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

**held on Tuesday 1 February 2022 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.

**Also present on webcam**: Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn and one member of the public.

**Apologies**: Community Council member Joe Stewart (who was still at work) and Tina Hartley & Yvonna Boa (Community Engagement and Development Officers, TG&DDC). We also received apologies after the meeting from Nick Sage at Infinergy.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.30pm following some technical difficulties and welcomed everyone to our first meeting of 2022. He 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.

**Declarations of Interest** – co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville declared an interest in the Infinergy project, the S37 planning application and the proposed battery storage facility. 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 7 December 2021 via webcam were proposed without amendment by Bob Moir and seconded by Caroline Gamble. Minutes are available at Garve Post Office, Achnasheen Village Noticeboard, on our website or via email. Hard/electronic copies are also available on request from the Secretary. 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/) A S37 planning application to carry electricity from the proposed Lochluichart II Wind Farm Extension has been submitted to The Highland Council – see planning matters later in this meeting.

In the Summer of 2021, our Chairman was asked to contribute to some **UK Government guidance** on community benefit and engagement practices for onshore wind renewables that was being updated. The updated document is now available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-benefits-and-engagement-guidance-for-onshore-wind#history> Several points made by our Chairman have been included in the updated guidance, especially in relation to keeping everyone in a community informed on a regular basis via a website, email or post of presentations, actual plans etc ...

An update from the **EDF Education & Training Fund** was received from Foundation Scotland just before Christmas. We learnt that three applications from residents in the Garve & District area were successful. £1,500.00 to fund accommodation, travel and equipment relating to MSci Physics with Astrophysics, £1,500.00 to fund accommodation, subsistence and laptop relating to BA (Hons) in Film and a further £1,500.00 to fund accommodation, subsistence and travel relating to degree in Medicine. The 2022 deadlines for applications are 7 February, 6 June and 3 October. More details at <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/apply-for-funding/funding-available/corriemoillie-education-training> This update has already been posted on our website.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – **SORN vehicles parked in a Highland Council car park** – Cllr Cockburn has confirmed that a Housing Officer will investigate ownership of two vehicles and if confirmed as linked to one of the council houses will contact them and Environmental Health to discuss better options for storing or disposing of untaxed vehicles. Our thanks to Cllr Cockburn for the update.

**White lines** in Garve Village and Gorstan Junction will be attended to in the spring.

**Collapsed drain** in Garve between Garve Public Hall and Garve Post Office has been reported. 387273371 was reported on Tuesday 21 December 2021. Our thanks to Community Council member Bob Moir. Bob thought there might be another collapsed drain in Matheson Road. He will check and report if necessary.

**Broken fence** at the playing field in Matheson Road has been reported. 393219179 was reported on Friday 14 January 2022. Our thanks to Community Council member Bob Moir. Bob also noted an **armchair dumped** in the layby between Garve and Tarvie close to access road to Blackwater Cottages on Tuesday 4 January 2022. Our thanks to Bob for reporting directly to The Highland Council and to the waste team for collecting in just a few days, much appreciated. Contin Community Council are also grateful for our assistance in this matter. Community Council members noted a recent TV program about illegal dumping and noted how lucky we were up here in the Highlands.

**Damaged road sign** east of Mossford has been reported. 393832332 was reported on Monday 17 January 2022 (also passed onto TG&DDC as part of the Sustainable Choices Action Plan re speed reduction measures), thanks to our Chairman.

