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

**held on Tuesday 5 September 2017 in Achnasheen Village Hall**

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

**Also present:** Val MacIver (Platform PR) and Fiona Milligan (Infinergy - from 7.10pm until 8.10pm).

**Apologies:** Eliza Leslie Melville (Treasurer), co-opted member Joe Stewart, Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn and Andy Russell, Grant Folley & Graham West (EDF).

**The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm** and welcomed everyone.

**Declarations of Interest -** Moragh Wylie declared an interest in the Infinergy project. Val MacIver declared a non-financial interest in the Citizens Advice Bureau Consultation. Community Council members confirmed that they had read all draft minutes, consultations and planning applications due to be discussed tonight before the start of this meeting.

**Chairman’s comments –** Best wishes to Eliza Leslie Melville and Phyllis Manson following their operations. Congratulations to Alasdair Mackenzie, son of Alex and Elspeth who is a member of the Inveraray and District Pipe Band which recently won the top accolade at the annual World Pipe Band Championships held in Glasgow. All G&DCC agendas, draft 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 or via the Community Council emailing list. 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. We now have 95 people on the emailing list.

**Approval of minutes** of the last ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 1 August 2017 in Garve Village Hall were proposed by Kenny Maclean and seconded by Moragh Wylie.

**Matters arising** - **EDF** – Val MacIver read out Grant Folley’s report … *“The windfarm suffered some wash out due to the concentrated flushes of storm water however the site has operated throughtout and safe access to all parts of the site has now been re-established. Contractors are currently working on site to repair all internal access roads and to clear any debris that has washed onto infrastructure. Work to fence the new forestry blocks are due to commence next week. Welfare facilities are due to be delivered to the site w/c 11 September, with works to erect the new fences due to commence the following week. I met with Eneco last week regarding the Garve Area Fund. Agreed for EDF to propose a revised Community Fund Agreement in order to allow monies from Corriemoillie to be disbursed through the LCT. The revised agreement is to be discussed and agreed with the LCT prior to formal agreement with Eneco and the other signatories (the Highland Council and Lochluichart LLP). Subject to legal review, it is expected the revised agreement will be provided to LCT Directors by the end of the month”.* We thank Grant and Val for the updates.

Iain Catto at Foundation Scotland has been in touch to say over £4,500 has been awarded in the first round of funding from the EDF Education and Training fund. This has been awarded for apprenticeships in commercial vehicle maintenance, a “GreenPower” go-cart and a for an individual to attend Inverness College UHI to study a diploma in education. We thank Iain for the update. [www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/corriemoillie](http://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/corriemoillie)

**Infinergy** – Moragh Wylie declared an interest in the Infinergy project and left the room at 7.10pm. Fiona Milligan informed the meeting that the community open days where the community can find out more about Infinergy’s proposals for the Lochluichart windfarm extension two are planned for early next month in both Garve and Achnasheen. These community open days will give the community the chance to view and comment on the proposals. The project team will be on hand to listen to comments/concerns and answer questions. Infinergy plan to send newsletters to every house in the area later this month advertising the community open days (posters will also be put up and a note placed on our website). They are still looking at building six to eight turbines. The project team are currently looking at landscape issues. Fiona Milligan was thanked for her update. Moragh Wylie then returned to the meeting at 7.15pm.

**SSE** – verge reinstatement works on the A832 between Grudie and Kinlochewe restarted on Monday 7 August 2017 and will continue over the next few months, a section at a time. Our thanks to those involved who helped to get this job restarted.

**Highland Council updates – Serious flooding at Aultguish, Corriemoillie and Lochluichart** on the evening of Friday 25 August 2017 resulted in some homes being flooded and the road between Achnasheen and Gorstan being closed overnight. Full credit to the Highland Council and all the emergency services that attended the “scary” scene that evening. The Chairman has been in contact with some of those effected. A number of people and the Garve Hotel provided beds for the night and food to those who could not travel west. The railway was also damaged at Lochluichart resulting in the line being closed between Garve and Achnasheen for three days. Moragh Wylie was able to update Community Council members that rubble reaching eight-foot-high in places fell down the hillside, stony road has been washed away and there is now a beach down beside Gardeners Cottage. The main road was closed overnight as they weren’t sure if any of the roads foundations had been washed away until the water level dropped. The flood also reached Mossford Power Station but the flood didn’t get into the building itself. Some people have had to move out of their homes, other are staying put. We wish everyone well.

**Fence** at football pitch in Matheson Road, Garve – will be repaired in due course.

**Garve Bus shelter** – second panel was installed around Wednesday 9 August 2017; the shelter is now finally fixed! Our thanks to Cllr Kate Stephen for pursuing this for us.

