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

**held on Tuesday 7 December 2021 via Zoom webcam**

**Community Council members present on webcam**: Kenny Maclean (Chairman), Jennifer Haslam (Secretary), Caroline Gamble (Treasurer), Bob Moir, Sadie-Michaela Harris and co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville from 7.00pm until 7.45pm.

**Also present on webcam**: Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn and two members of the public.

**Apologies**: Sue Tarr (Chair, TG&DDC) and Tina Hartley & Yvonna Boa (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) as TG&DDC are holding a meeting themselves this evening. Apologies also received from Community Council member Joe Stewart 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. Those who can’t attend our meetings can, as always, write to the Secretary with any issues they wish raised.

Our Chairman noted the sad passing of former Garve resident Nel (Daisy) Macdonald-Rolfe who passed away peacefully on Tuesday 9 November 2021. Known to many as Nel the Dog Warden (although her job covered many other aspects), Nel was also a former member of this Community Council from 2000-2003. Our thoughts are with the family.

We were sorry to learn that Flora Mackenzie, formerly of Corriemoillie passed away peacefully on Sunday in Urray House, Muir-of-Ord. Flora will be fondly remembered. We send our thoughts to her husband Gordon (a former Chairman of this Community Council) and the family.

Best wishes to our Treasurer Caroline Gamble following a recent Hospital stay. The Treasurer wished to thank Community Council members for the flowers and card she received from them. Also best wishes to George the Postie who has been unwell recently and Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris following a chimney fire at her home a few days ago.

**Declarations of Interest** – Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville declared an interest in the Infinergy project, the proposed battery storage facility and the PNO on Lochluichart Estate. Community Council member Bob Moir is a Garve Public Hall Trustee. The Treasurer is a member of the Garve Litter Busters Group and declared an interest in the Scottish Water 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 November 2021 via webcam were proposed without amendment by Sadie-Michaela Harris and seconded by Bob Moir. Minutes are available at Garve Post Office, Achnasheen Village Noticeboard, on our website or via email. Hard/electronic copies are available on request from the Secretary so whether you are online or not, our updates are available to everyone. Minutes will be signed by our Chairman and Secretary in due course via post.

**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/) Nick Sage has emailed the Community Council to say … “*Submission of Further Environmental Information (FEI) for Lochluichart Wind Farm Extension II (LXX) application (to increase turbine tip heights to 149.9m) will be submitted in January 2022. Consultees have been sent draft versions of these documents in advance of FEI submission for their consideration. The s37 Application to connect LXX will also be submitted in January, further design input on pole spacings underpinning the Over Head Line was required to ensure a robust application (hence the delay). Subject to consultee comments over requirement for further bird/bat surveys, the LXX application could be determined by The Highland Council North Planning Application Committee in April 2022 with the s37 considered around the same time”.* Our thanks to Nick for his update which has already been posted on our website. Community Council members had no questions on this matter.

On Wednesday 17 November 2021, our Chairman and Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris along with twelve other people including from TG&DDC, community organisations in Perthshire and Nairn and members of the public attended an online meeting about **community energy**. The meeting was recorded so will be made available in due course by TG&DDC. Funding is more geared towards heating projects these days; the proposed Blackwater Hydro scheme is still on hold due to its financial viability and solar panel car chargers might be a way forward. Ewan Bush (TG&DDC Energy Officer) informed the meeting that the Achnasheen charger might be removed by The Highland Council due to the ongoing wayleave issue. It was suggested a solar panel car charger might be able to be located elsewhere in Achnasheen instead. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris added how positive the speakers on the call were about the fact they saw a gap in the market for cafes - be it they be privately owned or community run cafes – and to include charging points in order that those charging had a more enjoyable wait. Hazel Boswell from The Midge Bite Café in Achnasheen has spoken to Ewan about hosting a EVC at her café. Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville noted that the solar panels at Kinlochluichart Church are not performing as well as expected due to poor sunlight. He will try and get some data via Church elders to share with us and Ewan. Our Chairman noted a similar potential problem when he looked into solar panels for his home a number of years ago. Perhaps this is a community wide problem?

