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

**held on Tuesday 4 April 2017 in Garve Village Hall**

**Community Council members present:** Kenny Maclean (Chairman), Jennifer Haslam (Secretary), Eliza Leslie Melville (Treasurer), Caroline Gamble and co-opted member Moragh Wylie.

**Also present:** Grant Folley (EDF), Val MacIver (Platform PR), Fiona Milligan (Infinergy), Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn and 4 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Community Council member Bob Moir and co-opted member Joe Stewart.

**The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm** and welcomed everyone. He pointed out the fire exits and requested mobile phones be put on silent mode. He reminded members of the public that they are most welcome to attend Community Council meetings and listen in to our discussions. Members of the public would only be able to ask questions or raise issues during agenda item AOB (Public) as per Constitution point twelve.

**Declarations of Interest** - Eliza Leslie Melville and Moragh Wylie both declared an interest in the Infinergy project. Community Council members confirmed that they had read all draft minutes and consultations due to be discussed tonight before the start of this meeting.

**Chairman’s comments** - Jessie Mackenzie of Corriemoillie passed away yesterday. We send our condolences to Gordon and the family.

All G&DCC agendas, minutes and dates of future meetings are available on the Community Council website [www.community-council.org.uk/GarveandDistrict](http://www.community-council.org.uk/GarveandDistrict) or by contacting the Secretary on garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com or at Broadoaks, Grudie Bridge, IV23 2QB. They are also available on the Achnasheen Village notice board and via the Community Council emailing list. Additional copies of the minutes are available in Garve Post Office so members of the community can take them away with them. The Community Council website receives around 150 hits per month and we have 65 people on the emailing list. The Community Council website has received over 1,500 hits in the last twelve months. The Chairman reminded everyone that as website administrator he never knows *who* is visiting the website, only the *number* of visitors to the website.

**Approval of minutes** of the last ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 7 March 2017 were proposed by Eliza Leslie Melville and seconded by Moragh Wylie.

**Matters arising** – **Infinergy.** Eliza Leslie Melville and Moragh Wylie both declared an interest in the Infinergy project and left the room at 7.07pm. Fiona Milligan then explained that due to illness, the scoping report was not ready before now however, the document is now complete and is in the process of being printed. It will then be sent to the Scottish Government and statutory bodies. The proposed layout of the turbines has slightly changed. It may be possible to build up to eight turbines on the site. Fiona asked should community consultation take place along similar lines as before (drop in sessions in both Garve and Achnasheen)? The Chairman felt this would be welcomed by the community. Fiona thought this may take place in late June, **TBC**. Fiona is happy to send on further updates when known. Fiona Milligan was thanked for attending. Eliza Leslie Melville and Moragh Wylie then returned to the meeting at 7.12pm.

**EDF** – Grant Folley explained that the asset management team were now dealing with the day-to-day issues on site. A list of small “snagging” issues has been drawn up and is being worked through. The Chipper has broken down again but it is hoped it will be working again soon. Chippings will then go by lorry to Invergordon. In June/July (depending on the weather), grouting of the turbine bases will take place. This acts as weather proofing for the concrete bases.

With regard to the Education & Training fund, the funding framework is nearly finalised. Those on the panel will serve a three-year term. An overview of the voluntary job will be provided by Foundation Scotland. If anyone in the Community is interested in being on the panel, please contact the Community Council Secretary by Monday 24 April 2017 or go to [www.foundationscotland.org.uk/news/corriemoillie](http://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/news/corriemoillie) A press release will be issued once the fund has a panel in place and is formally launched, probably early June.

EDF are meeting with the LCT on Monday 24 April 2017. LCT Directors have the report written by Foundation Scotland. Legalities would need looking at before EDF could pay the main fund into the LCT. It was noted that the draft minutes of the LCT Director’s meeting held on Friday 17 March 2017 suggest Eneco do not wish the articles or community benefit agreement to be amended. Grant noted the draft minutes but felt Eneco were willing to discuss the issues raised in the Foundation Scotland report. LCT is EDF’s preferred vehicle for the distribution of the main fund. EDF want as open a discussion with the LCT as possible.

