

Assynt Resilience Group

Assynt Development Trust, Assynt Community Council
Community Care Assynt, Connect Assynt working together

Minutes of Zoom meeting held at 5:00pm Monday 22nd February 2021

Present: Willie Jack, Bill Wardley Smith CCA, Liam Taylor ACC, Jane Young, CA, Observing: Ewen McLachlan ADT
Apologies: Sarah-Ann MacLeod ADT

Any conflicts of interest? None

1. Minutes of last meeting –Proposed LT and seconded WWS and All agreed

2. Finance review

- a) **STP grant** – There is £700+ available which must be spent by 31st March 2021. LT asked about possibility of using this fund to buy FFP2 masks, it was also suggested that the food larder could supply small bottles of hand sanitizer. WJ to liaise with AP.
- b) **WDB Fund** - LT confirmed that ACC has received £1,500 from the Covid-related HC Ward Discretionary Budget. This includes almost £600 towards electrical work at the Food Larder. £500 of the grant has been paid out to Lochinver village Hall for supporting the Assynt Food Bank. LT advised that the village hall committee will soon publish information about the likely timetable for reopening.
- c) **HC Fuel Grant** - Despite contact with Highland Council over the PayPoint versus the Post Office PayOut systems it appears that the fuel grant voucher can only be redeemed at PayPoint – in our case the nearest location is Ullapool. The deadline remains the end of February. The grant process has been widely advertised throughout Assynt.
- d) **Communities Recovery Fund** – A Sutherland wide application was submitted via Kyle of Sutherland Dev Trust and on behalf of the ARG ADT have submitted an Assynt application. We should hear more withing the next two weeks.
- e) **MFR Cash for kids** – WJ approached Colin Masterson head teacher of Lochinver primary school and found out that he has already made an application on behalf of children at the primary school who may fit the criteria. WJ said he would ask Colin if it was likely that Assynt High School children in need may miss out?

3. Food bank/ Food Larder

- a) **Food Bank:** WWS advised that the delivery from Williamsons on behalf of FairShare was arriving on Tuesday morning to the village Hall and he hoped that he could recruit some people to help move it to the community room on Thursday. Some previous recipients of food bank help have come off the list and some have been added and at present there are four families in receipt of help. Some only needed help in the short term due to changing circumstances. WWS advised that he has received a further £50 donation towards fresh food costs from a local resident and he has been told by Ken Hamilton that there will be a donation transferred this week from last years Harvest Festival. WWS advised that at present those who are in receipt of food bank help are often those whose Universal Credit has not come through. He feels that once a Food Larder is up and running it will change the dynamics.
- b) **Food Larder progress** – WJ advised that Travis Perkins had delivered all the materials for fitting out the food larder shed and some of the materials have been moved inside the leisure centre lobby for protection against the weather. Vinyl flooring still needs to be ordered. The internal fit out will start next week.

4. AOB

- a) **Lochinver Harbour** – Scottish fishing boats in at present are insufficient to keep the harbour running. Spanish boats have returned but they don't employ many people in Lochinver. Two smaller French trawlers have been back and a larger French boat is due in tomorrow. This will require the fish being graded on the pier

and environmental health dept have to issue certificates. If this all goes well over the next 10-14 days this may draw other boats back from landing in Killybegs, Ireland.

- b) **Letter to Scottish Govt.** – With the changing circumstances of foreign owned fishing boats in Lochinver the letter which LT and EM drafted to Fergus Ewing at the Scottish Govt has not been sent yet.
 - c) **Covid testing** – testing has been introduced for senior pupils at Ullapool HS and due to Assynt Medical practice being a vaccination centre they are not involved in any local testing. There has been concern about testing of fishing boat crews due to change overs and there is still no testing done in Lochinver.
 - d) **Grant money should be spent locally** – LT was asked if there is grant money available for provision of goods, could this not be spent in local shops? The meeting agreed that this would be the case where possible.
5. **Next meeting: Monday 29th March 2021 5:00pm**