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

**held on Tuesday 6 October 2020 via Zoom webcam**

**Community Council members present on webcam:** Kenny Maclean (Chairman), Caroline Gamble (Treasurer), Bob Moir, Sadie-Michaela Harris and co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville.

**Also present on webcam:** Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn, Andy Mudd (ASPE), Fiona Milligan (Infinergy) and one member of the public.

**Present on conference call:** Jennifer Haslam (Secretary).

**Apologies:** Community Council member Joe Stewart,Tina Hartley (Local Development & Engagement Officer) and Nick Sage (Infinergy).

**The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm** and welcomed everyone and explained that this meeting was being held via webcam due to the current Coronavirus situation. He reminded members of the public that they were still very welcome to attend Community Council meetings even on webcam and take part in the discussions under his guidance. Community Council members were sad to learn that our former Chairperson Pat Campbell died peacefully yesterday evening. Our thoughts are with all the family. Best wishes to Glyn Robson who has been in Hospital. Also, best wishes to Gemah Graham and family who have moved to pastures new.

**Declarations of Interest** – The Secretary declared an interest in Andy Mudd’s report as she is an LCT Director. Community Council member Bob Moir declared an interest in Andy’s report as he is a Trustee of Garve Public Hall. Co-opted member Hamish 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 1 September 2020 via webcam were proposed without amendment by Bob Moir and seconded by Sadie-Michaela Harris. Minutes are available at Garve Post Office, Achnasheen Village Noticeboard, on our website or via email.

**Matters arising – Infinergy update** – Hamish Leslie Melville took no part in this discussion. Fiona Milligan updated the meeting that Infinergy are looking at increasing the base to tip height from 133m to 149.9m of the recently consented five turbine Lochluichart extension II (with an overall generating capacity of up to 24MW, based on a 4.8MW turbine), scoping to be submitted shortly. This is to try and maximise the potential on the site and turbine advances have given greater choice and flexibility but all this would be subject to planning approval. If planning permission is not granted, Infinergy will build to the original consented plans. Engagement with the community will be tricky under current circumstances but Infinergy plan to use their website, emails, newsletters and perhaps webcam as a way forward, all TBC. Grid capacity is an issue so any changes need to be within current limits. Connection date has been pushed back hence the time to review the project. Turbines will still be built in the same locations as already consented. Turbines are likely to be built in Europe or America as the size of these turbines is too big for any fabrication yard in Scotland (same as before). We thank Fiona for her update and to her and Nick for their email updates.

**A press article** on Saturday 19 September 2020 stated Garve & District Community Council had given £1,400 towards driving lessons. This is not the case and the newspaper concerned has apologised for the mistake. It is thought this may be through the **EDF Education & Training fund**. In regard to the fund, three bursary’s totalling £3,500 were recently awarded to cover driving lessons for people who live in our area. A further £300 was awarded to cover travel costs for a student studying BSc in Adult Nursing. Our thanks to Sue Tarr and Marion Macdonald for sending us the update.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – **Speeding through Mossford and Lochluichart** – Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris has been looking through the footage from the cameras in Lochluichart. Over 90 hours viewed which have shown some dangerous movements. Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn confirmed that The Highland Council do have speed cameras and he will ask that they are deployed in the Lochluichart area but a number of Highland Council stall are off sick. He will also raise the issue at the next area committee. Police will also be asked to keep an eye on this area when visiting Achanalt/Achnasheen. Cllr Cockburn noted a traffic order would be needed if a 40MPH zone was installed but that process takes time. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted the volume of traffic is not the issue, it’s speed! There are less tour buses this year, overtaking on the Mossford corners is unacceptable and is an accident waiting to happen. “Slow” markings have been tarred over. Fiona Milligan noted a traffic counter may also be able to note speeds and will pass on information of a project she was involved with. We are aware that Lochluichart residents have also raised this issue directly with The Highland Council. People who experience a near miss/speeding in our area should report it to The Highland Council/BEAR if on the trunk road (A835) and the Police mentioning date, time and what occurred. Film such as dash cam footage would be very welcome. In related news, **Police patrols** have continued to take place in the Achanalt/Achnasheen/Glencarron area in recent weeks including on Sunday 6 September 2020 which resulted in several cars being stopped.

Our thanks to co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville and staff of the Lochluichart Estate who have, in recent weeks, **cuts trees back** at Kinlochluichart Church and at the layby at the Fannich road end to help improve sight lines for the safety of road users.

**Silverbridge toilets** reopened a few weeks ago. Our thanks to Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn and everyone at The Highland Council for their help in this matter. There is still a mess behind the building. This will be chased up with Environmental Health.

