

**DRAFT Minutes of the Garve & District Community Council ordinary meeting**

**held on Tuesday 6 May 2025 on webcam & via hybrid at Garve Public Hall**

**Community Council elected members present**: Kenny Maclean (Chairman & Secretary), Bob Moir (Vice Chairman), Caroline Gamble (Treasurer) and Sadie-Michaela Harris.

**Community Council co-opted members present:** Simon Friend.

**Also present**: Cllr Liz Kraft (from 8.15pm until 10.00pm), Fiona Milligan & Katrina Walker (Boralex from 7.00pm until 7.25pm), Scott Vallance (Principal Project Manager, Statkraft UK from 7.00pm until 8.15pm), Shannon Aitchison (Statkraft UK from 7.00pm until 8.15pm), Peter Kane (Kane Partnership from 7.00pm until 8.15pm), and three members of the public (Ann Macrae, Hamish Leslie Melville & Harry Leslie Melville who all stayed from 7.00pm until 8.15pm).

**Apologies**: Verbal apologies were given by Scott Vallance for Seumas Skinner (Community Liaison Manager, Statkraft UK).

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone. He also confirmed that this meeting would be recorded as per the agenda and will be archived and available for viewing for twelve months thereafter - <https://bit.ly/GDCC-6May2025> Recordings will then be deleted.

**Declarations of Interest** – the Vice Chairman is a Garve Public Hall Trustee, a Friend of Garve War Memorial, a LCT elected Director and a member of the GD CORe land panel. The Treasurer noted she is a land owner with regards to the SSEN underground cable from the Western Isles to Beauly and Community Council elected member Sadie-Michaela Harris is a member of the Wyvis Natural Playpark group. Cllr Kraft is a member of the North Planning Applications Committee at The Highland Council. Community Council elected members confirmed that they had read all documents due to be discussed tonight before the start of this meeting.

**Approval of draft minutes** of the ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 1 April 2025 via webcam were proposed without amendment by Bob Moir and seconded by Caroline Gamble, unanimously agreed. Minutes are available at Garve Post Office, on our website or via email. Hard/electronic copies are also available on request. Minutes will be signed by our Chairman and Treasurer in due course via post.

**Additional agenda item – co-option of Simon Friend.** Community Council elected member Sadie-Michaela Harris declared an interest as she is Simon’s partner so abstained from the discussion and vote. It has been unanimously agreed by the other elected members to co-opt Simon onto the Community Council, proposed Caroline Gamble, seconded Bob Moir, welcome Simon!

**Matters arising** – **Boralex** **windfarm** – <https://www.boralex.com> – The Highland Council North Planning Applications Committee notes that the application was approved by them in January 2023. Details for the satisfaction of pre-start planning conditions are pending consideration by the planning department.

**Proposed Boralex Lochluichart East BESS -** <https://www.boralex.com/en/projects-and-sites/storage-lochluichart-east-bess>-a public drop in was held in Garve on Thursday 3 April 2025 which our Chairman and Vice Chairman attended along with 4 others, one was from Strathconon, the rest from this area. Lithium iron phosphate batteries are proposed to be used, which have better thermal stability, reducing fire risk.  Fire risk is fully assessed, and the Fire Service is now involved with the consultation process. The posters on display at the drop in event noted that community benefit may be pay paid out by this project and that this Community Council would be asked for guidance on the matter. We have agreed that any discussions should be with the LCT, not the Community Council. Boralex have noted our position and we understand LCT have been made aware of our views on the matter. For information, Bob Moir as a LCT elected Director did not take part in our decision-making process. A further public drop in event was held last Thursday which most of the Community Council members attended. Boralex again posted out information to households in the area about this second event. Fiona Milligan and Katrina Walker from Boralex updated this meeting that eight people attended last week and that all the information displayed is on their website. It would appear early feedback from The Highland Council Transport Planner Jane Bridge would suggest sight lines of 215m are required. This would require several trees and an embankment to be removed. Some of the trees are thought to be around 150 years old. It was felt slowing the traffic down would make the junction safer and save cutting down the trees. *“Cut the speed, not the trees”* as our Chairman put it! The nesting Osprey were also noted as needing consideration in any proposed changes. The Lochluichart Estate are very happy for a site visit to take place to see the possible destruction of the natural habitat this requirement would cause. Community Council members fully agreed with Boralex that this proposal does not make sense for this section of road and would welcome a speed survey to see what the actual speed is. Boralex are happy to organise such a speed survey. Hamish & Harry Leslie Melville attending this meeting were very grateful for everyone’s support in this matter.

