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

**held on Tuesday 5 December 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:** Val MacIver (Platform PR), Annie Hingston (Marybank, Scatwell & Strathconon Community Council) and two members of the public.

**Apologies:** Community Council member Bob Moir, co-opted member Joe Stewart, Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn, Pam Courcha (Contin CC), PC Craig Rose and Fiona Milligan (Infinergy). Apologies were also given on behalf of Andy Russell, Grant Folley & Graham West (EDF) by Val MacIver.

**The Chairman opened the meeting** at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone. He reminded members of the public that they were very welcome to attend Community Council meetings and take part in the discussions under his guidance.

**Declarations of Interest** – none. Community Council members confirmed that they had read the draft minutes and the scoping report due to be discussed tonight before the start of this meeting.

**Chairman’s comments** – The Chairman and fellow Community Council members were saddened to hear of Alasdair Maclead who was lost at sea recently. Alasdair had been on the Applecross Community Council for many years and had a great sense of community spirit in him both for Applecross and for other communities across the Highlands. Our thoughts are with Alison his wife and their children at this time. Last Friday's BBC Landward programme was dedicated to Alasdair.

The Chairman attended the Garve Christmas lights being turned on last Saturday night. It was the first time he had managed to attend. Around 70 people attended from this and surrounding communities. The 2016 Community Needs Survey indicated that more social activities in the community would be welcomed (see page five of the full report). Such events also help to put Garve on the map!

All G&DCC agendas, draft minutes, dates of future meetings and fliers 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](mailto:garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com) or at Broadoaks, Grudie Bridge, IV23 2QB. They are also available on the Achnasheen Village notice board or via the Community Council emailing list. Just contact us with your email address and we will add you to our emailing list.  Your email address will not be passed onto third parties. From Monday 1 January 2018, only Community Council documents can be sent via our email list – see [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for more details. We now have 186 contacts on the emailing list plus all eighteen other active Community Councils in the Ward. Additional copies of the draft minutes are available in Garve Post Office and at these meetings so members of the community can take them away with them. The Community Council website receives around 150 hits per month. The website is updated every ten days or so. Old minute books from 2011 – 2017 were available to view at this meeting.

**Approval of minutes** of the last ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 7 November 2017 in Garve Village Hall. Co-opted member Joe Stewart has asked via email that the following correction be made to page four regarding the new play equipment at Strathgarve Primary School – “*The first phase of play equipment in the school garden has been installed and they are just waiting for the large play tower to be installed, it's still being built”*. The amendment was agreed and the minutes were then proposed by Eliza Leslie Melville and seconded by Kenny Maclean.

**Matters arising – EDF** - Val MacIver read out Graham West’s report in full … *“A new Asset Manager for EDF is Laura Noone who joins us as of today, Laura previously worked with Eneco and stays reasonably locally at Inverness.*

*All turbines have been running and we now have a GE site compliment of three technicians who are based on site Monday – Friday ensuring they are kept spinning, all technicians are from the Inverness area. Blanket mire restoration works on site were completed in September this year. The works were undertaken by local contractor; Highland Conservation based in Jamestown and supported by Nevis Environmental based in Inverness. The blanket mire restoration works included the creation over 780 peat bunds, extensive re-profiling and re-vegetation of eroding gullies and reinstatement of deeply rutted forwarder tracks. Turf covered peat bunds were required to slow the water flow across and out of the peat gullies and to help raise the water table. Re-vegetating and re-profiling of eroded hags and gullies were also identified as one of the main methods suitable to improve the condition of the blanket mire areas within the restoration area. This work involved the stabilisation of the eroded banks using a combination of slope re-profiling and utilising on-site vegetation gained during this process. The 50 hectares of restored mire will lock away approximately 80 tonnes of carbon a year from the atmosphere as peat (equivalent to the carbon footprint of 5 people per year).*

*Dr Jonathan Foot, EDF Energy’s Chief Environmental Strategy & Compliance Officer visited Corriemoillie wind farm earlier in October to view the restoration works first-hand. Jonathan stated “this project is of great importance because it demonstrates how we can protect an internationally and nationally important habitat, that also provides both benefits and services to the local community and the UK as a whole”.*

*In October EDF commenced with the erection of 10km of perimeter deer fencing. The fencing will provide suitable protection from deer and livestock for 140Ha of planting planned in 2018/19. The planting within the fenced area will consist of a mixture of Sitka Spruce/Lodgepole Pine, native broadleaf/conifers and peatland edge woodland (PEW). The areas of PEW will contain a low-density woodland which will help avoid net carbon loss that would result from conventional restocking on the poorer ground. This woodland will have significant biodiversity benefits for the woodland, including a mixed density woodland edge which may create new habitat and linkages for black grouse and other local species. A 5ha area of native broadleaf planting to the south of the wind farm site is planned to be started this month”.*

Community Council members had no questions. Thanks to Graham West for his report and to Val MacIver for attending.