The final EDF liaison meeting will take place later this month. Agendas were sent out to members of the liaison group earlier today. This final meeting will be an opportunity for final reports, final feedback and a thank you to those who helped along the way. Graham West and Claire Green hope to attend. Val MacIver and Grant Folley were thanked for attending.

**SSE** – The mess around Grudie Power Station in the roadside ditches has been partly cleaned up. The Secretary will keep an eye on this issue. With regard to verge reinstatement works between Achnasheen and Grudie, a meeting was recently organised between the Highland Council’s Roads Manager and representatives of SSE. The outcome is that SSE has now started the reinstatement works. We thank Cllr Greene for the update on this issue which we raised some time ago.

**Highland Council updates** – Garve bus shelter – Cllr Greene has passed our concerns onto the Community Services department at the Highland Council pressing for repairs to be done. Cllr Campbell has a damaged bus shelter needing repairing in Kirkton Road, Lochcarron and we have suggested both shelters could be repaired at the same time. Cllr Greene has made the Community Works Officer aware of both shelters but notes they will probably both need panels which will have to be ordered so it might be some time before repairs are actually completed. Cllr Cockburn suggested a new shelter altogether would be a quicker solution.

**Lochcarron bus service** – David Summers at the Highland Council has confirmed the following … “*The current bus service contracts expire on 23 April 2017. The Community Services Committee on 7 December 2016 deferred a decision on the renewal of the Applecross – Inverness contract, but on 15 February 2017 they granted delegated powers to the Director to approve a new revised contract following re-procurement. Tenders have now been invited for various service level options and these will be evaluated shortly. If necessary, the existing contract will be extended until the new contract can commence. Only 3% of passengers use the bus service from points east of Lochcarron.*” We thank Mr Summers for the update which we have passed onto Lochcarron Community Council. The bus operator has in recent days posted via social media that *…”we have been asked by the Highland Council to carry on the Applecross to Inverness bus service until 30 June 2017”.*

**Silverbridge toilets** – works in and around the site appear to have taking place in recent weeks. Some signage has been uncovered, trees cut back, fencing removed, windows have been re-opened and the lights are back on. Holes and trenches have been dug outside the front of the building and have since been filled back in. The trenches are between two inspection hatches. The Chairman and Secretary visited the site before tonight’s meeting and found a Highland Council plumber adjusting one of the toilets. He confirmed the facilities are now open again. Roadside signage will need to be uncovered in due course.

**Information Shelters** – this project has slowed down as Emma Whitham has left the Highland Council. Her successor has been appointed to take over the project and they will contact our Chairman in due course.

**Proposed phone box removal** – copies of our “lost” emails have been sent to various Highland Council departments and directly to BT. We are now awaiting a final decision from BT on this matter. We are disappointed that the Chief Executive’s office at the Highland Council hasn’t even acknowledged our email.

In **other Highland Council matters**, the road drains in Achnasheen were cleaned out on Tuesday 28 March 2017 and the road and pavements were then swept the following day. The Chairman can’t recall when the pavements were last swept in Achnasheen by the Highland Council … if ever! The missing 30mph sign beside Strathgarve Primary School has been reported. Also, down past the School on the Avenue, several trees are leaning.  We wonder if the Highland Council needs to cut them down on safety grounds. Nick Richards, the Highland Council’s tree officer will investigate. Caroline noted one large tree branch had snapped off in recent high winds.

The chairman recently had to call **the Highland Council’s call centre (01349 886606)** to raise a matter regarding bins. The call centre is open 8.00am until 5.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am until 12noon on Saturday. He asked to be put through to the Community Services department. He was connected to the Justice department to discuss his community service. The lady at the Justice department said this error happens all the time but the Chairman is left wondering if Highland Council are actually trying to tell him something! To avoid further confusion, he will use one of the following telephone numbers in future which are listed on the Highland Council’s website:

Roads, flooding and street lighting - 01349 886601

Council house repairs, pest control, housing applications and rent enquiries - 01349 886602

Waste collections, environmental health, fly-tipping, pollution, dog fouling or abandoned vehicles - 01349 886603