Fiona and Katrina were thanked for attending and left the meeting at 7.25pm and agreed to keep all parties informed.

**Kirkan Windfarm** – <http://www.kirkanwindfarm.co.uk> - as reported previously, they are still in the phase of considering options for Kirkan and working through the various planning conditions. We thank Trevor for his regular updates. The Highland Council North Planning Applications Committee notes the Scottish Government issued consent on 25 July 2023 and are now awaiting submission of pre-development planning condition requirements.

**Proposed Tarvie windfarm** – [www.tarviewindfarm.com](http://www.tarviewindfarm.com) – a meeting of neighbouring Community Councils and the developer took place on Wednesday 2 April 2025 with the developer. We were unable to attend but understand access to the site, access after construction, visual impact from Garve, and grid connection were all felt to be unacceptable by those who were present. The next meeting of neighbouring Community Councils and the developer is due to take place in July 2025, exact date tbc but we hope to attend. As things stand we agree with those Community Councils who did attend that concerns at this stage remain.

**Proposed SSE Fairburn windfarm extension** – <https://www.sserenewables.com/onshore-wind/in-development/fairburn-extension> - no news.

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| **SSEN Spittal – Beauly 400kV project** - <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/spittal--loch-buidhe--beauly-400kv-connection> - 3D modelling of the proposed route can be viewed - <https://www.3dwtech.co.uk/dashboard/ssen/spittal-to-beauly/portal-update/> which show they are still thinking of routing the line east of Contin rather than east of Garve. Project teams and contractors have been carrying out walkover surveys and ground investigation works for several months. Ground investigation activity for overhead lines, carried out using Permitted Development rights, typically involve the drilling of boreholes and trial pits, which allow engineers to understand the properties of the soil and rock beneath potential steel tower locations and their ability to support the structures and access tracks. Tree felling is also required in some instances, allowing access for ground investigations to take place. These works are set to continue throughout the remainder of this year and into 2026. The project team are also currently working to finalise the Section 37 consent application, which will be submitted to the Scottish Governments Energy Consents Unit in the coming months. |

**SSEN underground cable** from the Western Isles to Beauly – [https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/western-isles](https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/western-isles/) we understand ground investigations and trial pit works have been carried out at Strathgarve in recent days along with a traffic counter on The Avenue for seven days (thanks Sadie for finding this out for us). A public drop in event is due to take place in Contin Hall on Tuesday 10 June 2025 from 2.00pm until 6.30pm.

**Field Corriemoillie** – [www.fieldcorriemoillie.co.uk](http://www.fieldcorriemoillie.co.uk) – no news.

**Proposed Glasa windfarm** - <https://glasawindfarm.com/> Coriolis Energy, with development partner ESB are considering a 27-turbine windfarm on the Strathvaich estate. The turbines would be 250m tall from base to blade tip generating up to 189MW of electricity. A public drop event was held in Garve on Wednesday 2 April 2025 which our Chairman and Vice Chairman attended along with 10 others, some from out with our area. The proposal is at a very early stage and connection down to the Corriemoillie Substation may prove challenging. The developer hopes to return by the end of the calendar year with another public drop in event with more details. A scoping report has now been submitted to the Energy Consent Unit.

**Proposed Carn Fearna windfarm** – [https://projects.statkraft.co.uk/Carn-Fearna](https://projects.statkraft.co.uk/Carn-Fearna/) - Statkraft have passed on our concerns to Planning Aid Scotland (PAS) who have sent us via Anne Krippler the following statement … *“Our project was a perception-based data gathering exercise. The feedback collected reflects personal opinions, not objective facts, and therefore cannot be deemed 'wrong' per se. The report does not critique the work of the Community Council. It simply presents the findings from our engagement, along with related recommendations.*

*To clarify a few points:*

*•           The report references public toilets at Silverbridge, not those at Garve Public Hall*

*•           The Local Place Plan was acknowledged (page 5) and made available (in print) at the February drop-in session*

*•           Response numbers are outlined on pages 7 and 9: 16 responses to Survey 1, and 2 email responses to Survey 2*

*•           While the response window to the second survey was shorter due to Statkraft’s deadline, we would aim to allow more time in future*

*We recognise that the findings are not fully representative and understand concerns about engagement levels. However, some residents chose not to participate. Due to this context and prevailing mistrust, we included detailed findings and annexes for transparency. This was a first-of-its-kind project for both Statkraft and Planning Aid Scotland. A key learning is the need for much more time to build local relationships before any engagement. We are finalising the report and aim to share it in time for your May 6th meeting”.* Our thanks to Anne for the update. The report is now available in the library section of our website in the Carn Ferna folder.