In recent weeks, Community Council member Joe Stewart has been made aware that some headstones in **Garve Old Cemetery** have been toppled and other pieces of headstones removed. The families concerned have contacted The Highland Council directly and Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn. It appears to be the case that some have been toppled for health and safety reasons as has happened in the past. The Secretary noted there was a sign at Fodderty Cemetery stating this was the policy.

**EVC Achnasheen** – Our Chairman has been contacted by The Highland Council about the Electric Vehicle Charging point in Achnasheen.  It's still not operational! It appears no way leaves were agreed before the machine was installed and it seems to be proving difficult to resolve the issue. Our Chairman has suggested a different site, well away from the problem area and that owner has already expressed a willingness to accommodate the machine.  SSE think the local power line might need greater capacity to cope but discussions on that are ongoing. We have passed this update onto Ewan Bush, Local Energy Officer and Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn. Concerns were expressed at the expense to taxpayers so far as well as the time we have spent trying to move this issue forward along with others.

**Recycle centres** – Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn has confirmed there were staffing issues at recycle centres which caused restrictions during Coronavirus but most restrictions have now been lifted and opening hours extended. A full list of items that can be taken to the recycle centres is available at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1063/rubbish_-_household_waste/873/household_recycling_centres> In recent weeks rubbish has again been **dumped in laybys** in our area. Our thanks to Katrina Taylor and Les Ross at The Highland Council for their help and to local residents who have been helping to get the community cleaned up again. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted there are still car parts dumped in the old quarry in Strathgarve. We will highlight again to Forestry and Land Scotland.

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.

**BEAR update – damaged Garbat bridge** – traffic lights have been removed as planned and noted at our last ordinary meeting and barricades are in place.

BEAR Scotland, acting on behalf of Transport Scotland **are planning to carry out essential carriageway maintenance works on the A835 trunk road** between the Garve railway crossing and the Gorstan Junction. The resurfacing works are currently programmed to commence on Sunday 11 October 2020 for up to 6 nights. On Sunday the 11 October 2020 to Monday 12 October 2020, the works will be carried out under a nightshift convoy traffic management system between the hours of 7.00pm and 7.00am. On Tuesday the 13 October 2020 until Thursday 15 October 2020 and Sunday 18 October 2020, the trunk road will be **CLOSED** in both directions from 8.00pm until 7.00am. As there is no suitable diversion route, amnesties will be provided at 9.00pm, 10.00pm, 12.00am, 2.00am and 4.00am to allow waiting vehicles to be escorted through the site safely. Access through the works site for emergency service vehicles will be maintained at all times. This update has already appeared on our website and has been passed onto the LCT, TG&DDC and neighbouring Community Councils. There is also roadside signage at Gorstan and at Maryburgh roundabout. Community Council member Bob Moir wondered if the amnesties shouldn’t be advertised on the roadside signage but only so much information can be put on these signs at any one time. Resurfacing works are also due to be completed between Silverbridge and Inchbae between Thursday 15 October 2020 and Tuesday 20 October 2020. These works will be completed through the day between 7.00am and 7.00pm with traffic convoyed through the works.

Natasha Hutchison from the **Wester Ross Biosphere** has asked if a rep from Garve & District was available to join the Biosphere Board. Community Council members are wondering if this might be of interest to our local wildlife group or the local Development Company. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris would have liked more details on what the role actually involved. Sue Tarr has confirmed that TG&DDC will discuss this issue at their next meeting. Community Council members would like to receive updates from a local rep if one is appointed and feed back in accordingly as Garve was marked as the gateway to the Biosphere.

TG&DDC have recently undertook a survey to update **the community development plan**. Tina Hartley, Community Engagement and Development Officer has passed on some comments she thought were perhaps more under the Community Council’s remit which we send her our thanks. We note that we, the Police/Highland Council/BEAR are already aware of the main issues around speeding, speed zones and local cemetery maintenance as discussed earlier tonight. We used to have community skips until people started putting asbestos waste, oils and car parts including car engines in them.  It happened in several communities hence why The Highland Council stopped them about 15 years ago.  Landfill rules also changed about the same time. Recycle centres are the "in" thing now as Highland Council staff can check what you are about to dump.  A bulky uplift service is also available - <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1063/rubbish_-_household_waste/132/dispose_of_large_household_items>

We also note Lucy Beattie has left the Development Company and Yvonne Boa has joined. Our thanks to Lucy for all her help over the years.

**BT proposed payphone removal** – our objections have been noted along with members of the public’s objections. We now await a final decision on this matter. We note national newspapers are also reporting this issue.