In a slightly related matter, Lynn Frost from The Highland Council has been tasked with **mapping emergency food provision** throughout the far-flung corners of ward five should a request for emergency food come in to The Highland Council helpline. It was suggested The Midge Bite Café might be a central location for such a project as they have staff travelling in from both directions which, in turn, would help with distribution.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – The **“Trench” in Stirling Drive**, **Garve** has been repaired in recent weeks. The A890 south of Achnasheen was **white lined** on Tuesday 23 November 2021 along were grass/bush verge cutting. Our thanks to all involved. White lines still needed in Garve Village and at the Gorstan Junction.

Although out with our area, we were saddened to once again see **dumped items** in the Fisherman’s layby below Rogie Falls. Norma Ross, Chairperson at Contin Community Council was already aware and had passed the information onto the land owner who dealt with the matter promptly. We are happy to help Norma in any way we can on this matter as illegal dumping is something all communities are trying to deal with. Community Council member Bob Moir noted that there is some confusion on social media about charges for rubbish. Some people are mixing up recycle centres (which are free to use) and the bulky uplift service (<https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1063/rubbish_-_household_waste/132/dispose_of_large_household_items>). Cllr Cockburn will see if The Highland Council can publish clarification, perhaps through their press office as there is always plenty rubbish to gather after Christmas. A member of the public noted that they had used the bulky uplift service recently and thought it was fantastic value for money when costed against hiring a van.

**The Highland Council winter service** started on the 14 October and continues to 14 April. During this time, they monitor road and weather conditions across their roads network. The Highland council maintain a fleet of 105 gritters, 42 pavement gritters and 1 snowblower. Across the Highlands there are over 1,750 grit bins. Over a typical winter around 50,000 tonnes of salt will be spread on the road. The cost of providing this service reflects the fact that they have to treat the longest local road network of any council in Scotland. Although expenditure varies according to the severity of the winter, The Highland Council expect to spend in the region of £5million annually.

<https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/107/winter_road_maintenance> Our Chairman noted the **roadside cameras** beside the Achnasheen roundabout are no longer able to be viewed by the public. Cllr Cockburn will try and find out why as these cameras were very helpful to road users in winter months. Trunk road cameras are still available to be viewed at <http://trafficscotland.org/livetrafficcameras/> It was also noted that **grit bins** in the area have been refilled which is appreciated and perhaps pavement clearing operations have started again.

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.

**Faults on the Trunk Road (A835)** should be reported via <https://www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/>

**Killin Farm Level Crossing update** – Flora Smith at Killin Farm has been in touch to say … *“The site meeting went well although David Maclean, the level crossing manager got his dates mixed up so he wasn't there. There were two gentlemen from BEAR there. We discussed different ways that could improve the entrance/exit to the railway level crossing. They will report their findings and suggestions back to BEAR.”* Our thanks to Flora for her update who will keep us updated when more is known. We also note that **resurfacing works** and white lining on the A835 north of Gorstan have now taken place.

In slightly related news, Tina Hartley (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) has been looking into **speed signs** for Garve and the wider area. An Achanalt resident has asked the Community Council in this regard … “*Can we be assured that residents along the A832 will be consulted prior to any final action being taken?* As this is a project being led by TG&DDC, we passed the question on to Tina who confirmed to us and the Achanalt resident that the area is well represented on the Traffic Calming Measures Group and all updates will go out online. At the moment TG&DDC are looking at solar powered signs for the A832 that indicate speed and potential hazardous bends and are awaiting replies from The Highland Council and BEAR/Transport Scotland on the matter. Our thanks to Tina for her update. We note the Achanalt resident has now joined the working group. Those who are members of the group in attendance here tonight noted that no date has yet been set for the next meeting of the group.