**Achnasheen EV Charger** – press reports around Christmas time seemed to suggest SSEN were trying to resolve the ongoing wayleave and power supply issues *“by the New Year”* however, there is still no resolution on the ground. Rachael Anderson at The Highland Council confirmed that “*We don’t have a definitive date yet that the charge point will be commissioned, it is still sitting with SSEN to resolve the issue.”* Our thanks to Rachael for her update. We have again asked SSEN for an update. On Wednesday 19 January 2022 Duncan MacDonald at SSEN wrote … *“We are undertaking this work at the request of The Highland Council and are keeping them directly updated with our progress; for reasons of business confidentiality, as would be the case for any commercial piece of work, we are unable to provide you with any updates.”* We thank Duncan for his update. Our Chairman has gone back through our minute books and the agendas/minutes on The Highland Council website and noted an EV Charger for Achnasheen was first proposed by The Highland Council at their meeting on 3 November 2016 (Cllr Greene was in attendance) with an estimated installation date by March 2017 as the funding from Transport Scotland had to be spent in 2016/17 financial year. The EV Charger was installed in the Spring of 2017 but was not able to be used. Cllr Cockburn received confirmation that a completed installation date of Sunday 18 February 2018 was the target … yet we are all still waiting to get plugged in despite us raising this issue many times over the last five years. Our Chairman has asked that the matter now be raised at the next Ward Business and Area Committee meetings and Maree Todd MSP is making enquiries. Cllr Cockburn has heard nothing on this matter since our last ordinary meeting. The press are also asking questions on this matter. Community Council members were grateful for the various updates but feel after five years, SSEN really need to be producing a plan of action with a power supply attached!

There have been many **potholes** on the A832 Gorstan to Achnasheen road noted following snow in the first week of January but a huge thank you must go to the local roads team for doing their best to patch the road after the snow melted and for refilling **grit bins and for the drainage clearance works**.

It has been confirmed since our last ordinary meeting that it is indeed The Highland Council who are clearing and gritting the **pavements** in Garve and Achnasheen. It’s good to see that we are now getting the service other communities have always been receiving. Our thanks to the Area Committee for also helping us to get this long outstanding issue resolved.

Press and social media reports inform us that **the A834** will be closed outside the Church of Scotland in Strathpeffer to all traffic from 9.00am on Monday 31 January 2022 until Friday 5.00pm on 18 February 2022 to allow maintenance works to be carried out to the Sewers. Diversion via Contin – Maryburgh Roundabout – Dingwall – Strathpeffer. This update has already appeared on our website and via our email list to help spread the word of this near three-week full closure to all traffic.

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/> Resurfacing works are due to take place about two miles east of Garve on the A835 next Monday and Tuesday, 7.00am until 7.00pm. 10mph convoy system will be in place so allow extra time for your journey.

**Garve Railway Station Footbridge** – a local resident raised concerns about the footbridge at Garve Railway Station with the Development Company inmid-December who in turn passed the email onto us. We suggested to the individual that any concerns should be raised directly with Network Rail. Community Council member Bob Moir has visited the station and notes there has been no change to the surfacing that he could see. It appeared to Bob that all was in good order and he had no issues crossing or on the stairway. Our Chairman has also visited the bridge in recent days and found no issues. He has spoken to two local residents who uses the station who both raised no issues. Our Chairman also visited the **Achnasheen Railway Station Footbridge**. It looks rusty (mainly surface rust) as it's been around 15+ years since it was painted/refurbished but overall, he couldn’t see any major structural issues. This update has already appeared on our website.

On Tuesday 28 December 2021, our Chairman was contacted by the company that now owns **Garve Hotel.**  They had hoped to be open before now but Covid hasn't helped matters.  Hopefully they might be able to open in the Spring, employing around 3-5 people, probably on part time contracts to let people in, clean rooms etc ...  Such employment might be through the "kick start" employment program. They would like the function rooms to be a "commercial local hub" for local enterprises. Any catering on site will be 80% plant based and no alcohol.  They are happy to sell local artists' works and locally made non-alcohol drinks.  To help their guests experience the full history of the Hotel, they would like local residents to donate pictures and books about the Hotel, helping create a sense of place.  They asked if we could help in this matter ...  Our Chairman suggested a good project for the local school and Inverness archive might be able to help. They would not want to do anything that takes away from Garve Public Hall and would be happy to work alongside the Trustees as and when necessary. They have hotels in Wales and England and have also bought the Mackay’s Hotel in Strathpeffer to add to their existing portfolio of Hotels in Scotland located in Stromness and Irvine. <https://paymanclub.com/> This update has already appeared on our website.

