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

**held on Tuesday 3 May 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**: Andrew Biddlecombe (TG&DDC Director), Heather Green (TG&DDC Director), Heather Donaldson (TG&DDC Secretary) and one member of the public.

**Apologies**: Community Council member Joe Stewart, Tina Hartley (Principal Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) and Sue Tarr.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone. He reminded members of the public that although our meetings are not public meetings, they were still very welcome to attend Community Council meetings even on webcam and take part in the discussions under his guidance (see section 12 of the Constitution). Those who can’t attend our meetings can, as always, write to the Secretary by post or email with any issues they wish raised.

Community Council members were sorry to hear that Doreen Miller, a former Little Garve resident has passed away. Our thoughts are with her husband Ronnie and all the family.

Congratulations to Gary Ross and his partner Stacey who stay at Grudie Bridge and who recently got married.

We would ask everyone to note that recent posts seen on garve.org relating to Community Council meetings were not placed there by us, nor did we request such posts which contained several errors such as stating our AGM was tonight. We have never held our AGM in the month of May. garve.org also automatically posts directly to social media so errors appeared there too. We asked for corrections to the posts which Tina Hartley (Principal Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) did in a very speedy manner, our thanks to her. However, our own website [www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict](http://www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict) established in 2013 continues to be the first place to find updates directly from this Community Council.

**Declarations of Interest** – co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville declared an interest in the Infinergy project 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 5 April 2022 via webcam. We received an email from Sue Tarr last Thursday asking for three amendments and that her correspondence on this matter be read out in full which, with the permission of the Community Council members, our Chairman did. In summary for these minutes, Sue has requested the following … Under approval of draft minutes, the sentence *“but her point about the suitability of the free trees had been missed from the draft minutes. Community Council members felt the draft minutes did cover all points raised at the last meeting.”* should read *“Sue said her contribution to the discussion on the trees was not minuted.”* Sue feels the draft minutes are inaccurate and misleading on this point. Community Council members unanimously agreed to the amendment.

Under formal complaint the sentence *“Sue thanked our Chairman for his apology and said she had not intended to make a formal complaint."* should read *“Sue thanked our Chairman for his apology, but confirmed she had not made a formal complaint.”* Sue feels the draft minutes are ambiguous and misleading on this point. Community Council members unanimously agreed to the amendment.

Also under formal complaint, the sentence *“Sue wondered what would happen to her emails which contained suggestions about tree species for The Avenue."* should read *“Sue raised an issue about how the Community Council deals with correspondence, as her original email regarding planned trees for the avenue had not been read out as an item of correspondence or discussed under this agenda item.”* Sue feels the draft minutes are inaccurate and misleading on this point. Community Council member Bob Moir felt the amendment wasn’t needed as the draft minute goes on to answer Sue’s point. Our Chairman read out the next sentence in the draft minute – *“Our Chairman confirmed the emails would be kept and looked at again once the land ownership issue had been resolved.”* Our Chairman thought that the proposed amendment and next sentence do seem to go together and the overall paragraph does still make sense. After a little discussion of the Community Council members, they unanimously agreed to the amendment.

On Sunday, our Chairman requested that the line *“Community Council members felt the draft minutes did cover all points raised at the last meeting.”* be amended to *“Our Chairman stated that Community Council members felt the draft minutes did cover all points raised at the last meeting.”* Our Chairman asked Community Council members individually at tonight’s meeting if that statement he made at our last meeting was correct? Did any Community Council member feel forced to approve the minutes without amendment? All community Council members unanimously agreed they weren’t forced and the statement was correct. The Chairman thanked them for their clarifications. Community Council members then unanimously agreed the amendment.

Yesterday evening, Heather Donaldson, Secretary TG&DDC requested the words *“formal complaint”* and any such reference in the body of the draft minutes be removed as, she felt, the matter was not a formal complaint. Our Chairman confirmed that he did make a formal complaint in writing to the Community Council under the complaints procedure and then in writing to The Highland Council under the complaints procedure so that his emails could be reviewed internally and externally of the Community Council as the recipient (Sue Tarr) felt he had shown her discrimination in his emails. Our Chairman was formally cleared of any wrong doing both times. Community Council members unanimously agreed no amendment was necessary.

Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville felt, in his humble opinion, that the minute taking overall was of a high class, especially when you consider the number of topics covered at a meeting. Community Council member Bob Moir agreed and added that Community Council members getting sight of the draft minutes before they are published helps to ensure all topics have had a mention. Our Chairman noted that it is a good way to work and many other Community Council’s in the ward work in a similar way though others only publish approved minutes which they (and we) can do under current rules (see section 8.3 of the Scheme).

The draft minutes with all four accepted amendments for our meeting held on Tuesday 5 April 2022 were then proposed by Bob Moir and seconded by Hamish Leslie Melville, unanimously agreed. 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** – **Proposed Battery Storage facility** - co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville declared an interest in this project and took no part in the discussions. <https://meetings.ili-energy.com/lochluichart-energy-storage-project/> No further news.

**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/) The Highland Council has received further Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) information for the proposed five wind turbines at Lochluichart from Infinergy. The further EIA can be viewed on The Highland Council’s planning website. This update has already appeared on our website. Community Council members had no comments.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – we asked The Highland Council’s Road’s Department for updates on the following … **white lines** in Garve Village and Gorstan Junction need attention. **Collapsed drain** in Garve between Garve Public Hall and Garve Post Office has been reported. 387273371 was reported on Tuesday 21 December 2021. We are still awaiting updates but will ask again.

**Damaged road sign** east of Mossford has been reported. 393832332 was reported on Monday 17 January 2022 and was replaced recently. Our thanks to all involved.

**Achnasheen EVC** – still awaiting a meter installation before the machine can be commissioned, ongoing!

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/>

**The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee** – it should be noted that any trees planted become the responsibility of and belong to the landowner. Working with Registers of Scotland and The Highland Council in recent weeks has confirmed that The Avenue is owned by The Highland Council. Our thanks to all for their help. Nick Richards, The Highland Council’s Forestry Officer visited the site last Thursday (28 April 2022) to discuss the rotting trees currently on their site with our Chairman and Community Council members Bob Moir and Sadie-Michaela Harris. Nobody from The Highland Council’s Road's Department attended but apologies were received from Andrew Bone. Nick felt some trees may need to be removed for safety reasons and others may need surgery but was very positive in the possible replanting of the whole site.  Nick had been re-reading the SSE tree survey from 2013 and felt an updated tree survey would be a good starting point before any felling/surgery/re-planting took place.  Nick noted the 2013 SSE tree survey talked about planting 250 trees *(200 Scots Pine, 20 Lime, 10 Horse Chestnut, 10 Holly and 10 Oak).*  Nick also noted on site the number of regeneration trees already growing in The Avenue which, in time, would need thinning out. Nick also acknowledged that the damaged fence would probably need to be repaired by The Highland Council as it was their tree that fell and caused the damage in the first place.  Nick will now talk to his colleagues at the Road's Department as all this would be their responsibility/budget but would keep us updated on progress. Our thanks to Nick for his time. This update has already appeared on our website and the Lord Lieutenant has, at her request, been kept informed.

Over the last few months, we have **received several suggestions** both in writing and verbally about which species of tree should or could be planted in The Avenue to help keep its character. Sue Tarr wrote to us in early March 2022 and although she liked the idea of replanting The Avenue, she did have some reservations. Sue noted the original planting of The Avenue was made up of mainly Scots Pine but also Larch and Lime. Hornbeam would be regarded as an unusual choice for the Highlands, Elder is more a hedging species and Birch are fairly short-lived trees. Oaks and Beeches would provide the stature expected of an avenue and Sue would like to see replanting approached in a planned way with consideration given to the design and end result. LCT funding could help plant the appropriate trees with a long-term view in how The Avenue could look in 50-100 years’ time. Community Council member Bob Moir didn’t believe LCT funding would be available as we now know the land belongs to The Highland Council. Our Chairman tended to agree. Murdo Maclennan suggested native - Sessile Oak & Scots Pine (with the rot issue and feasibility of replacing with pine looked into), non-native - Beech (native in the south) & sycamore (very much naturalised to the UK but not native). Murdo mentioned native/non-native as it often comes up in discussions about woodland so felt it worth noting. Murdo felt those suggestions would enable us to retain The Avenue’s character but other species could also grow there. We have also received several verbal suggestions on this topic. All the verbal suggestions received were Oak, Scots Pine, Larch, Beech, Lime, Horse Chestnut, Sycamore and Palm trees. There was also a suggestion to stick to one species only to make an avenue such as Limes or Horse Chestnuts. Oaks are too slow, birches too easy and beeches (either green or copper) tend to break off. Another suggestion was more variety the better as The Avenue has naturally evolved over the years. Community Council member Sadie-Michela Harris noted there is Scots Pine, Lime, Sycamore and Horse Chestnut there now and noted the Palm trees in Ullapool. Our Chairman talked about the famous Plockton Palm trees, some of which have suffered storm damage in recent years and Community Council member Bob Moir recalled as a young lad going to Ullapool where an orange tree grew behind a hotel. Community Council member Joe Stewart noted (via email) that Oak trees are not the best to have near livestock. The growing leaves and acorns contain tannin which can be toxic to livestock if eaten in large amounts. Our Treasurer suggested that Hawthorn be planted in between any larger species. There is also some useful information at <https://treesforlife.org.uk/> which details native species to the Highlands. She also felt perhaps on safety grounds, the felling of possible falling trees should be The Highland Council’s first priority. Community Council member Bob Moir noted it will be up to The Highland Council what happens next as it is their land. Our thanks to everyone for sharing their thoughts. We will now await further news from The Highland Council as it is their land/responsibility/budget.