Blue Badge, travel and National Entitlement Cards - 01349 886604

Make a payment by debit or credit card - 01349 886605

Planning and building standards - 01349 886608

Licensing - 01349 886609

Elections helpline - 01349 886657

**BEAR Updates - Flooding on the A835 at Garve** – The gully sucker returned a few days after our last meeting. BEAR, Network Rail and Cllr Greene have confirmed that they have been in contact with one another with a view to having a joint approach to resolving the problems. This we welcome. BEAR have confirmed that drainage works outside Garve Village Hall which were planned for late April/early May will progress as quickly as possible. Cllr Greene acknowledges some major drainage works are required. Caroline was able to confirm that the gully sucker was out at 11.30pm on Saturday 11 March 2017.  They were opposite the Garve Hotel and the pool at the Village Hall was more or less cleared. Representatives from BEAR and Network Rail were seen on site in the last few days by the Chairman.

Caroline noted there is **water on the road east of Killin Farm** again. This was a problem when SSE built the road up the hillside a few years ago while building the replacement power line from Mossford - Beauly. Val MacIver will go back through the paperwork on this issue. Caroline will report the water running across the road at the **check rail corner**.

Caroline and the Chairman completed the paperwork for the **Development Company's** registration immediately after the last ordinary meeting and the forms were posted the next day. Three weeks later one of the forms was returned as it was no longer valid. A new current form will be filled in and returned.

The LCT Secretary requested more details regarding the “start-up fund” application. We now await the Director’s decision on the application.

Caroline highlighted the Community Development Company in Staffin has lodged an asset transfer request, which forms part of Community Empowerment legislation introduced in January 2017 by the Scottish government to resolve car parking issues near Storr <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-39290342>

**Wester Ross Biosphere** – Natasha Hutchison was recently appointed as project officer. One of her primary objectives is to put together a 10-year development plan for the biosphere. Their AGM took place last month in Kinlochewe. Natasha hopes to attend a future Community Council meeting.

**Community Ceilidh** – Caroline has checked the availability of the band in August/September. They can come again and the cost would be the same as last time. It was agreed a maximum of 60 people in the Hall. The Secretary will make enquiries regarding catering for the event. Saturday 12 or 19 August 2017 was suggested depending on school holidays, 8.00pm-11.00pm, **TBC**. Raffle in aid of Lucky2behere. All this will be subject to securing funding to cover the costs of putting on such an event.

No interest has been expressed in forming a **50+ club** as suggested at our last ordinary meeting.

**Defibrillators** – The first training session took place last night in Garve Village Hall with 21 people attending. Those who attended found it a very useful evening, learning lots of life saving information. The team who gave the lessons were clear. The second session will take place in a few weeks’ time in Achnasheen where around 16 people are due to attend. Defibrillators have been delivered and will be installed shortly.

**Broadband** – The HIE website [http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/digital-highlands-and-islands/can-i-get-it.html#](http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/digital-highlands-and-islands/can-i-get-it.html) is currently stating that customers on the Garve exchange should have access to superfast Broadband by the end of June 2017 but some providers are accepting orders from customers now. Those who live within 2km’s of the green cabinets will see a faster service than those further away. Those served by the Achnasheen exchange should have access to superfast broadband between July 2018 and December 2018. HIE are still exploring solutions for the Aultguish exchange. We note the dates seem to be slipping back. We understand HIE hope the service will be up and running before the dates stated … one to watch!

**Benches** – Installation of the benches and picnic benches has now begun, a big thank you to John Grant for all his help in this matter. Also, the Highland Council, Network Rail and Forestry Commission Scotland for giving us permission to put these seats on their land. A suitable flat location up by Wades Bridge has proven difficult to find. It was suggested an alternative site could be the Gorstan Layby beside our Jubilee tree with a nice view of Ben Wyvis and Wades Bridge. Permission will be sought. It was also noted that the Forestry carpark road surface at Little Garve has been improved in recent weeks and new picnic benches installed there.

