

GARVE & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Meeting Held on the 7 August 2007

Achnasheen Village Hall

Present: Helen Grainge, Donald Northwood, Jim Ruggles-Brise, Pat Campbell, Sheree Grant, Alex Mackenzie, Uisdean Menzies, Marian Taylor Cllr Jean Urquhart, Cllr Richard Greene, Robbie Bain Ward Manager and 25 members of the public.

Apologies: Ian Dickinson

Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting was proposed by Marion Taylor and seconded by Helen Grainge.

- 1) The chairperson opened by saying that Mr Ed Tarr wished to raise a point of order; he was then given the floor and proceeded to read a statement regarding the constitution that went on for over an hour and twenty minutes, during which he claimed the document he had was confusing and did not vary much from the old; it was explained to him that the document he had, had been given to his daughter Sue Tarr and was in fact a very early draft design as a discussion paper and that this had been made clear at other community meetings and placed in the minutes. He raised a number of points that were answered by members of the Community Council, Robbie Bain Ward Manager, for the Highland Council and Highland Council members present. The Community Council was asked why the document had not been made public and again it was explained, that this meeting was the first opportunity to do exactly that and as at other meetings the constitution had to be made public which is what the Community Council was doing at this meeting; the plan was and always been to then print a special edition of the Community Councils News and Views and for the public to review and comment on the document, then it needed to be approved by the Community Council Members before adoption at the next AGM. It also had to be approved by the Highland Council, which is what the Community Council was doing and that the only copies published were those sent to the Highland Council and Community Council members. At this point the Secretary asked Sue Tarr if she was in a position to print the special edition and if so when and how soon; she agreed this could be done and quickly. Ed Tarr again asked why we were changing the constitution and again the members explained that it was not being changed but replaced as the old constitution was not fit for purpose. Mr Tarr rejected this and it was then explained by Mr Robbie Bain what was required; Mr Tarr then accepted that it had to be replaced. Mr Tarr further asked the members why they had published the nomination forms in the News and Views without the returning officer and it was explained that the current Community Council only followed what past councils had done and if the procedure was so incorrect why hadn't he along with others questioned this in 1999 – 2001 – 2003 and 2005. Mr Tarr then returned to the issue of the

constitution leading some members of the public and Community Council to be confused as to the point he was making.

Another member of the public raised the issue of the nomination forms saying; if the Community Council continued people could question the validity of the nomination and force the new Community Council to step down. The Secretary agreed with the member of the public and said that this would be the ideal time to put right the errors of the past, he further confirmed that the nomination form published in the News and Views was not what the Community Council had asked for and that changes had been made to the form without consultation. It was then proposed by the Secretary that a new nomination form be produced with a returning officer being nominated and published with a copy of the new constitution that Sue Tarr had agreed to print. This motion was seconded by Uisdean Menzies and agreed by all other members.

Several other valued points were raised about the content of the constitution and it was further agreed that a public meeting would be convened on the 4 September 2007 at 7:30pm in the Garve Village hall and that the Highland Council representatives would chair the meeting. Another member offered the Secretary help in ensuring that the grammatics of the document was correct; he accepted this offer stating that any constructive help was always welcome. Cllr Green recommended that rather than four years serving as a Community Council member it should be reduced to two years as this may encourage more people to stand for vacancies. This was discussed and agreed by the whole group.

- 2) Matters arising from last meeting: The children's play area for Garve was still on going with the proposal for the current area by the station to be re-designed and equipped by the Highland Council. The issue of the gully and two small islands on the Garve loch was discussed with the Secretary reporting that communications had been had on the issue with no outcome. A member of the public said that they had been cleaned once before and Uisdean Menzies stated that this was done as a one off only event and the area of concern was not even in the Garve and District communities' area, but fell under Contin Community Council and suggested that the member should contact them.
- 3) There were no planning issues to report.
- 4) The Chairperson said she had received a letter from Mr Gordon Mackenzie dated the 1 August 2007 that he wished to be read out to the meeting; the Secretary then read the letter which stated he had been handed a copy of the new constitution that he claimed was alarming (*full text available in the Garve and District records*) The chairperson asked how he had been able get a copy of the document when it had only been circulated to The Community Council members and a limited number of Highland Council members before being made public at this meeting. She further asked the Secretary to write and ask Mr Mackenzie how and from whom he had got hold of a none published and non public document before it was put before the community. Other

correspondence from MOD notification of military exercises Noted. Letter from NHS 24 on services Noted.

- 5) The Treasurer reported that the current account held £2179.00, Senior Citizens account £173.16, War Memorial account £125.36, there was a further £660.00 to be banked which was monies raised through fund raising.
- 6) Any other business: The Secretary said that he had been contacted by a Tracey Cummins regarding a house in Garve and this had been passed on to the Highland Council Housing Department.
- 7) The last item was the Community Council standing down for re-election, several members of the public stated that we could not do this and what about the meeting planned for the 4 September 2007, Uisdean Menzies replied that we had no choice as per the current constitution which said we had to stand down and that the Community Council had been trying to replace the current constitution with a new constitution for the past 18 months and had been challenged at almost every meeting by a small minority of people each time the issue was raised and tonight was no exception. Both the Chairperson and the Secretary confirmed that while the current constitution was not fit for purpose the Community Council members had to abide by those rules.

The next meeting was set for 7:30 pm on the 2 October 2007 in the Garve Village Hall

Garve and District Community Council AGM 7:30pm Garve Village Hall