

GARVE & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Special Meeting Held on the 21 November 2006
Garve Village Hall

Present: Marian Taylor, Donald Northwood, Jim Ruggles-Brise, Kenneth MacLean, Pat Campbell, Sheree Grant, Lady Eliza Leslie Melville, Alex Mackenzie, Ian Dickinson, Uisdean Menzies

Apologies: Helen Grainge

The meeting had been called by the chairman to discuss the latest submission by the developers of the proposed Lochluichart wind-farm and explain to the Community Council his unaccompanied meeting with representatives of the development.

The chairman opened the meeting and asked whether any member had any objection to Lady Eliza Leslie Melville remaining in the meeting due to the possible conflict of interest, several members felt that there was no harm in her staying and Lady Eliza said that she was after all a community councillor and saw no reason why she should not stay. The Secretary stated that there was a direct conflict as the wind farm was to be built on the estate Lady Eliza owned or had an interest in. Jim Ruggles-Brise stated that it was normal that any person who had or knowingly had a personal interest in a development should withdraw from any discussion; after several minutes of discussions it was agreed that the treasurer could remain.

Jim Ruggles-Brise asked that it be noted in the minutes that while the Ledgowan estate is opposed to the wind-farm developments he at the time of writing wished it to be known that he had not contributed financially to any opposition group.

The developer's latest submission, i.e. their addendum reducing the number of turbines from 43 to 22 was then discussed, Uisdean Menzies made clear that the community had made their views clear at both the public meetings and via the postal ballot and that there was nothing else to discuss on the subject of the planning application. He further stated that it was now time to move on and await the outcome of the Scottish Executive and Highland Council. He along with the other members welcomed the forth coming exhibition.

Several members had concerns regarding the errors and misleading information contained in the addendum and was upset that the Secretary had been singled out and itemised in the documents over his personal objection to the project. A number of members stated that they had also objected

personally and that they had not been listed in the document or that the treasurer had connections with the project. All members agreed that they were appalled by the personal attacks made on both those in favour of and those against the development.

The Chairman gave an explanation to the impromptu meeting he had with the developers; the Chairman stated that the developers claimed to have had a meeting with Bob Cameron area manager at the Highland Council with regard community funding and with Lady Eliza on Lochluichart estate who had suggested they contact the Chairman and discuss the new proposal with him. He explained that they were very polite and had told him about their plans and the exhibition they planned for the 27 and 28 November 06; they will be sending out a 1000 leaflets explaining the project. They would not divulge any information regarding their meeting with the Highland Council or what offer they had put forward. It was made clear by the members that the Chairman had shown poor judgment on his part to hold a meeting with the developers on his own and that they had broke protocol in suggesting it. The other members then discussed what action to take on such matters in future and a formula was agreed; they further confirmed that if the developers wanted to discuss any issue or hold a meeting they make the proper approach and meet with the whole community council and at a time that was mutual to both parties.

- There would be no further impromptu meetings unless correct arrangements were made in consultation with all members.
- Any press releases or letters of response would be circulated where practical to other members of the council before dispatched.
- There would be no further side meetings unless these met with the constitution and minutes kept.
- Any requests for information, questions on the subject or copies of documents would have to be requested in writing through the chairman and secretary and that as a matter of principle community council members would refrain from open discussions with community members on the subject of wind-farms and their development.

Members agreed that a letter of response would be sent to the wind-farm developers to reconfirm the community's position, i.e. in objecting to the proposed development and further drawing their attention to their lack of professionalism and breach of protocol. The letter would include drawing their attention to the miss-spelling of Garve and the use of the Community Councils Secretary's position in the addendum.

Then Uisdean Menzies asked for an update on the Christmas party and Sheree Grant gave the members a brief run down on the arrangements, concluding that the invitations were going out over the next few days.

The Secretary told members that the new agenda for the AGM and Public meeting would be sent out in the next 48 hours.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman