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

**held on Tuesday 6 April 2021 via Zoom webcam**

**Community Council members present on webcam**: Kenny Maclean (Chairman), Bob Moir, Joe Stewart, Sadie-Michaela Harris and co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville. Caroline Gamble (Treasurer) joined the meeting at 7.30pm.

**Also present on webcam**: Yvonne Boa (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) and two members of the public.

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

**Apologies**: Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn.

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. Those who can’t attend our meetings can, as always, write to the Secretary with any issues they wish raised.

The Community Council website [www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict](http://www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict) continues to be well used, still receiving around 150-200 “hits” per month. As always, our Chairman, who is the website’s administrator, has no way of knowing who visits, he just sees the numbers. Updates between meetings continue to appear on the bottom of the home page.

**Declarations of Interest** – Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville declared an interest in the Infinergy project. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris is a Director of the LCT. As a Garve Public Hall Trustee, Community Council member Bob Moir declared an interest in the Hall planning application. Joe Stewart noted his wife is a Garve Public Hall Trustee but he is not. 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 March 2021 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. Minutes will be signed by our Chairman and Secretary in due course.

**Matters arising** – **Infinergy** – Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville declared an interest in this project and took no part in the discussions. [www.lxxwindfarm.co.uk/](http://www.lxxwindfarm.co.uk/) No further news as such except our Chairman has been asked along with others across the UK to contribute to updating onshore wind best practice guidance regarding community engagement. The updated guidance should be available later this year. Community Council members had no objections to our Chairman’s brains being picked!

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – **EVC** – Community Council Bob Moir, who is also a Garve Public Hall Trustee has asked their Chairman for an update. He confirmed that an EVC would be considered but there is uncertainty with regard as to who owns the parking area outside the Hall which The Highland Council have in the past denied owning and the Trustees do not believe it belongs to the Hall. Also, it was made clear that all costs, liability etc. would not be borne by the Hall. We thank Alan Ross, Chairman of the Garve Public Hall Trustees and Bob for the update. No further developments regarding the Achnasheen EVC. It appears other communities in the Highlands are in the same boat.

At our December 2020 ordinary meeting, we considered a draft **Tourism Infrastructure Plan** from The Highland Council. As the statutory body who represents everyone in this community, we were asked to comment and submitted suggestions which appear to have been included in the final approved plan. Some funding has been secured for car parking improvements, additional bins and collections, further promotion of the Highland Wide Toilet Comfort Scheme and road repairs. An additional team of Ranger’s has also been advertised to work alongside Forestry & Land Scotland and other agencies. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris believes the job involves educating and advising visitors what they can and can’t do. More details can be found at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/13505/new_jobs_in_highland_as_council_prepares_for_a_busy_season_ahead> We would like to see more exact details on all of this and have asked Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn to make enquiries.

**Wade’s Bridge –** The Highland Council have now confirmed that it is unlikely that they would install railings on this bridge (no reason given). People will need to take responsibility for their own actions.

Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville noted the **white lines at the Gorstan Junction** perhaps need repainted so that the requirement for vehicles coming from Achnasheen to stop at the junction is clearer. We’ve passed this onto the Acting Roads Manager for Ward Five who has added the job to the list as a priority. As soon as he can get the liner booked, it will be one of the first jobs to get done.

We are disappointed to report several incidents of **fly tipping** in our area since our last ordinary meeting. Empty drums, car body panels, a cooker, a sofa and white cylinders have all been dumped in the Lochluichart/Achanalt area. Tyres were also dumped in the Inchbae area on Forestry land. Our thanks to Forestry, Lochluichart Estate and The Highland Council who have all helped us tidy the areas. We note a new community group is trying to be formed to also help <https://garve.org/volunteers-needed#tCa3moxh> In a further effort to try and reduce the fly tipping, co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville has offered to use Lochluichart Estate time and man power to cut trees in the Lochluichart laybys. As well as opening up the laybys, it will improve sightlines and hopefully mean less rubbish for the Council to collect. Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn has been informed and will let the Road’s Department know. These works started this week. Community Council member Bob Moir noted that Dingwall Recycling Centre is open (with covid restrictions in place on site). More details can be found at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1096724/dingwall_recycling_centre> The bulk uplift service is also available. More details at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1063/rubbish_-_household_waste/132/dispose_of_large_household_items>

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.