The Secretary took no part is the discussion of this next item. … **Andy Mudd from ASPE** has been appointed to see what, if anything, can be done to improve working practices between the Community Council, LCT and TG&DDC. Andy was unable to join us at our last ordinary meeting as he was still in another meeting at the time but has spoken to our Chairman since on the telephone. He has met (virtually) with both the LCT and TG&DDC and has sent us and them his initial report with suggestions on possible ways forward, nothing set in stone at this stage. Andy has been very impressed how a small community like ours has managed to keep three groups going. In discussions, Community Council members raised the following points … *Page seven of the report states that TG&DDC employs people from outside the area. Is this their policy? (we will ask). When was Lucy’s job advertised and were members informed? (again, we’ll seek clarification). LCT funds should only be spent in this community. Community Councils are not advised by The Highland Council to hold assets or property. To possibly merge companies is unlikely to be accepted by Eneco who did state in 2010/2011 that a body such as Foundation Scotland would be used instead if LCT wasn’t set up. (The report does acknowledge that LCT feel it may be unacceptable to EDF as well). There is no mention of the audit/safeguard that LCT provides on the monies given to any group. LCT should be retained as it is. LCT have been flexible in the past such as Garve Public Hall emergency electric works. The community wanted a separate Development Company in the 2016 Community Survey, not Community Council. Report doesn’t tell us anything we didn’t already know. Sharing websites was suggested before and declined but there are links on the Garve hub to individual websites. Joint meetings - the LCT and TG&DDC are already welcome to attend Community Council meetings which they do and Community Council meetings are open to the public so questions can be asked. Andy’s proposal to hold a joint meeting with agendas focussed on identifying and implementing initiatives did carry some weight with Community Council members but do these groups have the time to attend even more meetings? TG&DDC block funding – no. All groups should apply for funding and be treated equally. Workshop? A face to face workshop is perhaps needed but now is not the time. How long would the workshop last … 2-3 hours to perhaps a whole day. Company Directors and Community Council members are volunteers who have day jobs.* Andy thanked the Community Council members for being so candid and found his attendance here tonight useful. Our Chairman thanked Andy for attending and hoped he would join us again another time.

Andy Mudd left the meeting at 8.40pm.

**Treasurers report** - Our Chairman and Secretary have filled in another form and The Treasurer has since received updates via text from the bank and a bank statement in her own name and address so hopefully everything has now gone through. Our thanks again to Eliza Leslie Melville for handover. Current bank balance is, as before, £2,977.19.

**AOB from Community Council members** – The Chairman noted **Remembrance Sunday** is on Sunday 8 November 2020. We understand it is hoped a socially distanced service might be able to take place but a final decision can’t be made until nearer the time. In the meantime, The Treasurer will order a Community Council Wreath. Our Chairman felt a Wreath should be laid on behalf of the community as usual if nothing else. Community Council members fully agreed.

The Secretary noted bushes are covering the **signs at Gorstan** again. Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn will raise the issue but the shortage of manpower at the moment due to illness/social distancing means it maybe some time before it is attended too. The Secretary noted **two incidents involving Deer** and cars recently. It appears Deer are burying under a fence just west of Grudie Power Station and getting onto the road. SSE will be asked to investigate.

The Treasurer has been made aware that a complaint has been sent to the **Wyvis Playpark** group via TG&DDC stating the park isn’t accessible for disabled people. Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn is also aware of the complaint. It would perhaps be difficult to adapt a natural playpark due to the chippings and wood edges but the Playpark group are taking advice on the matter to see what, if anything, can be put in place.

The Treasurer also noted more children have left **Strathgarve Primary School**. Is the School in danger of closing? Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn noted that The Highland Council doesn’t just go by current School roll but projected future intake.

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

Fiona Milligan left the meeting at 9.00pm and was thanked for attending.

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – We have received one consultation from Police Scotland via the Senior Ward Manager – “Your Police 2020-2021” survey. 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** - There are two new building warrants currently being shown on The Highland Council website for our area. 20/01413/DOM4 is the proposed bigger opening and new lintel at 2 Mossford, Lochluichart. 20/01506/NDOM6 is the proposed installation of a prefabricated kitchen and WC pod at Lochluichart Church.

Two new planning applications has been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 20/03190/FUL is the proposed continuation of rock excavation (Renewal of planning permission 14/03799/FUL) and the processing of construction and demolition waste at Achnasheen Quarry. Community Council members were informed via email and have raised no objections to this application.

20/03271/FUL is the proposed erection of five detached holiday cabins at Ledgowan Lodge Hotel. Community Council members were informed via email and have raised no objections to this application.

All planning applications can be viewed at [www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning\_-\_applications\_warrants\_and\_certificates/143/planning\_permission/4](http://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 3 November 2020, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 1 December 2020, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

January 2021 – no meeting

Tuesday 2 February 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 2 March 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 6 April 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 4 May 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 1 June 2021, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

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/21179/scheme\_of\_establishment\_final\_sept\_2019](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/21179/scheme_of_establishment_final_sept_2019)

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.  He also thanked Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris for hosting the Zoom webcam session.  The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

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

garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com