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

**held on Tuesday 7 May 2019 in the Conference Room, Garve Hotel**

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

**Also present:** Val MacIver (Platform PR).

**Apologies:** Community Council member Bob Moir, co-opted member Joe Stewart and Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn.

**The Chairman opened the meeting** at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone. Tonight’s meeting was scheduled to have taken place in Garve Village Hall but the Hall is currently unavailable. Our thanks to the Hall committee for his help in this matter, Community Council members and to Garve Hotel for accommodating us tonight. Best wishes to former Treasurer Jean Bailey who has been unwell.

**Declarations of Interest** – Eliza Leslie Melville declared an interest in the Infinergy project. Community Council members confirmed that they had read all documents due to be discussed tonight before the start of this meeting.

**Approval of draft minutes** of the last ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 2 April 2019 in Garve Village Hall were proposed without amendment by Caroline Gamble and seconded by Sadie-Michaela Harris. Minutes are available at Garve Post Office, Achnasheen Village notice board, via email or on our website. Our website continues to receive around 150 “hits” per month.

**Matters arising – EDF** - Val MacIver updated the meeting that the site is running well. Val was thanked for her updates.

**SSE update** – The Avenue trees – Patrick Allan, tree surgeon at SSE visited The Avenue on Friday 26 April 2019 to see the two leaning/dead trees for himself. He hopes the work can be done before the end of this month. They will require to hire a specialist cherry picker to section down the trees. The trees would then be cut into lengths and stacked for local residents with open fires to help themselves.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – The Dingwall Service Point is set to open its doors at a new location within the Dingwall Council Building. The move frees up the Ross House High Street site to allow The Highland Council to build twelve new affordable town centre homes for rent with two new retail units. To facilitate the move, the Ross House Service Point will close at 4.30pm on Thursday 9th May 2019 and will reopen at its new location at 9.30am on Tuesday 14th May 2019.

Our Chairman attended a meeting about future works this Autumn on the **Stromeferry Bypass** – see attached note. Since that meeting took place, it appears works will take place over an eight-week period from Monday 9 September 2019 with a total weekend closure on 14/15 September 2019 (was to be 21/22 but plans have changed). More details will be made available at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/104/stromeferry_bypass>

**Bridge signs** – The Bailey Bridge sign has been restored and replaced. The Chairman thanked Bob for removing and replacing the sign and to the Secretary for her handwork. **Do other bridges** in the community require signs? Our Chairman and Secretary will check and report back.

**Silverbridge public toilets** re-opened w/c 8 April 2019. Our thanks to all involved in getting these facilities re-opened as quickly as they did. This update has already been posted on our website.

The Secretary called at the **laybys on A832 Lochluichart** on Thursday 18 April 2019 and was very disappointed by the rubbish dumped. In the layby east of Lochluichart Lodge there were white goods left. At the layby east of Lochluichart Church three tyres had been dumped. In the layby opposite Fannich road end there was a Toilet and Cistern. Everything reported to The Highland Council accordingly who cleared the fly tipping on Tuesday 23 April 2019. Our thanks to Les Ross and the team.

The Secretary also noted **tyres laying on the verge** near Gorstan Junction. Since the recycle centres stopping taking tyres, are people adding to the tyres that were already there? We wonder if such items should not be removed as the verge can’t be used by pedestrians. We will seek clarification on the matter.

**Achnasheen electric vehicle charging point and information panels** – ongoing.

**Street lights on the Achnasheen roundabout** have been fixed. Streetlight faults can be reported via <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/110/street_lighting_and_traffic_signals> You will need to provide the reference number on the streetlight column.

The Highland Council notes that **residents should report issues directly to them** by calling The Highland Council’s Call Centre on 01349 886606 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.

**Joint Community Council** meeting for Ward Five Community Councils was held on Wednesday 24 April 2019 in Lochcarron. The Secretary, Bob Moir and Sadie-Michaela Harris all attended on behalf of the Community Council. Our Chairman was also in attendance. The Secretary and Sadie both thought the Housing topic had been useful and interesting. There was general agreement by those present at the 24 April meeting that Community Councils should individually write to their MSP requesting further funding for roads however, those present at this meeting felt we had been served very well by The Highland Council’s Roads Department so did not feel we were in a position to complain. Notes of the 24 April meeting are available in the library section of our website.