**Trunk Road (A835)** – Transport Scotland have confirmed that the **new crash barriers** to be located east of Garve are not yet designed but they will give us more information including on their exact location in due course. They plan to design and install the barriers during this financial year. With regard to the **speed limit review and extending the Garve speed zone,** the Community Council’s view is noted. We will try and get video evidence when we are fully out of lockdown. Police did carry out checks recently in Garve and Achnasheen, no issues found. In other news, the Secretary noted on Monday 15 March 2021 that “slow” signs and “40mph” signs had been painted onto **the resurfaced section** of trunk road between Garve Hotel and Hazelbrae. She thought the work looked very good. A member of the public was amazed that the unmarked police car had not seen any issues in Garve. As reported at previous meetings, speeding or inappropriate speeding should be reported at the time to the Police by calling 101. Video evidence would be helpful. Community Council member Bob Moir noted a string of rally cars in the area recently. **Faults** on the Trunk road (A835) should be reported via <https://www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/>

Caroline Gamble (Treasurer) joined the meeting at 7.30pm.

**Proposed Public Toilets in Garve** – Garve Public Hall Trustees are not opposed to allowing public use of the Hall toilets but with some concerns. Who would pay for upkeep, consumables, cleaning etc …? Also, who would take liability for any damage or vandalism caused? History has shown that the drains at times are problematic. Again, we thank the Chairman of the Garve Public Hall Trustees for his update. It was suggested that Kinlochewe have set up their own not for profit organization to run their public toilets, perhaps it might be useful to speak to them? Our Chairman will make enquiries. It is perhaps worth noting that The Highland Council have no statutory duty to provide public toilets as advised by Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn before. Does Garve need better signage to advise people where current toilets actually are? Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris, who is also an elected Director on the LCT Board, will report these points back to the LCT as they make for useful information for their current discussions.

**Cold weather payments** – Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn has confirmed that the Aultbea Met Office weather station is the station assigned to the IV22 Postcode area. Our MP has written to the appropriate UK Government Department and the reply says that the weather station links are made on the recommendation of the Met Office, who are acknowledged experts in this area. The Met Office assess each postcode district to determine the climate experienced by the majority of the population. The Department will ensure that IV22 is included in the upcoming annual review with the Met Office. Our thanks to our MP and the Department for their replies. Our MP will now write to the Met Office (as have we) to make the case directly. We await the Met Office’s reply. In the meantime, we have passed on the relevant emails to Torridon & Kinlochewe, Wester Loch Ewe and Aultbea Community Councils who all operate in IV22. It would appear private individuals living in other areas linked to the Aultbea Met Office weather station have also raised concerns as the weather station is also linked to IV21 and IV26. The UK Government will not take readings from other “local” weather stations such as weather stations in people’s gardens.

**The blue van** parked east of Garve that was raised as a potential issue at the last ordinary meeting of the Community Council has since been removed.

**Sustainable Choices online workshop** took place on Tuesday 16 March 2021. TG&DDC have been successful in their application to be part of the Sustaining Choices project - <https://www.pas.org.uk/sustainingchoices/> The aim of the project is to develop a Community Action Plan to address sustainable travel options for the Garve and District area – so walking, cycling, public transport etc... 27 people attended from TG&DDC, this Community Council, LCT and the Local Energy Group.  Reps from "On Ya Bike", a new community group also attended - <https://garve.org/community-pathway> It is hoped a Community Action Plan for the community will be agreed and in place by September 2021. Yvonne Boa (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) updated this meeting that a further online workshop for the public was due to have taken place on Wednesday 31 March 2021 but was cancelled as only one member of the public signed up to take part however there were lots of ideas put forward at the original meeting which are now being looked into. A survey will go out to the public in due course. **Locations for hand sanitisers** was raised again. We suggest Halls, Playparks and beside Defibrillators. Yvonne confirmed that there is still covid funding available for **cleaning products**, perhaps something of interest to the Halls. It is also hoped that there can be **Covid hero awards** at some point. Yvonne was also able to confirm that **Heather Donaldson** has been appointed the new TG&DDC Secretary. Our Chairman thanked Yvonne for her updates and hopes to see her and Heather at a future Community Council meeting. It’s always good to put faces to names!