The Secretary felt we should pay our Chairman the £72.00 fee for Registers of Scotland that he has paid out of his own pocket to help try and resolve the land ownership issue. Although our Chairman wasn’t looking to be reimbursed, Community Council members unanimously agreed he should be, proposed by the Secretary, seconded by the Treasurer. The Secretary also felt we should receive an additional £72.00 on top of our annual grant funding this year from The Highland Council as they had the paperwork all along and only shared it with us after we had shown them what paperwork we had received from Registers of Scotland!

**In related news** and as advertised on the Garve Public Hall noticeboard, The Garve Events Group warmly invite you to an afternoon tea in Garve Public Hall on Sunday 5 June 2022 from 12noon until 4.00pm to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of HM The Queen. Please RSVP by Saturday 14 May 2022 via [garveeventsgroup@gmail.com](mailto:garveeventsgroup@gmail.com) so they know how many to cater for.

**Scottish Water update** - our Treasurer declared an interest in this topic and took no part in the discussion. Installation of new water pipes for the Little Garve/Gorstan area are ongoing. **In related news,** two further issues have been found in Achnasheen in recent days and were reported to our Chairman. Both were reported directly by him to Scottish Water last Friday (29 April 2022) and when our Chairman got home from his day job today, Scottish Water were waiting at his house to inform him that the Hydrant in the Village Centre wasn’t leaking, just not turned off properly so was bubbling up. The possible leak on the school road is probably BT ducts full of drain/rain water which are bubbling up through access covers. BT will be informed by our Chairman in due course. *(Post meeting note – BT visited the site at 6.00pm on Friday 6 May 2022 with our Chairman in attendance and confirmed the ducting isn’t on their maps, so it is presumed to be redundant ducts. A local resident whose driveway is affected by the water will now look into the matter).*

**Barbed wire** – Murdo Maclennan at Scottish Forestry wrote to us on Friday 15 April 2022 to confirm that the Contin forestry squad have removed the barbed wire at Strathgarve and that the whole of the old fence could be removed but he had no plans to do so in the near future due to other priorities. Our thanks to Murdo for the update. Community Council member Bob Moir confirmed all was well.

**Defibrillators** – TG&DDC have confirmed that all Defibrillators now have new pads fitted. Most are dated until April 2024 but the Achnasheen pads will expire this September. Heather Donaldson (TG&DDC Secretary) updated this meeting that there are new pads at Achnasheen that can be used after the current pads expire. Our thanks to Heather for this important piece of information.

There is also an update on the **Garve land purchase** at <https://garve.org/the-gd-core-update-4>

**The joint TG&DDC/LCT/Community Council** meeting planned for Thursday 28 April 2022 was postponed until later this month. LCT have requested a discussion on OSCR rules. Apologies noted from co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris asked where can we see the full set of OSCR rules? The Secretary suggested trying the OSCR website – [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)

A **Bric-a-Brac sale** took place at Lochluichart Community Hall on Saturday 16 April 2022.  £1,035.00 was raised.  All proceeds will be donated to the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.  Well done to all involved.

**G&DCC Data Protection policy** has, as agreed at the last ordinary meeting, been updated with a copy sent to everyone on our emailing list. A copy of the policy is also available on our website and hard/electronic copies are available on request from the Secretary.

Garve & District Community Council currently has **one vacancy** on the Community Council.  The Community Council members consider it to be very important to have as broad a representation of our community as possible, as we cover a wide variety of community issues and to do this well, we would like members from all corners of our large area.  We usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month.  If you are aged 16 or over, live in the Community Council area and are on the electoral roll and would like to be considered for co-option onto the Community Council, please email [garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com](mailto:garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com) with your name and contact details.  Your nomination will be considered by Community Council members at their next ordinary meeting. We note both the LCT and TG&DDC have vacancies on their boards. Please contact them directly for more information. This update has already appeared on our website.

**Police report** - no formal report received and we are still asking who our new Liaison Officer is, even Police Scotland HQ haven’t been able to tell us but as reported at previous Community Council meetings, anyone who wishes to raise an issue with the Police is asked to **call them directly on 101** at the time of the incident and make a witness statement.  Video, dashcam or photo evidence is also welcomed, indeed encouraged by the Police.