**2019 Community Ceilidh** – After securing funding from the LCT, Garve & District Community Council are again holding a Community Ceilidh for everybody (all ages) in the community in Garve Village Hall on Saturday 17 August 2019 from 8.00pm until 11.00pm. Doors will open at 7.30pm. Music will be provided by “The Scone Fairies”. Soup, sausage rolls, tea and coffee will be available from around 9.00pm and those attending are welcome to BYOB and plastic glasses. As the capacity for this event will be 70, **FREE** tickets will need to be obtained on a first come first served basis from The Secretary by Wednesday 31 July 2019. No ticket will mean no entry on the night. A raffle will be drawn at the end of the night raising funds for the Community Council. Donations for the raffle or tombola would be welcome and can be handed in to The Secretary or any Community Council member. Many thanks for donations already received. A flier was emailed/hand delivered to every accessible property in our area advertising this event on 17 & 18 April 2019. A copy of the flier is also on our website and posters have been placed in the Achnasheen Village notice board, Garve Village Hall notice board and at Garve PO where spare fliers are also available. A note has also been placed on the Development Company’s website. 36/70 tickets have already been allocated. Page six of the 2016 Community Needs Survey report does show support for vibrant social activities.

**Community Council Scheme Review 2018-19** – as noted at our last ordinary meeting, there is currently a review of the scheme underway by The Highland Council. Community Councils and members of the public have the opportunity to comment and submit representations on the draft proposals. [https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CCReview1819](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.surveymonkey.co.uk%2Fr%2FCCReview1819&data=01%7C01%7CAlison.Clark%40highland.gov.uk%7C768530abcbf84d17b1b408d69e5c79bd%7C89f0b56e6d164fe89dba176fa940f7c9%7C0&sdata=LShsAL%2FImWH9T2vjmjMOxKjKfB9nz%2FNWIEeD5qmLJ1U%3D&reserved=0). The consultation will run until Friday 31 May 2019. This update has already been posted on our website.

**Police report** - [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk) – no report received but press reports inform us that four men are to be reported in connection with speeding offences after their four vehicles were spotted travelling at 128mph on the A890 west of Achnasheen on Saturday 27 April 2019. The men – aged 55, 46, 35 and 22 – were detected following directly on from information received from a concerned member of the public. Anyone with concerns about the manner of driving can call 101 or 999 in an emergency. The Secretary and Caroline Gamble both wondered if the crash barrier at the **“check rail corner”** should be increased in height now we realise now much of a drop there is from the road to the railway following tree cutting in the area? There has been a number of accidents at this location recently including one in the last week. Enquiries with BEAR and Network Rail will be made. Also, Scottish Forestry (formally Forestry Commission Scotland) have not responded to our enquiry into **flooding on the trunk road** – this will be chased up.

These represent a rise from 23 and 27 respectively in the same period in 2017.**Treasurers report** - The latest bank statement on Sunday 31 March 2019 shows a balance of £2,424.73. Expenses for the last month were £12.50 Garve Hall hire for April meeting and £31.45 ink and diesel for ceilidh fliers. Cheque from LCT for £982.50 received. Audited account for 2018/2019 now received and have been posted on our website. A hard copy will also be placed in Garve Post Office. Hamper sales have gifted the Community Council £1,303.45 in the last year which has helped to keep the Community Council in the black following the 50% cut in our grant. Hall hire and admin costs have been cut to help matters. Anyone who wishes to donate to our fundraising hampers can do so directly to our Secretary or at the reception of Garve Hotel. Hamper baskets would be particularly welcome.

**Correspondences** - All correspondences are sent to members via email. Correspondences received by email - Mandy McWilliam, Bowlts Chartered Surveyors - West Ross Deer Management Group AGM; Emma Green – Zurich insurance renewal update; ePlanning – new planning applications at 5 April 2019; Garve Hotel – booking; ePlanning – formal notice of 19/01284/FUL (Lochluichart); ePlanning – new planning applications at 12 April 2019; Marcus Dicks, SSE – The Avenue trees; Scott Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager, The Highland Council - Inner Moray Firth LDP review; Les Ross, The Highland Council – Rubbish dumped in laybys; Jean Bailey – thanks; ePlanning – new planning applications at 19 April 2019; Mark Ashton, Consents Manager, Energy Consents Unit, The Scottish Government – Kirkan Windfarm planning application; Patrick Allan, tree surgeon, SSE – The Avenue update; ePlanning – new planning applications at 26 April 2019; ePlanning – formal notice of 19/01861/S36 (Kirkan); Alison Gordon**,** Admin Officer, Scottish Forestry - Felling Permission Application (Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018) FPA-6346 - Strathbran Forest; ePlanning – new planning applications at 3 May 2019.

Correspondences received by post – Kirkan planning application and HAGS catalogue.

We have also received draft minutes from Marybank, Scatwell & Strathconon, Shieldaig, Torridon & Kinlochewe and Lochcarron Community Councils and approved minutes from Gairloch Community Council.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Our Chairman received an email via The Highland Council about **pocket orchards**. This is a project of the Wester Ross Growing Communities Association. It is hoped that by planting trees in the Wester Ross communities, it will create an environmental resource in the area. The varieties that are planted are chosen for their hardiness and many are old, Scottish varieties no longer grown commercially. The group planted five trees in Achnasheen around the Village pond recently. The deer have already had a nibble of the trees so our Chairman has asked if the trees can be given more protection around them which the group are happy to look into to. More details on the project itself is available at <https://www.facebook.com/pocketorchards/>

A Garve resident has asked our Chairman about **parking in Matheson Road**. It appears some train users are parking there instead of in the designated car park beside the railway yard. It was suggested a sign “Please no parking, children’s access” may help, but would not be legally enforceable.

**AOB from members of the public** – no issues raised by those present.

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – We have received two consultations. The Infrastructure Commission of Scotland is currently calling for written contributions on Scotland’s future infrastructure priorities.  These contributions will inform the Commission’s initial evidence gathering and analysis, with further opportunities for engagement planned in the coming months. Deadline for submission of evidence was last Friday. More details at <https://infrastructurecommission.scot/page/call-for-evidence> This update has already been posted on our website. Community Council members were informed by email and had no comments on this consultation.

Scottish Forestry have applied for felling permission (FPA-6346, Strathbran Forest). The application can be viewed on their register of felling permissions at <https://forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/public-registers> The area is around 100ha over the next five years. Comment on the application through the link by Tuesday 28 May 2019. Community Council members had no comments.

All Highland Council consultations are available at <http://consult.highland.gov.uk/portal> All Scottish Government consultations are available at <https://consult.gov.scot/consultation_finder>

**Building warrants, planning issues and licensing issues** - One previous planning application has been determined by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 19/00607/FUL was the proposed removal of outbuildings and the erection of two houses, land 80metres west of Chuilin. The planning application has now been granted planning permission by The Highland Council with ten conditions which can be viewed on The Highland Council website.

One new planning application has been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. Eliza Leslie Melville declared an interest in the Infinergy project and left the room at 8.15pm. 19/01284/FUL is the proposed erection of 9 turbines (maximum tip height 133m), temporary construction compound, borrow pits, crane pads, access tracks, underground cables between turbines, sub-station, battery storage, maintenance and control buildings with welfare facilities on land between Lochluichart and Loch Glascarnoch. The deadline for comments to the Case Officer is Thursday 23 May 2019. This update has already been posted on our website. Community Council members raised no objection. Eliza Leslie Melville then returned to the meeting at 8.20pm.

Notice of one other new planning application has been received from The Scottish Government. Kirkan windfarm is proposing 17 turbines (maximum tip height of 175m) south of Strathvaich road end. The application also includes associated access tracks, substation, borrow pits and a compound. Each turbine will generate around 4.8MW. The deadline for comments to The Scottish Government is Friday 31 May 2019. More details at <https://www.energyconsents.scot> This update has already been posted on our website. Community Council members raised no objection.

All planning applications can be viewed at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning_-_applications_warrants_and_certificates/143/planning_permission/4>

**Dates of future meetings**

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

Tuesday 4 June 2019, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall (venue tbc on the next agenda)

July 2019 – no meeting

Tuesday 6 August 2019, 7.00pm, Garve Village Hall

Tuesday 3 September 2019, 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 - [www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4456/scheme\_of\_establishment\_for\_community\_councils](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4456/scheme_of_establishment_for_community_councils)

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

*The restored Bailey Bridge sign …*



[www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict](http://www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict)

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*Notes from meeting of 11 April 2019: To discuss A890/Stromeferry Bypass*

*Highland Council HQ, Glenurquhart Road.
Present*

*Colin Howell (CH) (Head of Infrastructure)*

*Garry Smith (GS) (Principal Engineer)*

*Councillor Allan Henderson (AH) (Environment, Development and Infrastructure)*

*Councillor Margaret Davidson (MD) (Council Leader)*

*Kenny MacLean (KM) (Garve & District Community Council)*

*Aileen Grant (AG) (Lochcarron Community Council)*

*Apologies – Quentin Banting (Lochcarron Community Council)*

*Survey Work and Annual Reporting*

*Recent surveys have been completed (the first of three such surveys budgeted for). Recent surveys included site inspection and drone survey. Drone survey focused mainly on windblown trees that are slipping down the slope. 3D images will be obtained and used to design the catch netting. GS hopes to have some output ready for 24th April meeting. Annual Rock Slope inspection report will not be available until summer and will be posted on Highland Council website in due course.*

*Planned Public Consultation 24th April*

*The main focus for this drop-in session will be the plans for the Autumn works. Information will be available about the details of the works proposed. GS is preparing documents to go out to tender but the contract is not yet written and will not be finalised until after the consultation meeting.*