**Information Shelters** – the Chairman noted press reports regarding the proposed free wi-fi rollout across fourteen Towns and Villages in the Highlands by the Highland Council - [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-40890524](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-40890524) He has suggested to the Highland Council that the Information Shelters could also be included in the rollout. He has also asked when are these shelters actually going to be built, originally it was going to be Easter time. His understanding is that the Highland Council are looking at alternative sites at Braemore. It may be the case that the Braemore Information Shelter is built at a later date and the Information Shelters at Achnasheen and Lochcarron are built later this year.

At the Ross & Cromarty Committee meeting held on Tuesday 15 August 2017, members agreed the proposed **Maintenance Programme for Roads and Bridges for the Ross & Cromarty Area for 2017/18**. This maintenance program included the U3132 Lochluichart Station Road being patched with recycle material but there didn’t appear to be any mention of the side road at Gorstan that we have highlighted several times before. The Chairman has highlighted this to the four Ward Councillors, supplied photos of the road and has suggested the works at both locations are done at the same time while the employees and machines are in the area. Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn is in full agreement with this suggestion as were Community Council members present.

Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn has informed the Chairman that he has been made aware of instances of **dog fouling in the playground at Strathgarve Primary School.** Cllr Cockburn is already liaising with the Education Department at the Highland Council and the Dog Warden. The matter is in hand.

**The village bin in Achnasheen** is not coping with the demand at the moment.  Volunteers are clearing the worst of it and putting it in their own bins at home each evening but they are beginning to struggle too. Some residents in Achnasheen have raised this issue directly with the Chairman. The Chairman notes this is a problem right across the Ward, especially at Glen Docherty view point and Lochcarron.  Katrina Taylor at the Highland Council writes … *“We are currently capturing information on all litter bins in Ross & Cromarty, locations, amounts and types of bin. I will arrange for one more bin to be sited in Achnasheen but with the current situation, I am not sure this will completely alleviate the problem.”* We thank Katrina for her help and update in this matter.A second bin has now been installed. Community Council members noted rubbish in the layby near Garve Level Crossing. June Ross will shortly be retiring from the Highland Council after 42 years’ service! Community Council members agrees she will be sorely missed. We wish her a long and healthy retirement.

**Stromeferry Bypass –** although this section of road is out with our area, we take an interest as it effects both locals and tourists alike. The latest update from the Highland Council notes that significant rock removal has been identified and this removal (c£1M) will require significant traffic management. The Highland Council are considering how best to undertake the works whilst minimising the impact to the travelling public. Works will hopefully start in early 2018. With regard to the longer-term solution the targeted STAG stage 2 will be submitted to Transport Scotland in the very near future, and the work that HITRANS have commissioned to review the viability of a long-term road and rail sharing operation which is currently ruled out by Network Rail, will be finalised late summer. This will inform whether this option can be reconsidered with regard to its viability. We thank Colin Howell for the update.

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.

**Highland Council Quality Awards 2017 –** Community Council members agreed we should nominate June Ross.

**The Garve & District Development Company** – the inaugural meeting took place on Wednesday 9 August 2017 in Garve Village Hall. Around half the members attended the meeting. Alan Illingworth, Steve Jones, Uisdean Menzies and Ed Tarr have been elected to the Company Board as Member Directors. Further enquiries should now be sent directly to them as our involvement with the day to day running of the Company has ended. £250 will be passed over to the new Board to cover their initial day to day running costs once they have opened a bank account. Paperwork for Company’s House following the election was posted the following day after the inaugural meeting. The new Member Directors have received all electronic files and paperwork we have for the Company as well as copies of Community Council minutes from November 2016 which cover this topic. We wish them well.

It is nearly a year since the **2016 Community Needs Survey** was published following responses received from members of the Community over the summer months. Apart from the Development Company, what else has been achieved? The Chairman noted the following … we have held two Community Ceilidh’s. 49 people attended in December 2016 and 58 people attended last month’s Ceilidh. Five Defibrillators have been installed throughout the Community.  Land originally offered for housing is still available for sheltered housing as there was a feeling that looking after the elderly residents came through in the survey.  Information shelters are to be built by the Highland Council in Achnasheen and possibly in Gorstan as a gateway to the North Highlands.  Private individuals have bought the old filling station in Achnasheen and plans have been lodged to redevelop the site.  A local energy group has been set up and hope to be offering residents a rebate off their electric bills – see LCT minutes from Wednesday 17 May 2017 when £44,650 was granted.  A broadband group has been set up to try and fill in the gaps where green cabinets in Garve and Achnasheen won’t reach.  The School bus is a public service bus which means people can be in Dingwall and Inverness before 9.00am in the morning.  A playpark is currently being built in Strathgarve following a separate door to door survey. Caroline Gamble noted the car park and fencing is now in place at the playpark. Amanda Bryan and Jo Ellen who conducted the Survey have been updated accordingly.