The Section 36 planning application for proposed windfarm has now been submitted to the Scottish Government’s Energy Consents Unit for consideration. The full planning application can be viewed at [Energy Consents Unit website](https://www.energyconsents.scot/) (Ref. ECU00004851). The public notice regarding the application has been published in the Edinburgh Gazette, the Press & Journal, the Ross-shire Journal and The Scotsman. Hard copies of the full application are available to consult at Strathpeffer Community Centre (Monday-Wednesday 9am-4pm) and at Garve Public Hall (Monday-Saturday 8am-10pm; Sunday 9am-10pm – by appointment, email garvehall@gmail.com to book).

Any representations on the application must be submitted by email to the Scottish Government via representations@gov.scot; or by post to the Scottish Government, Energy Consents Unit, 4th Floor, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU, identifying the proposal and specifying the grounds for representation before Wednesday 4 June 2025. The Community Council are still studying the application but will ensure any comments are sent in before the deadline but in the meantime raised concerns in the application that Statkraft had given us *“training”* when all we had asked for was updates or presentations. The point was certainly noted by Statkraft who will ensure there is no doubt going forward as *“training”* was not aimed at this Community Council. The planning application also has the Community Council name wrong (noted). Several visuals were shown to those attending of various viewpoints including from Contin, Wades bridge, and Gorstan. Concern remains of the visual impact this proposal might have and everyone attending was again encouraged to write to the ECU (as above). Statkraft will also be in Garve Public Hall tomorrow from 1.30pm until 3.30pm to help people work their way through the 3,044 pages of planning documents. Concern was again raised that these timings are not best for those who work. Our Chairman asked if Historic Scotland had expressed a view of the photomontage at Wades Bridge? They will be consulted as a statutory consultee. Volume two, chapter seven of the EIAR acknowledges that the visual at Gorstan is a major change and Statkraft are not shying away from this. The Treasurer noted there does not appear to be a viewpoint from Inchbae, the old drover road. The Highland Council are still to upload the planning application to their website (now done under 25/01650/S36). We also asked about the planning application for the Met mast, is it still to be determined? Statkraft confirmed they are awaiting feedback after submitting further requested information around four weeks ago to the planning department. A835 Gorstan junction volume 3a fig 3.4 & 3.5 were also shown at this meeting. What happens if check rail corner is still “blocked”? How do existing turbines get down the road for repair? It was agreed this would be difficult under current traffic management on the road but traffic management plans are covered in the planning application with BEAR/developer working together if the project goes ahead. Collets have also had input and all movements would be under police escort. **In related news** - [www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/carn-fearna-wind-farm-connection](http://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/carn-fearna-wind-farm-connection) - no news but it is thought ground works maybe taking place with a possible connection date by 2030 if planning is granted. *(Post meeting note – some Community Council members will be in Garve Public Hall on Saturday 17 May 2025 from 3.00pm until 5.00pm to let people view the plans and to hear your views on this project, all welcome).*

**The EDF Corriemoillie Education & Training Fund details can be found at** <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/corriemoillie-education-training>

In related **renewable news, The Highland Council interactive map** is now live - <https://bit.ly/RenewablesMapHC> It clearly needs updating but at least it is a start. Community Council elected member Sadie-Michaela Harris is on the case!

Scott Vallance, Peter Kane, Shannon Aitchison and all three members of the public left the meeting at 8.15pm and were thanked for attending.

Cllr Liz Kraft joined the meeting at 8.15pm and was welcomed and was wished a Happy Birthday for yesterday and we noted today is exactly three years since she was elected.

**The Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – the **wooden fence** opposite Garve Cemetery continues to fall. This is very disappointing. Cllr Kraft notes our concerns.

**Core path signs** in and around the area continue to fall into disrepair. Can the Rangers not fix them? Cllr Kraft will ask. The Local Access Form may also be a useful lever.

**Bin at Garve Cemetery** - the bin men have suggesting removing the bin altogether which we have objected to and suggested a new wheelie bin be placed in the Cemetery instead. *(Post meeting note – the matter is now in hand, thanks Cllr Kraft).*

**20/30mph sign** at the bridge beside Strathgarve Primary School has been reported. Speed checks are also being carried out but the community’s feelings around the 20mph also need to be heard.