*Two engineers will attend and Lochcarron Community Council will be on hand/sitting at the front.*

*CH will invite Achmore Community Council (and local residents) to the consultation – preference is for a single consultation event.*

*Feedback sought from communities is primarily on the detailed timings of road closures (which impact on the length of the contract), but there will be limited scope for change.*

*Detail of Works Programmed for Autumn 2019*

*There will be two main working areas at either end of the avalanche shelter. The rockfaces will be tidied up bolted and new netting installed (similar work to last year's work). The road at these points is wide enough to allow for a safety barrier to be put in place and so there is no need to divert traffic on to the rail tracks; instead a convoy system will operate through the entire 1.5 Km working area all day. Importantly, this will mean that HGVs can continue using the route while the contract is ongoing. In order to achieve this, Highland Council have decided to aim for night-time working by closing the road completely, probably between the hours of 10pm and 7am. Weekend closures have been considered, but should not be necessary.*

*It should be noted that the works/closures programme has not yet gone out to contractors (it will be subject to tender) and so arrangements may change. Hence this is a good time for consultation.*

*KM asked if road to rail diversion was an option. GS and CH advised it's not a preferred option because of impact on HGVs. Discussions with Network Rail are ongoing as they still need to approve the works, and track inspections will require use of 'the token', and they will need to be on site during the works.*

*The works are proposed for the period 2nd September to 27th October, but dates could move a little, depending on community feedback.*

*CH anticipates a maximum 20-minute waiting period for the convoy vehicle during the day.*

*There would be potential to make provision for delaying the start of the nightly closure period to accommodate occasional/special events, as happened last year. It is important that the community identify any events during the works so that mitigation can be considered.*

*KM asked if it might be possible to clean the avalanche shelter portals – there is an old 'Ross and Cromarty' crest on these, concealed by moss and vegetation growth. GS advised that pressure washing of portals is not included but if communities wanted to make a bid for this to happen it could be funded potentially from member’s discretionary budget. AG agreed to raise this at the Community Council.*

*Stromeferry Cross Party Group*

*This Group has had its first meeting. Biz Campbell is the agreed Chair and the remit of the Group is to identify a long-term solution for the Stromeferry By-Pass and how to go about achieving it.*

*Minutes of the meeting will be published once approved and endorsed by the Environment Development and Infrastructure Committee (the usual practice for such minutes). Next meeting of EDI Committee is 16 May 19. However, GS/CH will make the presentations available for public view on or before the 24th April.*

*The Group discussed the 'Strategic Road Network Review'. Michael Matheson (Cabinet Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity) has identified the issue as a local road and thus for Highland Council to resolve, but he has said no to all similar requests. The Group considers that the most effective way of changing his mind would be through the strategic review of the trunk road network and MD will be writing to Michael Matheson to ask that the A890 be included in the Strategic Review. Michael Matheson may also respond to lobbying and now is a good time to make the case to all MSPs/political parties as parties are preparing manifestos and commitments in the run up to the next MSP elections. AG and KM will advise their Community Councils about the benefit of letter-writing to raise the profile of this issue. Key angles are linking trunk roads, abnormal load routes and addressing depopulation. While HC can focus on keeping us safe, they cannot find money for a new road proposal of this nature.*

*The Group will devise a Communications Plan – for discussion at their next meeting (no date yet agreed).*

*Council Web Site – will be the main source of information on this issue and as much information as possible will be posted here. Checkout*[***Stromeferry***](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/104/stromeferry_bypass)

*Options Under Consideration – The seven best routes for a new road (out of the original 32 possible) were included in STAG Stage 2 and these were further refined into 3 options (one on each corridor) as well as a 'do-minimum' option. The option of 'road onto rail' or track sharing has been modelled further by Hitrans, but looks unrealistic. Members also discounted the online (viaduct into the loch) option as it did not have the benefits of the two other routes and would have had significant impacts during construction. So, we are now looking at 2 options – (a) Glen Udalain and (b) Bridge at Strome Narrows. GS and CH are now tasked with distilling the STAG documents into a single document which will allow a well-informed comparison between these two options.*

*Value for Money Workshop – As part of the distillation of the STAG documents, it has been agreed by the cross party working group that the various criteria/considerations should be weighted in order to allow an appropriate discussion at a 'Value for Money' workshop. Such a workshop can tend to be biased towards cheaper solutions unless the assessment criteria are weighted to reflect the relative importance of the various criteria such as environment, economy, social etc.*

*AOB*

*GS drew attention to the need to repair the gaps in the safety barrier between road and rail. They will try to address this during proposed Autumn traffic management arrangements, but it will be a separate contract and needs to be investigated further.*