**Future of Achnasheen Hall** – following a survey of Achnasheen and Achanalt residents undertaken by Achnasheen Amenities in October 2021, 31 responses were received from the 49 questionnaires that were sent out (turnout 63%). The responses were: 22 not in favour of buying the hall from The Highland Council, 8 in favour of buying the hall and 1 abstention. Our Chairman recalled the public meeting held in September 2021 on this matter. The one thing that stuck in his mind was when someone asked if anybody would miss the Hall if it was no longer there.  Nobody said they would. Cllr Cockburn has noted the vote results and the matter will now be discussed by The Highland Council. In other news, there will be **Christmas Carols** sung at Achnasheen Hall this coming Sunday 12 December 2021 from 3.00pm, all welcome.

**South West Ross Community Car Scheme** AGM was held on Thursday 25 November 2021 which our Chairman was invited but was unable to attend online as he was left waiting in an online waiting room! The car scheme area includes Achnasheen. Need a lift to medical appointments, self-isolating or shielding? For deliveries of food, medicines etc just pre-arrange with your local shop or surgery and call: 01445 791436 9.30am – 2.00pm, Monday to Friday. They may need 48 hours to arrange a driver. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - If you feel you could volunteer by driving and delivering essentials or as a telephonist calling people on the phone, please contact Peter on 01445 791335 or email swrc-carscheme@btconnect.com [www.swrc-carscheme.co.uk](http://www.swrc-carscheme.co.uk) Registered Scottish charity no: SC034461.

**Cold weather payments update** – Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris informed the meeting that a monthly historic record and today’s weather for Achnasheen can be found at
<https://bit.ly/AchWeather> This might prove useful if we have another cold snap lasting longer than seven days below 0c.

Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville left the meeting at 7.45pm due to other commitments but was thanked for attending.

**Remembrance Sunday** – a service took place at the Garve War Memorial on Sunday 14 November 2021. It was a fresh mild dry day, our Chairman was joined by the Secretary who had travelled especially from Alness to join us, Community Council members Joe Stewart & Bob Moir, co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville and around 35 members of the community. It was particularly lovely to see our former Treasurer Eliza Lelie Melville in attendance. Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville laid the Community Council wreath on behalf of the community while our Chairman laid The Highland Council wreath on behalf of Cllr Cockburn who was unable to attend. Tea was served afterward in Garve Public Hall where the tables were well spaced out to allow for social distancing.

**TG&DDC updates** – An Achanalt resident has contacted the Community Council **about fire alarms** and the changes in the Law from February 2022. This is a project being led by TG&DDC so we passed the question on. Tina has replied to the Achanalt resident and ourselves to say that they already have a working group looking at this and have passed the concept of how they might support the community in the provision, and if need be, installation of alarms, to a funding body for their consideration. More details online at <https://garve.org/fire-safety> Our thanks to Tina for the update. Our Chairman noted that it’s good that emails/letters can and will be passed on to the appropriate group to help our residents find answers, something we have always done.

**Proposed purchase of land at Garve Hotel** – following a survey of local stake holder groups, Option 1 (to purchase three lots of land) was chosen (12 voted for Option 1, 7 voted for Option 2, 1 voted for both options and 1 vote abstained. Turnout 21/29 or 72%). TG&DDC will keep Community Council informed of developments when more is known. Despite the extension to the voting deadline, Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris was disappointed not everyone who was entitled to vote did so on such an important matter. It is our Chairman’s understanding that all seven Community Council members did vote so we certainly played our part in the process. Cllr Cockburn informed the meeting that the Garve Hotel building itself has been sold. He has met the new owners and has passed on our Chairman’s contact details to the new owners as they are very keen to meet him and work with the community. Our Chairman is happy to meet them to hear what plans they have at their earliest convenience.

Following **TG&DDC recent AGM** which our Chairman and other Community Council members attended, there are now six Elected Directors on the Board – Sue Tarr (Chair), Mike Franklin (Treasurer), Andrew Biddlecombe, John Fenwick, Heather Green and Amy Sharp. Zoe Bedwell-Cuthbertson continues to be the Board’s Youth Advisor.

Our Chairman was pleased to see the **new flower tubs** getting delivered in our area. There are already some in Garve and Achnasheen, our thanks to the Green Leaves group for the tubs and bulbs. Our Chairman understands wire netting will be placed over the Achnasheen tubs following his advice to the Community Janitor to keep the deer out, especially after what happened to the mini orchard!