**We note Strathconon Primary School**, which forms a cluster with Marybank and Strathgarve is to remain open.

Concern around **Gorstan Junction** remains but we note the matter was raised at the latest Area Committee by Cllr Kraft where clearer white lining and 40mph extended west of Garve was suggested. Recent training for Cllr’s noted the trend in safer roads as improvements like seatbelts were introduced with data from 1940 being very different to today.

**New road marking and signage** in Lochluichart and Achnasheen have been completed and several residents have welcomed the works noting that traffic appears (so far) to be slowing down although one resident begs to differ.  Other Community Councils have approached us for our help. It was noted the 40mph speed zone was first introduced in Achnasheen in 1997. We updated Cllr Kraft on the earlier news about the sightlines for the proposed Lochluichart BESS project. Cllr Kraft had not heard of the Transport Planner but would make enquiries as, like everyone else, did not see the need at that section of road.

It has been noted that traffic continues to overtake in and **around Achanalt**.  Can a sign warning motorists that they are approaching a hamlet be put up?  It is such a relative straight piece of road that you can understand why vehicles do overtake there but do they all realise they are flying past peoples' homes too? Cllr Kraft is making enquiries.

**Achnasheen Hall –** no sale yet BUT Cllr Kraft also wants to make sure proceeds from the sale go back into the community, perhaps building new toilets/showers in Achnasheen. The leader of the Council also appears to agree with this along with Cllr’s from Skye. Cllr Kraft also felt the local Development Company would also need to step up to such a project but who covers all the costs? Further discussions needed, perhaps with other communities like Kinlochewe and Gairloch.

**Achnasheen Defibrator –** in hand to be moved, awaiting a time the contractor can do it.

Although out with our area, Community Council elected member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted **fly tipped rubbish near the Tarvie café** on Wednesday 9 April 2025 and reported it accordingly, thanks to Sadie.

The Highland Council notes that **residents should report issues directly to them** by calling The Highland Council’s Call Centre on 01349 886606 or via [www.highland.gov.uk/report](http://www.highland.gov.uk/report) In all cases, you will be given a reference number. The Highland Council also appreciates photos showing the actual problem.

**A835 Trunk Road issues – “check rail corner”** – Transport Scotland has advised that … *BEAR has experienced more challenges than they expected and are behind programme and are now advising a start date of Monday 3 November 2025. Transport Scotland have questioned some of the activities on their programme with a view to pulling this date forward and will keep us advised.  BEAR has advised that difficulties they have experienced to date include:*

*•         Complexity of design solution which keeps Network Rail line and A835 open at all times as well as other design constraints*

*•         Modelling iterations to find final design solution*

*•         Geotechnical design*

*The solution BEAR has developed is to construct a beam along the edge of the road and to sit the parapet at the edge of this.  Due to the road layout and the drop down to the railway line below it is necessary for part of this beam to project out (as shown below).  There are other solutions however, it would be necessary to*

*close the A835 for extended periods which is clearly unacceptable.*

*Extract from AIP Drawing – from the sketch there are piles/columns extending into the ground to carry this beam and anchors extending below the road.  These are necessary to transfer any forces which would result should a large vehicle hit the parapet at speed.  The main problem BEAR has is with the piles/columns.  As the ground is so steep and the top part is a wall there is not much soil around the piles/columns to hold them in place when the collision load is applied (they want to buckle).  There has been much though given how best to achieve the required strength but still ensuring that this can be constructed without needing to close the road while ensuring there is no disruption to rail. The Approval in Principle (AIP), which sets out the analysis, design and construction approach, has been through several iterations in the development of the solution and agreed with colleagues in road safety and geotechnics. A close to final version will be submitted to Network Rail (NR) soon for consideration.  While this is being considered, BEAR will continue in finalising the design (dotting the I’s and crossing the T’s) and preparing drawings, specifications etc for tender.  Please note that NR are aware of what will be presented to them and the proposals have been discussed with them in liaison meetings to minimise approval delays.* Our thanks to Transport Scotland for the detailed report which we have already shared on our online channels. We have asked for further updates on the A835 east of Garve where traffic lights are in place and traffic continues to jump the red lights. It has been suggested blasting into the rocks to take the road away from the railway would be best.  Is such a solution possible? We have been advised by Transport Scotland that several options were considered but forming a rock cutting and moving the road was discounted. Although the advantages of such a solution are that the road alignment could be improved and the carriageway and verge widths increased but these were outweighed by the disadvantages which were:

* The need to acquire land to form the cutting (land purchase can be a lengthy process – sometimes years);
* Greater environmental impact forming the cut;
* The need to undertake extensive environmental surveys (often required over lengthy periods);
* A more complex design including the need to undertake an extensive ground investigation – increased time for investigation; and
* Far greater cost.

We have also been advised that a package of information has been presented to Network Rail who are reviewing this but this is not delaying matters as BEAR is progressing the detailed design and tender documents in anticipation of any comments being minor. Once again our thanks to Transport Scotland for their detailed updates.

The Vice Chairman was talking to a Garve resident recently who has heard **a flashing “SLOW” sign** might be installed in the next financial year. We asked for an update and it was confirmed that **a flashing “SLOW” sign** is being considered by Transport Scotland. A decision is expected shortly. They have again explained that **concealed entrance signs** are not appropriate for Station Road, Garve properties as road users can see the houses from the road but are considering junction bollards instead. **Faded road markings** in and around Garve trunk road will be refreshed including the faded 40mph roundels and red markings on the road, timeline tbc.

**Trucks travelling at speed** – the MSP’s office has been advised that authorities will arrange for a commercial vehicle enforcement operation to be planned during quarter one of this new financial year. In and around Garve. They will also look to see if there is an opportunity to collaborate with local police so they can provide the necessary specialised support. Before they conduct such an operation, it would be useful to determine the best days, times or locations to plan activities which would give the greatest likelihood of encountering these vehicles. Please visit report a lorry or HGV driver or company - [www.gov.uk/guidance/report-an-hgv-driver-or-company](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-an-hgv-driver-or-company) where this information can be submitted. Our thanks to the MSP’s office for their help. This update has already been shared on our online channels. It was also noted that there does not appear to be so many logging lorries now, but plenty campervans!

It has been noted that the **Ben Wyvis car park** is getting so full again that cars are parking on the main trunk road again.  There were cones and tape to prevent this before but some are now just parking on the verge anyway.  What, if anything can be done?  Could the car park be made bigger? We have asked Transport Scotland for an update. They tell us that to regulate the parking more effectively, they are currently promoting a change to the SSI Decriminalised Parking Enforcement at the request of The Highland Council which in turn means parking enforcement will be carried out by the local authority. This change is required to be taken forward through the parliamentary process with a current date of Thursday 15May 2025. This will allow for The Highland Council to commence parking enforcement from the end of June 2025 onwards which should resolve the situation of parking on the main trunk road. This came as news to Cllr Kraft who will make enquiries.

**Faults on the Trunk Road (A835)** should be reported via [www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/](http://www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/) or 0800 028 1414. Members of the public can live track gritters on the trunk road network using Transport Scotland’s online ‘[trunk road gritter tracker’](http://arcg.is/GritterMap). It displays the current location of gritters and where they have recently treated.

**Garve & District** **Road Safety Community Group (formally Traffic Calming Group)** – met on Monday 28 April 2025. It was disappointing so few turned up, especially when road safety was a high priority on the Local Place Plan. The 22 minute meeting can be viewed at [https://bit.ly/RoadSafety28April2025](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fbit.ly%2FRoadSafety28April2025%3Ffbclid%3DIwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAYnJpZBEwV05OWDJxV3R2TGp5OVV2UwEePKlaBpHpiKb5yw39R7YbXYop7fnMuakDBTJRA_2rsmJc49j0U1qLk68glos_aem__KmcCsWhxhX63g1tiS5tEw&h=AT0ljUU6oonBh_worFu8U1IHdPRCQjOTrp_LOBNumPIRxX7up968FenTQCpF6Ap7ORq-Z3foi6jZ_GX1eT4VmIVHG8BfIEsSmkKwC0bE6DCvZflqV8l1A41YjAo8pYAf_x9qgouCIqZR4An8jA&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT0NL283vwt4fPAAy04a2axuAcxQmPrZcPyYm2XPbQWBh4o3EBj4od9WDkHxnBD2HbzV1ClhC-pODARGH8La-xDipuOaxFw9G-BkmKd0f69ond8DGar3xfn1dU9GGSf00JplRiYpdDXdp-qjByQix8ouX8lde41skWB-V_B5tCEW73TkoGNN3RjzseNPvKeK8gYrby4kwwIT1OuglgRg4lEniUy_EvzS) Issues raised at that meeting are already covered in the minute of this meeting. All eight members of the group along with the 130 residents who we have email addresses for and who have been invited to the previous three meetings have all been asked if they want these separate meetings to continue, awaiting feedback. TG&DDC have also shared our request for feedback but no responses via them so far.

