

~~Draft~~ Minutes of G&DCC Meeting held at Achnasheen Village Hall 7th September 2010

PRESENT: Jock Logie, Pam Morrison, Jennifer Haslam, Jean Bailey, Jean Hollingdale, Kenny Maclean, Sue Tarr, Bob Moir, Alex Mackenzie. Also present: Cllr. Jean Urquhart, Val MacIver Community Consultant for E-On, and 10 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Steve Jones, Jimmy Ruggles- Brise, Ruari Matheson, Robbie Bain (Ward Manager)

The chairman opened the meeting at 7.30pm and gave a welcome to Val MacIver of Platform PR (Community Consultant for E-On)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: of meeting 3rd August 2010. Proposed by Alex Mackenzie and Seconded by Bob Moir. Copies duly signed by Chairman and Secretary and passed to Cllr Urquhart to give to Robbie Bain.

MATTERS ARISING:

LITTER IN LAY-BYS: Cllr. Urquhart stated that she had sourced a bin for the Gorstan lay-by and would be looking into sourcing one for Grudie.

Jennifer Haslam stated that the litter at Grudie was still bad and more fly tipping had occurred since our last meeting also that the previous litter had not been cleared.

Jean Hollingdale stated that litter reported to Network Rail had now been cleared from the railway bank and bagged litter had been cleared from the lay-by but unbagged litter had been left.

ACHNASHEEN SCHOOL: The school is now officially closed. The Highland Council will ratify the decision at a meeting of the full membership of the Highland Council on Thursday 9th September. New catchment area means children from Achnasheen will go to Kinlochewe and Gairloch; children from Achanalt and east will go to Strathgarve and Dingwall. School transport will be provided. As yet the Community Council have had no word from the tenants of the school house.

LUIB ROAD: Resurfacing has now been done except for the stretch nearest Achnasheen which will be done next year.

GARVE PLAY AREA: Our Letter about this land is with the Highland Council Housing Department. Cllr. Urquhart will meet with HC depts. to discuss further. Kenny stated that some members of the Community would be interested in fund raising for equipment at some time in the future.

OFFLETS AT GRUDIE: Jennifer Haslam stated that these have still not been cleared and that the water is still running down into her drive. Cllr. Urquhart to look into.

STIRLING DRIVE: Bob Moir has been in touch with Hydro Electric about the trees touching the power lines. Hydro have now made two site visits. Bob has given the Hydro permission to cut the trees on his land. The Beech trees along the road belong to the Highland Council, Hydro will contact HC for permission but the trees will be cut below the power line. Residents have requested that beech trees are reduced to hedge level. On going.

STATION ROAD: Transerv were informed after our last meeting about trees and bushes impairing visibility for anyone leaving their house. Nothing so far has been done. Secretary to contact Transerv again about this matter also branches on roadside at Rogie.

TOURIST INFORMATION BOX –GARVE AND GORSTAN ROAD SIGN: Robbie Bain looking into these matters. On going.

RECYCLE BINS: Kenny MacLean reported that the recycle bins at Achnasheen are now being emptied. Kenny asked Cllr. Urquhart if there was any possibility of Blue wheelie bins for Achnasheen.

Cllr Urquhart replied that HC are running a test period on Skye of alternate collections of Blue bins one week and Green bins the following week.

SMILEY SPEED SIGNS: Both Achnasheen and Garve are now on the waiting list for Smiley Speed Signs.

BENCHES: Jock Logie reported he has no reply as yet to his letter to Einir's brother about a memorial bench. The other two benches are still on going.

STATION LIGHTS: Pam Morrison reported to Network Rail Achanalt station lights being on 24 hours, they have now been turned off.

TREASURES REPORT: Jean Bailey reported that all accounts have now been changed over to the new CC.

CC balance - £2119.95 this includes HC Grant; Senior Citizens-£910.79 plus £30.60 from carboot; War Memorial £156.79; News & Views- £1607.93

CHRISTMAS FAIR: Bob Moir stated that a table was earmarked for CC to contact Uisdean Menzies.

NEWS and VIEWS:

No representatives to speak for the News and Views sub committee were present.

Jackie West has written to CC informing of her resignation as editor.

The Chairman recognised that she had left the previous meeting feeling upset and regretted this and has spoken personally to her about this. He would rather that anyone upset at something would say so at the time. JW willing to help the News and Views in an advisory role as and when her job allows.

The Chairman read out an email received from Helen Grainge as a member of the News and Views sub committee, and also a message from a member of the public.

The Treasurer asked the CC to think about how they felt about the News and Views becoming independent of the CC as this was what the sub committee were considering. Helen is looking into ways this could happen. Items for CC to consider are the printer and the News and Views money.

Comments were invited from members of public; these included that the previous CC's had caused the present situation; that the chairman had not been patronizing towards the editor and they didn't recognize they had been at same meeting; the News and Views should be a voluntary group separate from CC.

The Chairman suggested that he should attend News and Views meetings as a Community Councillor not a volunteer and all agreed. CC waiting to hear what the News and Views sub committee decide.

