police Consultation Invitation</li> <li>• Response to West Garty Revised Application</li> <li>• HMS Sutherland invitation to presentation followed by a cancellation notice</li> <li>• British Red Cross and European Union Initiative – Community Resilience – waiting for confirmation of date.</li> <li>• Community Transport Grants.</li> <li>• Drummie scaffolding – e-mail to Steve Barron – CEO</li> </ul>

	<p>Highland Council – will send substantive response when more information is gathered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highland Wide Development Plan</li> <li>• Planning List – draw attention to petrol pumps in Helmsdale and to Clynelish Distillery expansion.</li> <li>• Dr. Paul Monaghan – invitation to official opening of his HQ on 11<sup>th</sup> December.</li> <li>• Post Office confirming move to Premier Express. Some access issues being resolved, but concern expressed about steps and parking of P.O. vans etc. No objections were received by BCC.</li> <li>• Letter of appreciation to Linda Bremner for her service to community, BCC and Brora Service Point.</li> </ul> <p><b>Micro-grants –</b>  Canadian trip – to Scout rally - £250 to two people going.  Brora Primary School £53 agreed by e mail  Surgery application agreed as it meets SSE’s community benefit criterion. £250 per person being trained.  Veterans’ Day agreed to same grant as last year  Memorial Gates – approved in January BCC to share costs.  Grant for village Christmas trees approved.  E.W.A at Brora Hub – outing for users in December to Dornoch with lunch. Grant of £267 agreed. (A Friends of the Hub group is being formed.)</p>
9. Planning	<p>A site meeting at Scotia House took place with representatives of BCC, local community councillors, lawyers, and a Reporter from Edinburgh. An appeal lodged with Scottish Government. Site is designated by the Caithness and Sutherland Development Plan for sensitive development, beneficial to Brora.</p>
10. Gordonbush Windfarm Apprentice Scheme	<p>Russell Rekhy gave the meeting a report on this scheme, which includes Helmsdale, Brora, Golspie and Rogart. There is £144,000 to distribute between the 4 communities over 4 -5 years. The Panel have collectively agreed to do more apprenticeship schemes. V.G.E.S. was contracted to manage the scheme. 7 applications have been funded and 6 have already been taken up – the 7<sup>th</sup> starting in January 2016. Employers and apprentices are all local.</p> <p>1 community wants to take control of its own fund, but it is a collective decision to split the fund. The feeling is that it should remain joint. There has been positive feedback to the Panel so far.</p> <p>The Panel is now looking to set up an Investment fund for the future. It will take some time to reach a decision. A positive</p>

	result from the Fund is Panel's aim.
11. Financial Report	The current financial statement distributed to members. Former Treasurer Karen Mackay, will come off the Bank record as a signatory.
12. Public Discussion	Concern was expressed over the standard of repointing by Highland Council. On instruction of a stone-mason, an aging wash will be applied for 6 months after which grouting will be an acceptable colour. Grouting will then be tidied. Friends of Clyne War Memorial overseeing procedure.
12, Date of Next Meeting	The next meeting will be on 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2016 in the Community Centre.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm