

Ardersier Community Liaison Group

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 24th November 2021

Location: Meeting held via video call

Present:

- Kevin Reid - Chair (KR)

Ardersier and Petty Community Council

- Janet Scorgie (JS)
- Christine Wood (CW)

The Highland Council

- Cllr Trish Robertson (TR)

Scottish Water (SW) and ESD

- Paul Sexton, General Manager – Alliance Management (PS)
- Graeme Campbell, Project Manager, ESD (GC)
- Gavin Steel, Corporate Affairs Manager (GSt)

Apologies: n/a



Community Liaison Group Objective

'The aim of the community liaison group is to minimise any negative impact and maximise the positive impact on the local community.'

The group will provide feedback and guidance on Scottish Water's programme of engagement and communication with the local community, elected representatives and other stakeholders throughout the construction element of the approved projects. This will facilitate feedback and enable informed debate that will help Scottish Water identify areas of concern, explore solutions, aid communication and progress the projects.'

Minutes

1. Welcome & introductions

KR welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Review of previous minutes and actions

KR noted that one amendment had been proposed to the draft minutes of the previous meeting. TR proposed the minutes, CW seconded them and they were accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

Actions were reviewed as follows:

Action 1: If confirmed by the Community Council, ESD to arrange for the central boulder to be moved out of the way to restore easier vehicle access across the coastal path to the beach at the next opportunity.

GC noted that following a discussion by the Community Council and request that the boulders be removed from the edge of the coastal path altogether, this had been done.

Action 2: Scottish Water / ESD to confirm dates for the site's permanent power supply to be installed when received from the contractor.

GC informed members that iUS had now confirmed their timescale for the permanent power supply to be connected. The road crossing which was associated with this work was expected to be delivered between Monday 6 December and Thursday 9 December. iUS was expected to complete their work by Thursday 16 December. SSEN



would then make the final connection to the electricity network on Friday 17 December, when a planned interruption to the WWTW's existing power supply would be required. Preparations were in place for this and no impact on power supply to other customers in the community was expected.

KR sought confirmation that the road crossing would be achieved on a 'half and half' basis without need for a road closure. GC confirmed that this was correct.

Action 3: Scottish Water to follow up with CW and inspect condition of bund along the coastal path, where Scottish Water Horizons had installed the new rising main to the WWTW.

GSt explained that although he had not succeeded in speaking to CW about this, the concern had been followed up by ESD's Site Manager, who had also been involved in the earlier work by Scottish Water Horizons. He had walked the length of the Scottish Water Horizons work that had impacted upon the bund and had not noted any issues. GC noted that he understood the pipe-laying work had not involved disturbance to the bund along its full length.

No members were aware of the location of the problem that had been mentioned and it was agreed that this could be revisited if a specific location could be confirmed.

3. ESD project progress update

GC noted that there were currently 2 cranes on site and the assembly of the revised Picket Fence Thickener tank had taken place on the day of the meeting. He talked members through photographs which showed the stages of the assembly process. The tank itself was now up to its full height, but he noted that there was a plate and the gantry structure, with folding handrail, which would go on top of the tank, as shown in the planning drawings.

GC noted that there had been an issue in obtaining the local control panel which would be part of the handrail mechanism. This had been impacted by a global shortage of semi-conductors / chips. Work was ongoing and had been for some time in an effort to resolve this with the supplier, Siemens, but the installation of the gantry and handrail would be delayed as a result.

GC explained that the motor mechanism was expected to be mounted on the tank and connected up in advance of the operational access gantry being installed. This should allow the tank to be commissioned before the folding handrail was installed.

GC noted there had also been an issue arising from an electrical contractor going into administration. Work was being taken forward via the subcontractor who had been engaged previously and was still trading, but it had taken some extra time to put alternative contract arrangements in place.

GC explained that the site team was targeting mid-February for 'turn of flows' once all electrical work was complete and the Picket Fence Thickener tank was tested and commissioned. GC apologised for the delay in the work that required semi-conductor components, but explained that this was unfortunately beyond the project team's control in the current circumstances.