BROADBAND: Bob Moir summarized the situation:

Achnasheen exchange is using a system called Exchange Activate, one of only 60 in Scotland. They would need to be upgraded to ADSL to access broadband. This is a BT cost and there are currently no firm plans to upgrade due to cost, approximately quarter of a million pounds.

Currently HIE are looking into a project which if they receive funding would see this work start early next year. There should be an announcement before Christmas if the HIE have been successful in attracting funding.

For Garve exchange the situation is different it is ADSL rated and therefore can get broadband as we know.

The problem with slow speeds is the distance subscribers are from the exchange, further away slower the speed. There is a technology called Broadband Enabling Technology run by a company called Scotnet in Inverness. This can boost the speed to a maximum of 2mps.

The costs for this are as follows.

- Exchange upgrade payable to BT £1,000.00. There must be a minimum of 15 subscribers before BT will do this.
- BT charges for connection are for 1mps £600 for 2mps £900 per subscriber
- Ongoing costs to Scotnet are as follows;

Service	Monthly data transfer Limit	Monthly rental
1Mb Residential	15Gb	£14
2Mb Residential	20Gb	£18
1Mb Business	25Gb	£23
2Mb Business	30Gb	£30
Connection Charge	£40	
Additional transfer	£0.5 Per Gb/month	

All of these costs would have to be paid upfront by the Community Council and then an application submitted to LEADER for a possible grant. (Deadline for this closes 6th Oct so CC not proceeding)

The other news is that the UK Government through its BDUK initiative has put in place a rigorous strategy to improve access to broadband throughout the UK to a minimum of 2mps and have the best broadband speed in Europe by 2015. Indications are that this is currently moving ahead of schedule.

The application BY HIE for funds to upgrade exchanges as above is part of this programme.

More details can be found on www.bis.gov.uk/BDUK.

You can also test your broadband speed by visiting www.mybroadbandspeed.co.uk It will not give you a true result if you are using a wireless link. Your machine must be connected by cable to the telephone line / router.

WARD FORUM STRATHPEFFER: Pam Morrison reported that the subjects of this meeting were Rural Health - how communities can help; and a Government Consultation booklet is available –Speak up for Rural Scotland with a questionnaire for suggestions. If any members of the public have ideas they would like to put forward booklets are available from the CC Secretary. There is a time limit 24th October 2010.

A.O.B: Over Sixties Dinner. It was agreed that this year it will be a dinner as usual. Invitations will be sent out in due course with a question for the future of whether a Lunch or Dinner would be preferable. CC to have a Christmas Party sub group meeting at some point.

Kenny MacLean commented that any abusive or threatening anonymous letters or telephone calls to members of the CC WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE.

Pam Morrison commented on Environmental Noise (Motor Bikes). What can be done? Cllr. Urquhart stated that the noise has to be constant for a sustained length of time according to the legislation.

CORRESPONDENCE: Draft Minutes from various CC's around our area; Network Rail re litter; SSE, thanking us for our comments; NHS Team updates; NHS Highland-In Patient Survey Report; "No Need for Nuclear" poster; Gala Lights poster; Quality Awards Highland Council; Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust;

Emails: Sand Bags advert; Various from E-ON plus briefing report on community benefit; Scoping report Future Forestry Management for Strathbran and Dosmuckeran; Infinergy to give presentation at December meeting; Play ground Partnership passed to Garve School ; Various SSE about Drop In's and presentation for November Meeting; Out going mail, reply to scoping report for Lochluichart wind farm extension.

Cllr. Urquhart left the meeting before any planning applications was discussed.

PLANNING: Renewal for temporary siting 2 chalets Ledgowan Lodge Hotel; No public comments. No comments to be made on Forestry Future Scoping report for Strathbran and Dosmuckeran; E-ON Access change, Amendment will be made formal by next meeting, no public comments received.

LICENSING: None.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT:

The Chairman reported on the sub group's meeting with Robbie Bain (present were Kenny Maclean, Steve Jones and Jean Bailey on behalf of GDCC and Robbie Bain for HC). HC has reached an agreement with Econ (who have taken over from Infinergy) but this is not signed yet. Steve proposed that we re-negotiate to take into account inflation in the price of electricity. HC unwilling to do this but agreed that GDCC could try writing to Econ about this.

Comments were made at current meeting by several present that the deal on offer was generous (higher than any other windfarm in the Highlands), and had been requested by the Leslie-Melvilles.

Vote taken by CC on whether we try to re-negotiate or continue with current deal: 8 in favour of current deal, 1 in favour of re-negotiation.

Corriemoillie Windfarm. Highland Council is willing to carry out negotiations with E-on about community benefit. Public discussion followed about various related issues including conflict of interest if CC/sub group of CC hold negotiations about Community Benefit during the planning process. There was general agreement that there would be a conflict of interest. Also whether representatives from CC should be present when HC negotiate with E-on about Community Benefit.

Vote taken by CC on who negotiates with E-on: 6 in favour of HC alone, 3 in favour of HC plus CC representatives. Agreed that Secretary write to Bob Cameron and Robbie Bain requesting that they negotiate with E-on on our behalf, with regular feedback to the community.

Date of next meeting - 5th October 2010 Garve Village Hall 7.00 pm – Transerv, AGM, Ordinary Meeting. Meeting Closed 9.30 pm.