**Infinergy** – no further news. It is unlikely we will hear more from Infinergy until the spring.

**Highland Council updates** – Potholes on the “S” bends at Lochluichart on the A832 were repaired recently. It was also noted that holes in the football pitch in Matheson Road, Garve have been filled in.

We are still awaiting the Highland Council to fix the following issues …

Damaged road surface to the east of Glencarron Lodge on A890 (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60268728)

School Road in Achnasheen is full of potholes (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60324080)

U3132 Lochluichart Station Road requires further works (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60318099)

Little Garve-Silverbridge back road is full of potholes (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60322137)

Side road at Gorstan is full of potholes plus drainage problems (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60318870)

Speed limit sign light out at Junction of Stirling Drive and Station Road, Garve (Reported November 2017 - FS62027724)

Garve playpark fence requires fixing (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60319466). John Mackay, Highland Council Community Services is sorry for not getting back to us about this sooner. The person dealing with the fence is off at the moment but John hopes to have a full update by the end of this week.

Missing 30mph sign near Strathgarve Primary School (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS58387155)

The Avenue requires resurfacing (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60323206)

Strathgarve Farm road requires resurfacing (Reported October 2017 Ref - FS60322733)

Iain Moncrieff from the Highland Council will be meeting up with our Chairman this Thursday so he can see all these problems which we have reported for himself. Our Chairman will also raise run off’s at Corriemoillie and Gorstan with Mr Moncrieff. Community Council members asked that the road edge and crash barrier at Grudie, the church layby at Lochluichart, trunk road flooding near Garve and top soil at Grudie also be raised. Is the road from Strathgarve to Wades Bridge adopted? Our Chairman will ask.

**Verge reinstatements works** between Grudie and Kinlochewe appear to have stopped again this time west of Achanalt. Both SSE and the Highland Council noticed that works had been progressing well. We are seeking an update on the issue, perhaps there is a winter break in the programme?

A local resident has raised concerns regarding **road gritting on the A832 at Lochluichart** on Friday 24 November 2017, especially around the morning school bus time. We have asked for comment from the bus company and the Highland Council (Roads and Education Departments). The Education Department said that it would pass on our concerns to the Roads Department if the School bus route was not being treating as a priority route (which it already is). The bus company concerned said that their driver confirmed that there was a fair amount of snow in places that morning, so drove with caution which meant that it took him a little longer to get to Dingwall Academy ... but the kids did get to school. The Roads Department replied … *“As all of the winter maintenance vehicles are fitted with tracking devices, we can confirm that the section of road was treated on the morning of concern at 06:11am. The salt rate applied was 20g and blades were fitted, the operator was able to treat both side of the road on the way up and it was treated again on the return journey. Unfortunately, given the weather on this particular day the snow fall was coming at intervals and falling quite heavily in places. The road may have been white but it had been treated prior to the school bus having to travel the route.”* We thank Laura MacAllistar at the Highland Council’s Roads Department for the update. It should be noted that Highland Council roads are gritted as specified within the Highland Council’s agreed winter maintenance policy – details of this are on the Highland Council’s website at [www.highland.gov.uk/gritting](http://www.highland.gov.uk/gritting) where area gritting maps can also be found. We have passed our findings onto the local resident who raised the concern in the first place along with a copy of the Highland Council’s winter maintenance policy. The local resident has thanked the Community Council for our time and efforts on this matter and wished to clarify that they were not questioning the ability or manner of driving of the driver. The Secretary drove from Grudie to Garve that same morning around 8.30am and the road was ok. She had no problems when she returned home around 3.00pm that afternoon.

**Electric vehicle charging points** – Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn has been informed by officials at the Highland Council that the charging point will be installed in Achnasheen by Sunday 18 February 2018 probably on Highland Council owned land. Locations of existing charging points - [www.chargeyourcar.org.uk](http://www.chargeyourcar.org.uk)

**Inappropriate speed at Lochluichart** – Cllr Kate Stephen has been advised that the following document is the best one to use to make the case for a 40mph speed limit through Kishorn and Lochluichart - <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2006/08/14134225/0> Section six is about rural speed management. Cllr Stephen will keep us informed of her progress with this issue. We thank her for the update.