**GD CORe land panel** – the Vice Chairman who attends these meetings updated us that demolish seemed to be the popular vote in the recent community survey so plans are now being put in place with a phased approach going forward.

**Scottish Water were seen in Garve** on numerous occasions in mid-April following reports of bursts. We have asked for an update on this ongoing issue and again asked that we are reconsidered for the future planned works. We sent the email on Monday 7 April 2025, no reply received yet. Concern was raised again at the number of bursts, holiday homes affected and those digging up private roads/land without permission. *(Post meeting note – reply received via Cllr Kraft - we want to first acknowledge and apologise for the disruption caused to residents and local businesses, including the difficulties with accessing cars and holiday lets. We fully recognise that, even when essential works are required, the impact on the community can and should be minimised wherever possible. We have already prompted our Service Review Team to review the specific matters reported by one of the impacted customers, and we are looking carefully at what happened in this case. While some water issues can take time to fully resolve, we are sorry that, in the meantime, the level of disruption experienced has fallen short of expectations).*

**Garve Hotel** - Tina Hartley (Development Manager, TG&DDC) forwarded us and to other local groups an email received about plans for immigrants going to be staying in the hotel. Several points in the email appeared to be incorrect including who the owner was. Tina also forwarded the email onto Cllr Kraft who has passed the email onto the relevant department. It was also noted there has been workmen on site in recent weeks. *(Post meeting note – social media enquiries would suggest this was a political stunt).*

**We note the morning train** will run around 25 minutes earlier from Monday 19 May 2025 into Dingwall and Inverness. All other train times remain the same.

We have received draft minutes of the **Skye Lochalsh and Wester Ross Community Partnership Meeting** held on Tuesday 25 March 2025. The draft minutes are available in the library section of our website. Achnasheen and Achanalt fall under “Wester Ross” NHS matters. **The Mid Ross Community Partnership minutes** from March 2025 are also in the library section of our website. Dingwall Medical Group quarterly meetings noted vaccinations are going back into surgery’s but when? Changes to diabetic clinic also raised as a concern. Cllr Kraft will ask for more details on all points but noted the new GP contracts have had a knock-on effect to all services.

**Joint meetings** – LCT, TG&DDC and the Community Council meet up from time to time to compare notes. We host in January, LCT host in May and TG&DDC in September each year but the last few meetings have been cancelled. We hope September’s meeting will go ahead.

The Vice Chairman noted the following from the approved TG&DDC board minutes on 11 March 2025 ... ***Electric Bikes*** *– the Coigach Community Hall Trustees had expressed an interest in having the two e-bikes which had been held by TG&DDC. The Trust regularly oversaw numerous community activities and tourism events at the Hall, and would be happy to make the two e-bikes available for Coigach community and tourist use. The Board felt that donating the bikes to CCHT would make good use of them, and HD would make arrangements to transport them. Both the Coigach Community Development Company and the Coigach Community Hall Trust had expressed thanks for being considered as recipients of the bikes.*

We asked their secretary on Friday 25 April 2025 to remind us when the eBikes were offered to this community? No reply received yet. Concern raised that Development Company members had not been told or consulted on the matter. *(Post meeting note – next day after our meeting Heather Donaldson updated us as follows … Working with the Wheelness Project, e-bikes were trailed in the community back in 2021.  The electric bikes were originally gifted to the Development Company with the condition that they would be utilised as part of an appropriate community bike-share initiative, a stipulation that the Company accepted upon receipt. They were used for quite some time by two people with identified health needs and eventually were stored, and kindly maintained by a Board member. The bikes are quite old now, and sadly are not being stored in the best of conditions which is of concern:*