**Police report** - no formal report received but as reported at previous Community Council meetings, anyone who witnesses speeding or inappropriate speed is asked by the Police to **call them directly on 101** at the time of the incident and make a witness statement.  Video or photo evidence is also welcomed by the Police.

**Treasurer’s report** - The Treasurer updated members that the bank balance as per the latest bank statement dated Tuesday 21 September 2021 remains at £2,700.00 but £35.00 is due out shortly for Data Protection. The breakdown will therefore be as follows …. Newsletter fund unchanged at £744.50. Reserve unchanged at £1,538.45. Admin will be £382.05. Data Protection registration is required as we hold contact details for many people. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Our Chairman noted that in February 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will celebrate her **Platinum Jubilee**. This will be the first time that a British Monarch has celebrated seventy years on the throne. With Coronavirus ongoing, it would be difficult to plan an event but he wondered if we might plant a tree next summer like we did 10 years ago at Gorstan? Community Council members will give the matter some thought before our next ordinary meeting on Tuesday 1 February 2022.

Our Chairman learnt today via social media that from Wednesday 5 January 2022, **Westerbus timetables** are changing. The main changes for our area are that the return bus from Inverness will be around 70 minutes earlier and the Thursday bus to Dingwall will now run on Wednesdays.

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

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – we note from press reports that OFCOM wish to change the rules that decide whether a public phonebox can remain in place or not. More details including other proposed changes to the telephone network and the link to respond to OFCOM’s public consultation can be viewed at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-59217347> Deadline for comments to OFCOM is Tuesday 11 January 2022. If the rules are changed, BT would still need to consult with the local authority who, in turn, would need to undertake a public consultation, but public phoneboxes used less than 52 times a year would be up for removal unless there is a poor mobile phone signal in that area. Based on previous known figures, all four of our public phoneboxes would be at risk.

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 is one new building warrant currently being shown on The Highland Council website for our area. 21/02107/DOM2 is the construction of a new garage at Keepers Cottage, Strathgarve.

One new planning application. 21/05168/FUL are the proposed alterations to an existing access track on land 160metres North West of Luib, south of Achnasheen. In order to meet tight deadlines, Community Council members were informed by email and raised no objections. This update has already appeared on our website. Our Treasurer found a very interesting article about the old Scardroy to Luib track - <https://nosasblog.wordpress.com/2014/10/14/old-routes-through-ross-shire-luib-near-achnasheen-to-scardroy-in-strathconon/>

Two new PNO applications have been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 21/04891/PNO is for proposed peatland restoration on land 4000metres south west of Luib. Although the area of land in question is just outside of our area, it is thought the site will be accessed from Luib, south of Achnasheen. Community Council members had no questions on this application.

21/05030/PNO is the proposed Peatland restoration on land 5800m South West of the Aultguish Inn. Community Council members had no questions on 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** - the latest guidance received from The Highland Council yesterday states … *“With the First Minister’s announcement last week, encouraging all who can work from home to do so, we would ask any Community Council who has restarted face to face meetings to consider reverting to online meetings again.  This is in line with the national messaging for people to take additional precautions in light of the new variant.”* It was noted we had already agreed to hold winter meetings online.

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

January 2022 – no meeting

Tuesday 1 February 2022, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 1 March 2022, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 5 April 2022, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 3 May 2022, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 7 June 2022, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

July 2022 – no meeting

Tuesday 2 August 2022, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 6 September 2022, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 4 October 2022, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 1 November 2022, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 6 December 2022, 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 and as this was the final scheduled meeting of 2021, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Community Council members wished to note our Chairman’s due diligence on all matters throughout the year and thank him for his continued work. The Chairman thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 8.10pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

At 6.00pm on Saturday 27 November 2021, around sixty people including some Contin residents attended the Garve Christmas lights being turned on. The weather was kind, not too cold and very little snow. The raffle raised £230.00. It was lovely to see so many there and as our picture shows, there were plenty of people queuing for the food and hot drinks on offer …



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

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