GC noted that drawings had been completed for submission to Highland Council with proposed revisions to the planting scheme for the landscaped bunds, as had been discussed at the September meeting. Scots Pine trees which had not become established successfully would be replaced by birch and rowan trees which were more suitable to the ground conditions. Subject to feedback from the planning service, it was hoped that the replacement trees could be planted out before the end of the year.

GSt noted that the electrical connection work was also expected to happen between 6th and 17th December, as already noted under Action 2.

GC added that the removal of the hoarding was dependent on the completion of the re-planting and he hoped this would take place immediately before the Christmas holiday period or early in the new year. GC noted that a lot of blackthorn and brambles had become established around the hoarding.

JS asked if it was correct that there was a fence behind the hoarding.

GC confirmed that there was a security fence but this was located inside the landscaped bunds so it would not be seen from the coastal path in the way that the hoarding is.

4. Feedback and discussion

- **Road closed signage on C1005**

JS noted that she had seen personnel putting up 'road closed' signs on the C1005 'back road'. She had not been aware of this and asked if this was connected with access for the cranes.

GC explained that this reflected the normal operation of the site's Traffic Management Plan for HGV traffic, although this was now only needed infrequently.



GC explained that the only remaining HGV delivery anticipated was for the handrail and the gantry which would be installed in due course on the top of the redesigned Picket Fence Thickener tank.

JS noted that the road hadn't been closed for a while and that she had been able to drive through today.

GC explained that there was only a short section of the road near the rifle range which had to be closed to allow HGV convoys to use the route and that the closure was generally for a very short duration, starting immediately before the use of the road by a convoy, with the road able to re-open as soon as vehicles had dropped off equipment and returned via the same route to the A96.

- **Leaving a legacy**

GSt noted that while not strictly legacy-related, Scottish Water had been approached about a month ago by Butterfly Conservation Scotland, who had been working with John Orr of the Highlife Highland Ranger Service to look at opportunity for further habitat improvement, which would be beneficial to the population of Dingy Skipper and Small Blue butterflies at Ardersier Common. GSt understood that JAPES and others in the community had worked with John on habitat improvement within the Common in the past.

GSt shared a plan and outline of their proposal which Butterfly Conservation Scotland had provided and noted that Scottish Water had also approached the Community Council to seek their input.

Scottish Water was being asked to give permission for the proposed work as the landowner on the section of coastal path alongside the WWTW, which was required for a funding application to progress. GSt explained that Scottish Water was minded to give permission, but had wanted to seek the community's input first. The work itself was some time away and depended on the outcome of the funding application process.

JS noted that it had been discussed at the Community Council in November and people had wanted some more information. She had been taken round by John Orr and had got a better understanding of what was proposed, which would allow her to take it back to the Community Council on Wednesday 1st December.

Action 1: Ardersier & Petty Community Council to confirm if it is content for Scottish Water to give permission for the proposed project on its land, which would allow a funding application to be moved forward.



JS noted that John Orr was hoping to come along to a future meeting and asked if GSt could pass on contact details for David Hill of Butterfly Conservation Scotland. GSt confirmed that he would do this.

Action 2: GSt to pass on Butterfly Conservation Scotland contact details to JS.

There were no other questions or issues from members.

5. Future meetings

KR asked if there was a date for a future meeting.

GSt noted that no further dates had yet been pencilled into the diary beyond the end of 2021.

If the established pattern was followed into the new year, the next two meetings would be:

- Wednesday 26th January, 5:30pm; and
- Wednesday 30th March, 5:30pm

If members were interested and daylight permitted, the March meeting might be able to take place on site to allow members to see around the site, which was expected to be operational by then.

Action 3: GSt to circulate diary appointments for the next two proposed meetings, as noted above.

KR thanked attendees for their participation in the discussion and closed the meeting.