Community Council members were grateful for the update but were disappointed there didn’t seem to be as many job opportunities as under the previous owners.

**Scottish Water update** – Our Treasurer declared an interest in this topic and took no part in the discussion. On Friday 14 January 2022, Gavin Steel from Scottish Water wrote to us as follows … *“As you will have gathered, we unfortunately didn’t quite get on site with the water main renewal project for Little Garve before the end of 2021.  However, I was speaking to our project manager yesterday and understand that our contractor, Corrie, are expecting to be on site from next week.  The initial activity will be in the fields south of Little Garve/on the east side of the Ullapool road, just past the turning towards Achnasheen, and should hopefully not have too much impact beyond the landowner affected. Our project team will write to customers to let them know about the work and to provide some information on what will happen later on in the work when the renewed water main is brought into service.  Similar work on the Gorstan side of the Ullapool road is expected to follow on from the initial phase. I appreciate the patience of customers and the Community Council while we have been preparing to get this work underway, which we hope will secure a more reliable service for customers in Little Garve and Gorstan for many years to come. Our site team will do all they can to minimise any short-term disruption for customers associated with the delivery of the work that is needed.”* We thank Gavin for his update which we have already posted on our website and note work started the following Monday in Little Garve which we welcome. It was also noted that there had been two separate bursts before the works started and that there are now plenty machines in the field!

**TG&DDC updates** – we were sorry to lean that the Development Company have not been receiving email replies from both BEAR/Transport Scotland and The Highland Council regarding proposed **new signs**. They have asked us if we could help. We have passed the chain of emails onto the appropriate Heads of Department seeking clarification which came through within a few days to us. Our thanks to all involved for their speedy replies. We know the Development Company will also be grateful. In slightly related news, **a new sign for Garve** has been designed <https://garve.org/new-sign-for-garve> however, Transport Scotland have confirmed that as the 40mph limit is fixed by a Traffic Regulation Order, the location of the new sign will be as a replacement to the existing 40mph sign. Also, number and spaces between streetlights and overall size of the sign are all factors. It was noted that LCT funding can’t be used to fund council road signs as per the original agreement.

The Development Company have **purchased three plots of land** next to Garve Hotel for £275,000 <https://garve.org/the-gd-core-update-3> As confirmed at previous Community Council meetings, the Development Company will undertake further public consultation on the next stages in this process in due course. They will call this project GD CORe (Garve & District Community Owned Resource). Our Chairman noted the Community Development Plan (updated 2021), the Alan Jones Associates consultation from 2019 for Garve Hall and the Achnasheen Hall survey from 2021 may also be useful.

Our Chairman, Treasurer and Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris attended a ***“Personal Assistant Provision”* event** via webcam on Thursday 20 January 2022 set up by the Development Company following feedback to the Community Development Plan.  More details can be found at <https://garve.org/personal-assistant-event> including a full recording of the presentation.  The webcast mostly dealt with Self Directed Support and how this can support people financially to stay within their own home by enabling them, with a number of options, to be provided with personal assistant/s. This has specific criteria that has to be met.  In Highland, Health and Social Care for Adult Services is provided by the NHS Health & Social Care team and Children's Services by the Care & Learning team of The Highland Council.  If anyone needs personal assistance, just contact the local Health & Social Worker whose details can be found at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1347/social_care_and_health>  It was noted that as some of these services come from The Highland Council, LCT funding would not be available.

Recent storm damage has brought down a number of trees in our area including in **The Avenue**. Well done to all involved in the clean-up effort. Cllr Cockburn confirmed that The Highland Council would have no objections to people cutting up fallen trees and taking them away as the roads team can’t be everywhere. All help would be appreciated. The Treasurer was reminded of a recent press story she read. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cumbria-59564480> From 2025, **copper landlines** will no longer operate which will mean that when there's a power cut, phones will not work. Mobiles will work provided there's a signal and you have enough charge left in the battery. Cllr Cockburn informed the meeting that The Highland Council have tried to get the date of 2025 pushed back as this new system will impact small rural communities more than perhaps the bigger towns/cities.