*“The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) emphasizes the importance of storing e-bikes in safe environments to minimize fire risks. Old, cold buildings often have poor insulation and ventilation, which can lead to moisture buildup and temperature fluctuations—both of which can negatively impact lithium-ion batteries. These conditions may increase the likelihood of battery failure, overheating, or even fire hazards. To reduce risks, e-bikes should be stored in well-ventilated, temperature-controlled areas, away from damp or extreme cold.”  National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), 2025. E-bikes and e-scooters fire safety guidance. Available at:*[*https://nfcc.org.uk/our-services/campaigns/e-bikes-and-e-scooters-fire-safety-guidance/*](https://nfcc.org.uk/our-services/campaigns/e-bikes-and-e-scooters-fire-safety-guidance/) *As the Company has no plans to develop such a community bike share model in the foreseeable future, the Board agreed to uphold the original agreement with Wheelness by offering the bikes to another like-minded community organisation that can maximise their use for community benefit. Thanks to Heather for the update).*

**Garve & District Community Council currently has vacancies on the Community Council.**  The Community Council elected members consider it to be very important to have as broad a representation of our community as possible, as we cover a wide variety of community issues and to do this well, we would like members from all corners of our large area.  We usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month.  If you are aged 16 or over, live in the Community Council area and are on the electoral roll and would like to be considered for co-option onto the Community Council, please email garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com with your name and contact details. This update has already appeared on our online channels. LCT and the Development Company also have vacancies, contact them directly for more details.

**Police update -** as reported at previous Community Council meetings, anyone who wishes to raise an issue with the police are asked to **call them directly on 101** at the time of the incident and make a witness statement.  Video, dashcam or photo evidence is also welcomed, indeed encouraged by the police. The police can also be contacted on [www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/contact/](http://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/contact/)

The police report for ward five covering March 2025 tells us that several offences have been detected, including within the Garve and Achanalt areas. Some offences detected include careless and dangerous driving, drivers being under the influence of controlled substances, no insurance and MOT, driving without a licence and vehicle defects. There was an alcohol related disturbance during a concert at the Pavilion in Strathpeffer. Several people were either arrested and charged for offences or ejected from the premises. On Tuesday 18 March 2025, a driver was stopped and found to be driving whilst disqualified. During the stop by Police officers, the driver was found in possession of a quantity of controlled substances. The driver was charged with driving under the influence of controlled substances, other road traffic offences and being concerned in the supply of controlled substances. (We understand this was in the Achnasheen area). Police Scotland would urge the public to be wary of exchanging money online and to report any suspicious activity. Further advice regarding fraud and how to stay safe online can be found on the Police Scotland website - <https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/scams-and-frauds/> The full report is, as usual, available in the library section of our website. We also note police patrols on the A832 on Sunday 6 April 2025 and last Sunday.

**Treasurer’s report** - Our total bank balance remains at £1,873.62.  The breakdown is as follows … Treasurer's account was £-160.03 plus £160.03 from the reserve = £0.00. Reserve is now £1,453.42. Wreath fund (in memory of Eliza) remains at £420.20. It was proposed by Caroline Gamble and seconded by Kenny Maclean that Jean Bailey be appointed auditor this year. Jean was Treasurer for many years and has a head for figures, all agreed. The current Treasurer found working with Jean very useful … and educational! We thank Jean for doing the audit and we will get her a small token of our appreciation in due course. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**AOB from Community Council members** – The Vice Chairman has received reports of people using fences in and around the railway station and Matheson Road in Garve as toilets. Similar issues have been reported in Achnasheen. It is very disappointing when there are toilets at Silverbridge. We also note Rogie Falls and other toilets are either closed due to plumbing problems or vandalism.

**AOB from members of the public** - Anne Dale has raised concerns following us sharing a post on social media by Cllr Kraft that the Community Council and perhaps the Trustees of Garve Public Hall may be encouraging people to ignore the Supreme Court ruling **on same sex spaces**. We would encourage everyone to follow all laws on all issues. We understand the BMA have now raised concerns due to the lack of medical expert opinion presented at the Supreme Court. Cllr Kraft apologised if her post had caused us extra work and explained the post was actual legal advice following the supreme courts ruling. We also note the two “likes” on our page and 13 “likes” on Cllr Kraft’s page on this issue.

Those who cannot attend our meetings can, as always, write to us by post or email with any issues they wish raised at garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – we have received one consultation from SEPA. **SEPA are launching a consultation on a proposed Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme (EPAS) - a fair way of reporting on how businesses are meeting their responsibilities.** SEPA are consulting on a new way of assessing environmental performance that is designed to drive quick action to resolve issues that could cause harm to communities and nature. They are proposing a responsive scheme that is transparent about when they have checked compliance and what this means for environmental performance. Please help to ensure the scheme is effective and robust by visiting [SEPA's consultation hub](https://consultation.sepa.org.uk/compliance-and-beyond/epas/) and making your views known. The consultation runs until Monday 30 June 2025.  More details at [EPAS Consultation FINAL 31.03.25.pdf](https://consultation.sepa.org.uk/compliance-and-beyond/epas/supporting_documents/EPAS%20Consultation%20FINAL%2031.03.25.pdf). This update has already appeared on our online channels.