We note a Police presence was seen in Garve on Sunday 10 April 2022 and speed checks have been taking place throughout our area over the last few weeks in various locations. Press reports inform us that Highland & Islands Road Policing Officers have been undertaking patrols across the Highlands as part of Operation Cedar (challenge, educate, detect and reduce). In the past few weeks, a number of cars, motorcycles, vans and HGVs have been stopped and a variety of offences detected across the Highlands including a 23-year-old who was detected driving at 102mph on the A890 near Achnasheen and a 47-year-old who was detected driving a van at 98mph on the A835 near Garve. Both drivers will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal for dangerous driving offences. A 37-year-old was arrested for drink driving on the A832 at Achanalt and will be reported for this as well as disqualified driving and insurance offences. A number of other speeding, insurance and MOT offences were also detected during Operation Cedar across the Highlands.

Press reports from the weekend inform us that an individual who drove at over 100mph on a 60mph straight stretch of road in our area has been allowed to keep their licence. Inverness Sheriff Court was told that the offence took place on the A890 near Achnasheen on 19 July 2020 when Police clocked the individual at 106mph. Their Solicitor told the court that their client travelled everywhere for work so their licence was vital. The individual was fined £790 and had their licence endorsed with six penalty points. The Treasurer wondered if the employer would be best pleased about all this? Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris added that she felt it was ludicrous that the court accepted the plea that the offender's license was necessary for work purposes thus letting them off the hook!

It has also been noted locally that driving at 30-35mph can cause long tailbacks and possible frustration leading to dangerous overtaking manoeuvres as witnessed recently in our area. Police have already been informed of such an incident last week in the Lochluichart/Achanalt area.

**Treasurer’s report** - The Treasurer updated the meeting that the bank balance on Friday 25 March 2022 was £2,145.65 but the newsletter cheque for £744.50 was still to clear plus Diesel for our Chairman at £40.10 so a true overall balance would be £1,361.05 however, there is a £-137.30 Treasurer’s fund to note until the audit balances this out using the Reserve of £1,538.45 as has been done in previous years. Yearly audit is in hand and as agreed earlier tonight, a Cheque to our Chairman for £72.00 will now need to be written out. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Community Council member Bob Moir noted The Highland Council grass cutters were in Garve recently and have made a terrible mess, no strimmer’s and some sections not cut at all. This has happened before. Bob also noted that BEAR have done a very good job on the trunk road cutting grass … even in the snow! We will ask the Senior Ward Manager to raise our concerns. *(Post meeting note – the grass cutters were back the day after our meeting and have made a much better job this time).*

Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris wondered what happens to all outstanding issues now that Cllr Cockburn is about to retire such as the Achnasheen EVC? Do his emails get passed on to a newly elected Councillor? We will seek clarification from the Senior Ward Manager.

Co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville noted that there continues to be fast traffic through Mossford and Lochluichart as well as other areas of our community. Hamish would like an update when we might get signage to encourage traffic to slow down. It was suggested that this could be a topic for the upcoming joint TG&DDC/LCT/Community Council meeting but Andrew Biddlecombe (Director, TG&DDC) informed us that the upcoming meeting will only be on one topic - OSCR rules. It was concluded that in that case, we will ask Tina Hartly to give us an update for our next Community Council meeting on Tuesday 7 June 2022 so all Community Council members could ask any questions they might have. It was noted by the Treasurer that <https://garve.org/gd-traffic-issues> is up and running.

Our Chairman wished it to be noted that the only people who are members of this Community Council are those names listed on our website (Kenny Maclean, Jennifer Haslam, Caroline Gamble, Bob Moir, Joe Stewart, Sadie-Michaela Harris and co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville). He was also concerned to hear a verbal report that some people in the community may, in the past, have felt forced or expected to attend Community Council meetings. He wished to make it very clear that although our meetings are not public meetings, people are still very welcome to attend Community Council meetings and take part in the discussions under his guidance but it is very much *their choice* whether they do attend or not.

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

**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** – none. 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 Thursday 3 February 2022 is that we can now meet in person if we wish to.

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

Tuesday 7 June 2022, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, Garve Public Hall. Apologies noted from Community Council member Bob Moir. It was unanimously agreed a webcam option should still be available for those who may still not wish to meet up in person. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris and co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville will take up this option due to other commitments but Our Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary will be “live” in the Hall!

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

As usual, our Chairman started to draw the meeting to a close by asking all present if anyone had any final questions or thoughts on anything they had heard the evening, a question he often askes throughout the meeting too. Nobody had any final questions or thoughts. Although our meetings are not public meetings, members of the public are still very welcome to attend Community Council meetings and take part in the discussions under the guidance of the Chairman (see section 12 of the Constitution). A copy of our Constitution is available in the library section of our own website and hard/electronic copies are available from the Secretary.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and respectively asked everyone attending that when the draft minutes are published, any proposed amendments be sent in writing to our Secretary in good time.  He also thanked Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris for hosting the webcam session.  The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

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

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This set of minutes were first published (in draft form) at 2.00pm on Sunday 8 May 2022.