**Community Ceilidh** – was held on Saturday 19 August 2017 in Garve Village Hall. 58 tickets were given away, that’s +9 on the last Ceilidh held in December 2016. People appreciated not having to come out on a winters night! Thanks to the Garve Village Hall Committee for all their help and to Out of the Blue Catering who oversaw our catering requirements. A special thank you must go to all those who attended and those who donated prizes for the raffle and bottle stall. £115 was raised on the raffle for Lucky2BHere. The bottle stall raised £191 for our Community fund. A donation of £20 has since been received. The cost of putting on the Ceilidh came to around £750, similar to last time. Our thanks to LCT for funding the event. The bunting, balloons, candles, crisps and sweets all added to the occasion. Several people have already asked when is the next Ceilidh … perhaps next spring/summer 2018. The LCT Feedback form has been completed and will be sent shortly.

**Fly tipping** – Trish Wilson from Scottish Water has been in touch regarding the fly tipping outside their building in Little Garve recently … “*I have spoken with our redundant asset team as they are responsible for the site in question. Unfortunately, the rubbish was left outside our site boundary, however, they have said that they will arrange for our property maintenance team to attend this site and tidy up within our boundary. Perhaps if our property appears to be maintained it will hopefully deter any further fly tipping.”* We thank Trish for the update.

**Relocation of Lochluichart Postbox** – on Thursday 10 August 2017 we receive the following update from Jake Diamont at Royal Mail … *“I am advised that we are currently waiting for the Highland Council to approve the new location for the postbox – we expect consent to be signed off in the next week (by Friday 18 August 2017). The final hurdle is then to receive consent from the landowner.  We have submitted a formal application to the land registry to establish who owns the land so we can receive confirmation to proceed with the work.”* We thank Jake for his update which we passed onto the Lochluichart Estate, the Ward Manager and the four Ward Councillors.

**Broadband** - the proposed scheme is being run by the Garve and District Broadband group who are a completely separate group to the Community Council and have charitable status (SC047481). They will be shortly reviewing wireless and fibre solutions and deciding which one/combination is best for getting better broadband to the community. They will then be seeking funding for the solution. We thank them for sending us their latest update on their project.

The **Joint Community Council** meeting for Ward Five Community Councils hosted by the Highland Council will take place later this week. Bob and Kenny will attend.

Fiona Milligan left the meeting at 8.10pm and was thanked for attending.

**Police report** – Police were to review the Lochluichart section of road following discussions at our last ordinary meeting. We await sight of the report. This report may be delayed in light of the recent flooding. An Achnasheen resident has raised concerns with the Chairman about the speed of traffic driving through Achnasheen and the speed of traffic going down into the Village Centre.  It's all within a 40mph zone. The Chairman did point out that the Police were already catching people speeding on the main road in Achnasheen but did agree to ask the Police if they could do some patrols down in the Village Centre. There could be instances of inappropriate speed rather than speeding. Press reports inform us that an individual who crashed their car on the A835 between Garve and Tarvie on the morning of Saturday 22 April 2017 was recently fined £600 and disqualified from driving for 12 months after Police discovered they had been drunk driving. A breath test showed 59 microgrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath, the legal limit is 22 microgrammes. Further press reports inform us that an individual travelling on a motorbike at 138mph near Achnasheen on 15 May 2016 has been fined £2,000 and banned from driving for six months after pleading guilty to a charge of careless driving. The individual had two previous convictions for careless driving while on a motorbike and had been disqualified in the past. Bob Moir noted that in recent weeks, motorbikes are not speeding like they once used too. Perhaps the message is finally getting through. Community Council members were concerned to hear of a report of an individual cold calling at properties in the area claiming to be from the Community Council. The only people elected to serve on the Community Council are listed on our member’s page of our website. Community Council members wondered if this was not a case of false representation? Community Council members also noted there are some scam calls at the moment.