**Relocation of Lochluichart Postbox** – enquiries are ongoing as to why this relocation has not taken place.

**Garve & Lochluichart SWI** - **The SWI will be 100 years old this year.  The Federation are planning a garden party in Contin.  The Garve & Lochluichart SWI’s ten members are planning an afternoon tea in Garve Village Hall on Saturday 24 June 2017, 2.00pm-4.00pm.  Everyone in the Community would be welcome to come along and help the ladies mark the centenary.**

**2017 Joint Community Council meeting** – We are still awaiting minutes of the last joint Community Council meeting held on October 2016. Anne Macrae in Torridon is “mortified” that her PC has let us all down so badly. The Chairman has told her to keep trying to get the minutes out of her PC!The Commission for Democracy in the Highlands was launched in June 2016. The Commission are investigating the current state of democracy in the region and wish to start conversations about the kind of democracy we want to have.  They would like to attend the 2017 Joint Community Council meeting.  Dates in June have been suggested. A meeting in June would also give Community Council members an opportunity to meet new or returning Highland Councillor's following the elections. The Chairman has contacted all the Community Councils in the ward. Feedback received so far from around half the active Community Councils in the ward would suggest June is a good month to meet, longer days and brighter nights. Various venues to the west of the ward have been suggested. Some Community Councils have commented that they have been struggling with the Democracy in the Highlands initiative, not least with all the documents and links which confuse rather than inform so a meeting with them would be useful.

We have a **new email address** – garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com All contacts in our email address book have been informed and a note has been placed on the homepage of the Community Council website. The new email address also appears on the bottom of the agendas (along with our website address) and will also appear in minutes of future meetings. If anyone sends an email accidently to our old email address, they will receive an auto reply advising them where to resend their email. This auto reply service will stop on 31 May 2017 when the old email account is closed by Orange as reported at our last ordinary meeting.

Since the last ordinary meeting, we have received information from the **Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust** on their work in Achiltibuie. The suggestion was made the old schoolhouse in Garve could be the centre of a “community hub” as suggested in the Community Needs Survey. Pedestrian access could perhaps be via the riverbank and vehicle access limited to suit the school.  We have passed the suggestion on to the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust and the Highland Council for consideration.

**Police report** – no report received this month but the Chairman did notice speed checks were taking place this evening as he travelled down to this meeting.

Press reports inform us that a Motorcyclist from Northern Ireland travelling at 107mph at Glencarron on 2 January last year was recently fined £1000 and had six points added to their licence.

Highland Council has been alerted to a Council Tax scam whereby scammers are cold calling and emailing residents – claiming to offer a Council Tax refund. The companies are asking tenants/residents to give their bank account details, credit/debit card number and the three-number security code on the back of the card. This is a scam which originated in Oldham, England.

Police in the Highlands are urging the public to be vigilant. Officers have been informed of a number of telephone scams where cold callers advise victims they have an outstanding debt and need to purchase iTunes vouchers to pay the debt. On Wednesday 22 March 2017, a report was received that a 71-year-old man in Inverness had received such a phone call and was conned out of £950.  Also on Wednesday 22 March 2017 a 26-year-old man in Inverness was conned out of £650 after receiving a similar cold call. On Thursday 23 March 2017, an elderly man in Invergordon was conned out of £800.

The Secretary noted that scam phone calls supposedly from the Inland Revenue are also being made at the moment.

**Treasurers report** - Community fund = £1,014.28. Community Council admin fund was £350.82 minus £30 Achnasheen Hall hire for March meeting minus £400 Secretary fees minus £4.70 postage minus £100 auditor’s fee = -183.88. Community Newsletter fund stands at £875.11. Defibrillator fund stands at £13,020.00. The secretary is still to claim ink for the fliers from this fund. Total in bank = £14,725.51.

The Treasurer went to see Ann Macrae the morning after our last ordinary meeting. Ann is happy to audit the accounts for year end. We send her our thanks.

The Community Council admin fund which covers the day to day running of the Community Council is in the red again. The admin grant paid by the Highland Council simply doesn’t cover our running costs and hasn’t for some time. Community Council members were asked to think about a fundraising event to help cover the costs.