**Police reports** – no report received this month but our Secretary is still waiting to hear back from PC Murray regarding which area her reports actually cover.

Community Council members were very concerned to read reports of **dumped tyres** in the Lochcarron and Inchbae areas (over 200 tyres). It’s suspected that this has been done over a period of time and Police are appealing for anyone who may have seen any vehicles acting suspiciously to contact police on 101, quoting incident number NP 658/21. Alternatively, you can contact the Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. Both sets of tyres have now been taken away and disposed of properly. Our thanks to all concerned.

Press reports inform us that a top executive with a company involved in the manufacture of a Covid vaccine and who has since stepped down from that role, kept his driving licence despite **speeding** at almost twice the speed limit while rushing to a government meeting. The individual aged 57 admitted travelling at 108mph on the A832 at Achanalt on 2 August 2020. The Sheriff decided against a driving ban and instead endorsed the driver’s licence with six penalty points and fined him £1,040.00

**Treasurer’s report** – The Treasurer confirmed that the bank balance on Thursday 18 March 2021 (last statement received) was £2,400.53. This is less £400 from last month to cover the Secretary fee plus her travelling expenses. Other Secretary expenses of around £25 are still to be paid. Treasurer’s fund now stands at £117.63, Newsletter at £744.50 and Reserve at £1,538.45. Contact has been made between the Auditor and the Treasurer to get year-end accounts drawn up.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Several Community Council members noted **potholes** following the cold weather on our Highland Council roads. Community Council member Bob Moir has already reported the fault in Stirling Drive online (FS323269935) and other Community Council members will do the same for Matheson Road, The Avenue, Strathgarve and Little Garve. Our Chairman reminded members that the main roads will be attended to first as per Highland Council policy. Potholes can be reported directly via The Highland Council website - [www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads\_and\_pavements/96/road\_faults](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/96/road_faults)

Community Council member Joe Stewart noted the **sightlines** when leaving Little Garve are much better. Forestry & Land Scotland have been cutting back the bushes on the **Drover’s Road** which is welcome but the cutting back of the bushes could have been done better. The Treasurer agreed. Perhaps it’s work in progress at this stage? We will ask Forestry & Land Scotland for an update on their works.

The Treasurer noted an increase in **dog mess** around the Wyvis Natural Playpark area. Are **cars** going there via Strathgarve instead of via Little Garve because of the potholes? Perhaps the new Ranger role might help educate people. As previously reported at our meetings, people visiting the playpark should park in Little Garve. **Dog fouling** – picture needed and then it needs to be sent to - [www.highland.gov.uk/info/1330/street\_care\_and\_cleaning/473/dog\_fouling](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1330/street_care_and_cleaning/473/dog_fouling) Anonymous reports will not be accepted.

**AOB from members of the public** – A member of the public, along with Community Council members, was saddened to see Mary Craig’s house at Gorstan had been partly demolished in recent weeks. It is presumed it was taken down as some corrugated sheeting had come loose from the roof during recent stormy weather. The Community Council was not aware of any future plans for the site once the demolition is completed.

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – none. 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** - Community Council member Bob Moir took no part in the following discussion. One new planning application has been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 21/01070/FUL are the proposed alterations and extensions to Garve Public Hall. This update has already appeared on our website. Community Council members had no objections to the planning 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 4 May 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

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

July 2021 – no meeting

Tuesday 3 August 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 7 September 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 5 October 2021, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

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

Tuesday 7 December 2021, 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 8.20pm.

Signed …………………………….

Signed …………………………….

Date ……………………………….

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

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