**Treasurers report** – In the absence of the Treasurer, the Chairman with help for the Secretary declared the following figures … Treasurers account £536.52. June and August Hall Hires (about £48) are still to be paid. Community Fund was £1,043.04 plus £211 from Ceilidh minus £576 to John Grant for building and installing the benches = £678.04. Hall hire for the two Development Company meeting on 14 July and 9 August (about £16) are still to be paid. Development Company £250. This will be passed onto the new Company once they have opened a bank account. Newsletter £800.56. Ceilidh fund was £774.50 minus £400 band, £14.50 crisps/sweets, £19.99 fliers, £44 Hall hire and minus catering costs (£3.95x70 = £276.50) = £19.51. The remaining balance will be returned to the LCT. 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 - ePlanning – new planning applications at 4 August 2017; Jake Diamont, Royal Mail – update; ePlanning – new planning applications at 11 August 2017; Bill Allan, Local Officer, Scottish Health Council – Consultation of the future role of The Scottish Health Council; Eileen Irvine, Office Co-ordinator, The Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust – Annual Conference and AGM notice; Trish Wilson, Scottish Water – update; Quentin Banting, Minute Secretary, Lochcarron Community Council – Draft August 2017 Community Council minutes; Dr Audrey Sinclair, Chairperson, Wester Ross Biosphere – invitation to presentation; Highland Council Policy – Quality Awards 2017; ePlanning – new planning applications at 18 August 2017; Kirsty Jarvie, Education Co-ordinator, British Red Cross – Free first aid education for adult groups; Katrina Taylor, Highland Council – Achnasheen Village bin; Colin Howell, Head of Infrastructure at the Highland Council – Stromeferry Bypass update (received via Siobhan Mackenzie at the Highland Council); Dr Kate Anderson, Policy Officer in Community Resilience, Scottish Government – Scottish Resilient Communities Conference Agenda (Sent via HC Policy); ePlanning – new planning applications at 25 August 2017; Jackie West – Broadband update; Highland Military Tattoo – update (8-10 September 2017); Highland Council Policy – Consultation on debt advice and related services; Iain Catto, Foundation Scotland – update; ePlanning – new planning applications at 1 September 2017. Correspondences received by post – none.

Bob Moir wondered if the free first aid education for adult groups could be made available to individuals in the Community? The Secretary will make enquiries.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Bob Moir noted the Highland Council website was not filing complaints properly. He called the Call Centre and the faulty streetlights in Stirling Drive have now been reported properly.

The Secretary noted the gate into the Railway Station carpark in Garve was damaged sometime around Wednesday 9 August 2017. The incident has been reported directly to Network Rail under incident number 170811-000009. Photos taken by the Chairman have been sent. The rubbish in the railway yard was reported at the same time.

The Chairman has been informed that the Stations Team has no plans this year to install a hand rail on the footbridge at Achnasheen Railway Station. He also notes that there is to be essential track maintenance works at Achnasheen Railway Station using heavy plant machinery between 8.00pm on Sunday 1 October 2017 until 4.00am on Monday 2 October 2017. Network Rail employees have hand delivered neighbour notification letters to local properties and the Chairman has put a copy of the notice in the Achnasheen Village notice board.

**AOB from members of the Public** – no issues raised.

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – We have received two consultations. First consultation is from The Scottish Health Council. The Scottish Health Council would welcome views on its future direction, given the changes in how Health and Social Care is now delivered within the Highlands. The Scottish Health Council was originally established by the then Scottish Executive in April 2005 to promote Patient Focus and Public Involvement within the NHS in Scotland. Things have since moved on with Adult Care now within the remit of NHS Highland and the Care of Young People now within the remit of The Highland Council. To take part in this consultation, please answer the seven consultation questions. The consultation documents and access to the online questionnaire can be found by visiting the Healthcare Improvement Scotland website: [www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org) and [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HCISconsultSHC/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HCISconsultSHC/) The closing date for responses is Friday 20 October 2017. Community Council members had no comments.

Second consultation is from the Highland Council. Val MacIver declared a non-financial interest in this consultation and left the room at 8.40pm. At the meeting of the Highland Council on Thursday 9 March 2017, elected members agreed to undertake a review of debt advice and related services. The Highland Council’s Welfare Support Team delivers welfare advice and support.  This includes undertaking home visits for the most vulnerable and for those who are unable to attend a local office setting.  The Council also contracts each of the eight Citizens Advice Bureau in Highland to deliver the following types of advice: Debt advice (also referred to as money advice), Housing advice (eg to assist with tenancy disputes), Benefits advice (eg means-tested and other entitlements) and Employment Rights Advice (eg disputes with employers). The budget for these services is around £1.75m per annum. Is there a better way these services can be provided? Consultation is via a questionnaire that then needs to be sent to welfare&benefits.policy@highland.gov.uk Community Council members wondered if reducing office costs by sharing library space was a way forward? Perhaps confidentiality was an issue. Val MacIver returned to the meeting at 8.45pm.

**Building warrants, planning issues and licensing issues** - One new planning application has been received by the Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 17/03791/PNO is for the erection of a 10metre high telecoms tower with antennas and dish, installation of cabinets and associated ancillary equipment within fenced compound, 635metres south east of Aultguish. Community Council members had no comments.

**Dates of future meetings**

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

Tuesday 3 October 2017, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 7 November 2017, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 5 December 2017, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

*Tuesday 9 January 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall*

Tuesday 6 February 2018, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

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.

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 and closed the meeting at 9.00pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

The Community Ceilidh took place on Saturday 19 August in Garve Village Hall. 58 tickets were issued …