**Correspondences** received by Email - two emails from Cllr Richard Greene – Flooding on the A835; Cllr Richard Greene – Garve bus shelter; Rory Mair, Commission on Highland Democracy – further consultation (received via HC policy); David Summers – Lochcarron bus contract; Eileen Irvine, HSCHT – Achiltibuie Schoolhouse update; ePlanning – planning at 10 March 2017; Jake Diamont, Royal Mail – Lochluichart Postbox relocation; Quentin Banting – Draft Lochcarron Community Council March minutes; Kristoffer Boesen, Improvement Service – Updates (Received via HC Policy); Cllr Richard Greene – bus shelters and verge reinstatement works; ePlanning – planning at 17 March 2017; Mhairi Wylie, Highland Third Sector Interface – Upcoming workshops; ePlanning – planning at 24 March 2017; Natasha Hutchison – Wester Ross Biosphere update; ePlanning – planning at 31 March 2017.

One correspondence received by post – Bowlts – Invite to the Wester Ross Deer Management group’s AGM.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Caroline noted a new locked gate has appeared in recent weeks near the old quarry in Strathgarve. Access on foot is still possible around the gate. It was suggested the gate may have been put up by Forestry Commission Scotland as there have been instances of fly tipping over the years in the old quarry. A question was raised about access rights. There is legislation which provides for public access to most land and water. These access rights apply widely to Scotland's countryside and include walking, cycling and other non-motorised activities. More details are available at [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)

**AOB from members of the Public** – the Chairman asked if any member of the public had any questions on anything discussed during the meeting. A member of the public asked if there was to be a Produce show this year, as a way of raising funds for the Community Council. There are no plans this year but Community Council members agreed that they would not object if another local group wished to hold a Produce show instead. The Chairman suggested the member of the public speak to the Secretary about what it actually takes to organise the show.

Another member of the public asked how much money had we applied for from the LCT for the “start-up” fund for the Development Company. The Chairman replied by saying it was agreed at the last ordinary meeting that we would apply for £250. This would cover Hall hires for meetings, fliers promoting the company, stationary costs and a small reserve. This money would be handed over once the board had been elected and when they had opened a bank account in the name of the Development Company.

The Chairman then asked for any other issues that members of the public wished to raise with the Community Council reminding those present that only issues raised in person would be discussed. No issues were raised by those present.

Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn left the meeting at 8.35pm and was thanked for attending.

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** - Two consultations to consider. Police Scotland are now setting out for consultation their proposed 10-year strategy, to ensure that Scottish policing remains fit for the future. The document is available online. Deadline for comments is Monday 8 May 2017. Community Council members had no comments.

Commission on Highland Democracy - the Commission wants feedback on what it has heard so far. They wish to ensure that the Commission has heard and interpreted correctly what the main issues affecting local democracy in the Highlands are. Community Council members had no comments.

**Building warrants, planning issues and licensing issues** - There are no new building warrants currently being shown on the Highland Council website for our area.

One previous planning application has been determined by the Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 17/00810/FUL was for the erection of an 80-metre-high anemometer mast at Corriemoillie Forest. Permission has now been granted by the Highland Council with five conditions regarding limited time of permission (five years), restoring the site after the five years, a drawing showing guyed supports with bird deflectors at 5 metre intervals is provided to the planning department, MOD notified when work starts on site and aviation warning light must be fitted to the top of the mast. Trevor Hunter from Coriolis Energy has indicated that he hopes to attend a future Community Council meeting once he has received an environmental impact assessment report.

There were no new planning applications or licensing issues to consider this evening.

**Dates of future meetings**

Tuesday 2 May 2017, 7.00pm, Achnasheen Village Hall

Tuesday 6 June 2017, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall. Old minute books will be available to view.

Tuesday 4 July 2017, 7.00pm, Achnasheen Village Hall

Tuesday 1 August 2017, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 5 September 2017, 7.00pm, Achnasheen Village Hall

Tuesday 3 October 2017, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 7 November 2017, 7.00pm, Achnasheen Village Hall

Tuesday 5 December 2017, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Members of the public are very welcome to attend Community Council meetings and listen in to our discussions. Members of the public will only be able to ask questions or raise issues during Agenda item AOB (Public) as per Constitution point twelve. A copy of the Constitution that every Community Council in the Highlands has to work to is available on the Highland Council website.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

One of the two picnic benches recently installed in Achnasheen