**The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee** – our Chairman raised this topic at our last ordinary meeting and asked Community Council members to give the matter some thought. In light of recent events at the weekend, he wondered, perhaps in The Avenue where recent storm damage had resulted in further trees falling over, could we plant seven trees to mark The Queen’s seven decades on the Throne? Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville suggested memorial trees that last, trees with long deep roots which are less likely to get blown over. Perhaps Oaks, Wellingtonias and maybe even some Hawthorns between the seven trees? The Treasurer noted a useful website on the matter - <https://treesforlife.org.uk/into-the-forest/trees-plants-animals/trees/> Community Council members fully supported the general suggestion so our Chairman will contact The Highland Council’s Forestry Officer for advice. A member of the public stated that, although they were in favour of planting trees, was The Avenue the best place as trees do fall and block roads? Although our Chairman was thinking about planting trees nearer the fence line rather than at the roadside, he will seek guidance from the Forestry Officer on this particular point.

**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. Press reports inform us that four motorists who drove £600,000 worth of high-performance cars at almost 100mph on a Highland road have been banned from driving. The quartet were also fined a total £4,400. They all admitted a lesser charge of driving carelessly on a one and a half mile straight stretch of road of the 60mph A890 near Glencarron on 27 April 2019 at 95mph. The original charge accused them of dangerously driving at over 120mph which would have entitled the Sheriff to seize the cars. One driver was banned from driving for six weeks and fined £1,400 as he had a previous road traffic conviction committed just two months before this offence. The other three were each fined £1,000 and disqualified for four weeks.

**Treasurer’s report** - The Treasurer updated members that the bank balance was £2,700.00 but £35.00 was taken by Direct Debit at the end of 2021 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. The Secretary has expenses of £25.95 for cards and stamps so this will be deducted next time. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**AOB from Community Council members** – no issues raised by those present.

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

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – three consultations. Our Treasurer noted an online consultation from Net Zero Scotland seeking views of people living in Scotland on the impact of litter and fly tipping. More details at - <https://zws.scot/litter-flytipping> This update has already appeared on our website.

Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted a Scottish Government consultation relating to cold weather payments which, if implemented, would not be determined by local weather stations but instead by low-income households - <https://www.gov.scot/news/new-winter-heating-benefit/> This update has already appeared on our website.

The Strathbran long term forest plan renewal was received before Christmas. Community Council members had no comments as such except the plans show a good mix of trees over the large area and it would be good to get the access roads reinstated after the works as the heavy vehicles required to carry out the work can cause serious damage to the access roads. Our comments were passed onto Forestry and this update has already appeared on our website.

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. 21/05168/FUL was the proposed alterations to an existing access track on land 160metres North West of Luib, near Achnasheen. We raised no objections to this application at our December 2021 ordinary meeting and the Case Officer has now granted planning permission with no conditions. Work started on site on Tuesday 11 January 2022, a few days after the planning application had been granted and work is now near complete. This update has already appeared on our website. Work on extending Ledgowan Lodge and a new holiday cabin build in Achnasheen both appear complete.

Two new planning applications have been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 21/05895/FUL is the proposed construction of a house & garage at North Hill Forest Cottage, North of Silverbridge. To ensure we meet deadlines, all Community Council members were informed by email and raised no objections. This update has already appeared on our website.

Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville declared an interest in this planning application and took no part in the following discussion … 22/00244/S37 is the proposed 33kv overhead line (on 68 poles) connecting the proposed Lochluichart Wind Farm Extension II to the grid at the Corriemoillie substation. Deadline for comments to the Case Officer is next Tuesday. Community Council members raised no objections.

Our Chairman reminded everyone that *“Neighbour Notification letters”* are not sent out by the Community Council. They are sent out by The Highland Council to all houses within 20metres of a proposed development and that 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 on Sunday 23 January 2022 is that we should still be meeting online for now.

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

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 for getting us all online in the end!  The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

*Damage to one of The Avenue trees following 80mph guests at the weekend …*



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

garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com