The 2016 Community Needs Survey indicated that a **handyperson service** for the elderly would be useful (see page seven of the full report). Such a service is available - <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1075/supported_and_sheltered_housing/226/help_with_small_jobs_around_the_home> The handyperson service is for people aged 65 or over who have difficulty carrying out small jobs around the home and for people of any age with a disability. Each handyperson is fully equipped with tools and will be ready to undertake your repair. They will charge you for the materials the handyperson uses to complete the agreed work. Their handyperson has been vetted by Disclosure Scotland ([www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk)) and will be able to show you their identification badge when they knock on your door. More details are available from [ilm@ilmhighland.co.uk](mailto:ilm@ilmhighland.co.uk) or 01349 884774.

**Highland Council tenants** are being encouraged to have their say on rent setting proposals for 2018/19. The Highland Council will publish the results online and Highland Councilors will consider the responses and comments before making a decision about what level of rent increase to apply at a special budget meeting of the full Council in February 2018. The online survey - [www.highland.gov.uk/info/925/council\_housing/797/rent\_consultation\_2018\_to\_2019](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/925/council_housing/797/rent_consultation_2018_to_2019) closes on Friday **5 January 2018.**

The Highland Council notes that residents should report issues directly to them by calling the Highland Council’s Call Centre on 01349 886606, by visiting Ross House, Dingwall 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 appreciate photos showing the actual problem.

One of the **Achnasheen picnic benches** appears to have been placed in a spot prone to flooding during heavy rain. John Grant will attend to this issue in due course.

The **annual Church of Scotland sale of work** took place on Saturday 11 November 2017 and raised £730, all the venison and baking went straight away! Thanks to Hazel Kerio for the update.

**Remembrance Sunday** – a service took place at Garve War Memorial on Sunday 12 November 2017. Despite the cold wet day, our Chairman was joined by Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn, Janet Bowen, Lord-Lieutenant of Ross and Cromarty, Skye and Lochalsh and around 30 members of the Community. It was again good to see so many of the younger members of the community in attendance.

**Postbox’s** – Jake Diamont at Royal Mail provided us with an update on Tuesday 14 November 2017 *...” we have received consent back from the correct landowner.  The documentation has been sent to Group Legal for a counter signature.  Once received, a job will be raised for the installation and we anticipate this to be completed within six weeks.”* Closer inspection of the paperwork suggested the Postbox was to be moved from Lochluichart to Mossford. We wondered if this meant the existing Postbox would be removed from Mossford. We made enquiries and Jake replied with the following … *“Whilst the changes mean the provision of Postboxes in the area is in excess of our policy, we have no plans for any of the surrounding Postboxes to be removed. As required, highway notices are being raised in advance of the installation.”* We thank Jake for the updates and clarification.

**Police report** – PC Craig Rose reports that one person has been reported for speeding at Achanalt in the last month. Press reports inform us that Police wildlife crime officers are carrying out anti-deer poaching patrols in the Highlands. Illegal hunting of deer can become a problem in the run up to Christmas when the meat is offered for sale on the black market. Police Scotland said its Operation Moon was being targeted at known poaching "hotspots".

Further press reports inform us that officers from Police Scotland working with a range of partner agencies have worked together to remove a number of abandoned and untaxed vehicles from the roads of the Highlands. Road policing officers have supported the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and The Highland Council’s Environmental Health enforcement officers along with other partners including the Health and Safety Executive, Trading Standards and HM Revenue and Customs in carrying out enforcement action. The first week of action has seen in excess of 50 vehicles seized and 40 vehicles clamped for being untaxed. The Highland Council and the DVLA will continue to carry out enforcement action across the region, supported by Police Scotland. Anyone who wishes to report untaxed vehicles should do so online at the following online address: <https://forms.dft.gov.uk/report-an-untaxed-vehicle>

Two hillwalkers who got lost in "full on winter conditions" on Friday 10 November 2017 had not equipped themselves with a map and compass. It is believed they had parked their car at Garbat and used their mobile phones to alert emergency services when they got into difficulty on Ben Wyvis. They were found and airlifted to safety by a coastguard helicopter. We wish to remind everyone, especially at this time of the year when daylight is short and winter conditions are present, that everyone heading to the hills are welcome to our area but should be well prepared and know how to use their equipment.