**We also note BT are trying to remove around 110 payphones in the Highlands** including in our area. Latest figures suggest Achanalt was used to make 18 calls in the last 12 months, and Garve 5 calls in the last 12 months. None of the calls made are thought to have been to emergency services. Notices have already been placed in these payphones to say they will be removed shortly … cart before horse? The full consultation can be viewed at [**consultation**](https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/16586/bt_consultation_on_the_removal_of_110_payphones_in_highland)**.** BT’s consultation is open until **Tuesday** **15 July 2025.** Community Council members all agreed we will write to object to possibly losing our payphones again. The process for considering the removal of payphones has changed and The Highland Council no longer co-ordinates responses across all communities.  If you have any questions or want to make representations, please contact BT at btp.authorisation.team@bt.com.

All Highland Council consultations are available at <http://consult.highland.gov.uk/portal> All Scottish Government consultations are available at <https://consult.gov.scot/consultation_finder>

Cllr Kraft left the meeting at 10.00pm and was thanked for attending.

**Building warrants, planning issues and licensing issues** **- there is one new building warrant** currently being shown on The Highland Council website for our area. **25/00347/NDOM5** is to convert part of decommissioned water pumping station into a holiday letting unit on land 40M East of Woodlands, Little Garve. This warrant has since been withdrawn.

**One previous planning application has** been determined by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. In October 2023, we considered **23/04158/FUL**, the proposed erection of a 20m lattice tower with 3no. antenna, 1no. dishes, 1no. V-Sat dish and ancillary equipment on land 725M NE of Fannich Bothy. The Case Officer has REFUSED planning permission.

**No new planning applications** have been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting but we note four new Prior Notification Orders and the Statkraft application to the ECU. **25/01205/PNO** is the proposed upgrade of track and installation of a bridge on land 4KM NW of Fannich Bothy. **25/01120/PNO** is the proposed peatland restoration works at Strathvaich Estate Phase 7. **25/00886/PNO** is the proposed erection of two agricultural sheds on land 200M East of Strathmore House, Gorstan. The Case Officer has already determined Prior Approval is not required for the two agricultural sheds with one condition - the development must be carried out within five years of the date of the decision notice. **25/01519/PNO** is the proposed peatland restoration scheme south of Achanalt.

A possible planning breach can be reported at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning_-_applications_warrants_and_certificates/170/planning_enforcement/2>

All planning applications can be viewed at [www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning\_-\_applications\_warrants\_and\_certificates/143/planning\_permission/4](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning_-_applications_warrants_and_certificates/143/planning_permission/4)

**There were no new licensing issues** for us to consider this evening.

**Dates of future meetings** - *(Ordinary meetings are usually held on the first Tuesday of every month unless stated otherwise)*. MONDAY 9 June 2025 (AGM and an ordinary meeting) online and in the meeting room of Garve Public Hall from 7.00pm. Future meetings may be held on Tuesday 5 August 2025 and Tuesday 2 September 2025 tbc.

As usual, our Chairman started to draw the meeting to a close by asking all present if anyone had any final questions or thoughts on anything they had heard this evening, a question he often asks throughout the meeting too. Nobody had any final questions or thoughts. Although our meetings are not public meetings, members of the public are still very welcome to attend Community Council meetings and take part in the discussions under the guidance of the Chairman (see section 12 of the Constitution). A copy of our Constitution is available in the library section of our own website and hard/electronic copies are available on request. Those who cannot attend our meetings can, as always, write to us by post or email with any issues they wish raised at garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.  He also thanked Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris for hosting the webcam session.  The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.05pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

*The Midland Pullman visited our area once again on Sunday 27 April 2025. Here it is in a very wet and damp Achnasheen heading back to Inverness from Kyle of Lochalsh. Passengers from around the UK and indeed the world travel on this train to enjoy the beauty along this railway line. The trip was repeated just two days ago such is the demand for this luxury train. Photo curtesy of Douglas Gibson …*



[www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict](http://www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict)

[www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552992414355](http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552992414355)

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