

MINUTES

MANOR & CASTLE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Tuesday 26 January 2021

Zoom at 7.30pm

Present:

Eric Anderson (chair), Katie Laing (secretary), Dolene Anne Smith (treasurer)

In attendance:

Gordon Murray, Chris Kelso, Mary Macleod

Apologies

Mary Watt

Approval of minutes:

Eric approved the minutes.

Councillor's report:

Gordon reported having had "quite a few" calls about gritting and as a result grit bins have now been installed at Assaye Place, Morrison Avenue and Sand Street. The idea is that they are supplied, full of grit, and residents are able to disperse the grit where they see fit. He invited anyone who wanted a grit bin to let him know. As a result, Eric and Katie said one would be good for Portrona Drive / India Street and Gordon agreed to look into that (ACTION POINT: Gordon). Chris Kelso reported the gritting lorry had come into Assaye Place, as if spreading, but was obviously empty. Gordon agreed to look into that (ACTION POINT: Gordon). Gordon also reported there had been complaints about people cycling on the pavements.

Gordon gave a number of updates on council business, as the Comhairle is currently in the middle of meetings. He reported the Transportation Committee will be meeting on 27 January and will be considering the Assaye Place Traffic Order but the report going to committee will not have timelines for the Traffic Order as had been promised. Eric reported that council leader Roddie Mackay had told Stornoway Community Council at a meeting the previous week that this was because the college was not open at the moment, so it was felt the Traffic Order would be a bit pointless until college resumed. Gordon disagreed with the council leader's view but Eric agreed, saying he had not seen a build up of traffic in Willowglen like there was previously.

Gordon reported that Stornoway Primary is to lose its dedicated Head Teacher, with the shared 'Executive Heads' for primary schools being voted through at the council that day. Gordon and Rae Mackenzie had put forward an amendment against these posts but were unsuccessful. An amendment blocking Executive Heads for secondaries succeeded.

Gordon also reported that the Comhairle's Business Plan proposals, voted through last year, were now coming under scrutiny at the current meetings and he expressed concern

that council members had been voting on proposals without understanding consequences. Gordon said he had recorded his dissent and asked for impact assessments.

Gordon spoke about Council Tax. Eric reported that Roddie Mackay would be pushing for a 4.5 per cent rise on Council Tax; Gordon said he and the SNP group would oppose that and look for a Council Tax freeze, due to all the impacts of Covid 19. Likely to be decided at the end of February.

Stornoway Community Council

Gordon reported that Stornoway Community Council was in urgent need of new members, due to several leaving. Eric and Katie agreed and appealed for anyone interested to join.

Columbia Play playpark:

Eric reported that the colour of the matting has been selected – red – and the equipment will be installed in due course. Hopefully soon.

Crown Estate funding

Eric reported we had been unable to apply for Crown Estate funding for the plans for the allotments and shed behind Grianan due to a lack of clarity at the Comhairle over ownership of the ground and plans for its future use. Gordon offered to look into that again and get some answers (ACTION POINT: Gordon).

Eric reported from Sharon Reid that a job description is being worked up for the post of Community Development Worker, to be shared between Manor & Castle and the Cearns, after the successful bid for Crown Estate funds for this post. Eric said that once this person is appointed, they will help us work up our application for the allotments etc for the next round of Crown Estate applications.

Gordon said it might then be time to revisit the development of off-road parking and Eric agreed there were parking issues on Morrison Avenue, Portrona Drive and India Street. It was agreed to put potential Manor and Castle projects to be worked up by the Community Development Worker on the agenda for the next meeting (ACTION POINT: Katie) and to invite them along once they have been appointed.

Future social events

Eric expressed “big disappointment” that there would be no Spring trip in 2021 and general disappointment was expressed at the social situation due to Covid. Hopefully, it will be possible to arrange something similar to the Christmas lunch in the summer, depending on progress with the vaccination programme and other variables.

Litter around the canal

Chris Kelso expressed concern at the amount of litter at the canal bank, from the Bridge Centre up towards the bowling club and Canada Crescent. Gordon offered to find out who is responsible for clean ups. (ACTION POINT: Gordon). Chris also expressed concern at the state of the Low Road in the Castle Grounds this week, not passable due to ice.

Financial Update

Dolene reported there was £9,599.62 in the account at the time of the meeting.
Eric reported the £250 cost of the Christmas hampers would not be replaced from Ward funding as that had not been passed by the Comhairle.

Date of next meeting:

Back to the third Tuesday of every month, so Tuesday, 16th February at 7.30pm via Zoom (open to all members of the association).

ends