**Treasurers report** - The bank balance on Monday 23 October 2017 was £2,269.03. Treasurers account £462.93 minus £37.45 ink and minus October meeting hall hire (£14) and November meeting hall hire (£10) and minus £35 on Monday 1 January 2018 for Data Protection renewal (by direct debit) = £366.48. Community Fund was £586.29 minus £47.65 notice board repairs = £538.64. Development Company £250. Alan Illingworth, The Garve & District Development Company’s Treasurer has advised our Chairman that the company now has a bank account so the £250 will be passed over to him tonight. Newsletter £728.55 minus £30.01 for Caroline’s fuel delivering fliers earlier this year = £698.54. Audited accounts for the last financial period (1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017) are available on the Community Council website, at Garve Post Office and at these meetings.

**Correspondences** - by Email – Four emails from Jake Diamont, Royal Mail – Postbox updates; ePlanning – new planning applications at 10 November 2017; Ben Lennon, Bowlts – Lochrosque forest long term forest plans scoping report; ePlanning – new planning applications at 17 November 2017; Paul Moxon – Road gritting; Laura MacAllister, The Highland Council – Road gritting report; Isla Cuthbert, Membership Secretary, Highland Senior Citizens Network – Winter 2017 newsletter; ePlanning – new planning applications at 24 November 2017; PC Craig Rose – Monthly Police report; ePlanning – new planning applications at 1 December 2017.

Correspondences received by post – none.

We have also received draft minutes from Shieldaig, Lochcarron, Gairloch, Torridon & Kinlochewe, Lochbroom, Coigach and Lochalsh Community Councils. Community Council members noted that these draft minutes are enlightening, provide ideas and keep us informed what else is going on.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Caroline Gamble noted that The Garve & District Community Energy group, a completely separate group to the Community Council, have started issuing cheques to local households to help meet their energy costs.  More details are available by writing to [gdcommunityenergy@gmail.com](mailto:gdcommunityenergy@gmail.com) or G&DCE, Tigh na Croit, Gorstan, IV23 2PX.

Caroline also noted that a lorry was recently lost trying to find the Wyvis Natural playpark which is currently under construction beside Wades Bridge. Caroline gave the driver instructions how to find the site. The playpark itself is currently damp and boggy, extra drains may be required but the equipment looks “fantastic”!

Our Chairman has been advised that Coffee & Books, a completely separate group to the Community Council, recently advertised dates of future coffee mornings. These advertised dates have now been revised to just Saturday 16 December 2017 and Saturday 20 January 2018, 10.30am until 1.00pm. We thank Jean Bailey for the update.

**AOB from members of the public** – No issues raised.

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – One scoping report received via Bowlts - Lochrosque forest (911 Hectares) long term forest plans. Scoping is an important part of the development of a plan because it is the point at which issues of sensitivity are highlighted by statutory consultees such as Community Council’s for resolution as the plan progresses.  This plan will develop a long-term strategy for the Lochrosque forest with detailed felling and restocking proposals for the years 2018-2028.  The plan also includes the owner’s objectives of management. The deadline for comments is Friday 22 December 2017. Community Council members had no comments.

**Building warrants, planning issues and licensing issues** - One previous planning application has been determined by the Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 17/02465/FUL was for a change of use of the disused filling station in Achnasheen into a tearoom with fuel. The fuel part of the application has since been withdrawn. The planning application for the tearoom has been granted planning permission with one condition - no development shall commence until a scheme to deal with any potential contamination from within the site has been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Planning Authority. Copies of all planning reports and decisions are available on the Highland Council website.

There were no new planning applications or licensing issues to consider this evening. This means there are now no outstanding planning applications or licensing issues awaiting determination by the Highland Council from within our Community Council area.

**Dates of future meetings** – all dates, times and venues for our meetings in 2018 are now confirmed.

*(Ordinary meetings are usually held on the first Tuesday of the month unless stated otherwise)*

*Tuesday 9 January 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall - apologies noted from Bob Moir and Eliza Leslie Melville.*

Tuesday 6 February 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall - *apologies noted from Eliza Leslie Melville.*

Tuesday 6 March 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 3 April 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 1 May 2018, 7.00pm, Achnasheen Village Hall

Tuesday 5 June 2018, AGM followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall. Old minute books will be available to view.

Tuesday 3 July 2018, 7.00pm, Achnasheen Village Hall

Tuesday 7 August 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 4 September 2018, 7.00pm, Achnasheen Village Hall

Tuesday 2 October 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 6 November 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 4 December 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Members of the public are very welcome to attend Community Council meetings and take part in the discussions under the guidance of the Chairman. 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, wished the Community Council members and the community a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

Some of the new play equipment at Strathgarve Primary School which was funded by the Lochluichart Community Trust. Work continues on the new Wyvis Natural playpark beside Wades Bridge …



Garve Christmas lights which were officially switched on at 6.30pm on Saturday 2 December 2017 …

