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

**held on Tuesday 1 November 2022 on webcam**

**Community Council members present on webcam**: Kenny Maclean (Chairman), Jennifer Haslam (Secretary), Caroline Gamble (Treasurer), Bob Moir and Sadie-Michaela Harris.

**Also present on webcam**: Cllr Liz Kraft, Reuben Whitaker (TP&E from 7.00pm until 7.40pm) and two members of the public.

**Apologies**: Community Council member Joe Stewart, co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville and John Fenwick & Mark Dale (On ya Bike).

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. Our website [www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict/](http://www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict/) continues to receive 150-200 visitors per month (out of a community of around 270 people).

We send good wishes to Rhoda Urquhart. Community Council members were sad to learn that Margaret Maclennan, formerly of Inchbae passed away in Invergordon Hospital. Our thoughts are with the family. Best wishes to Kim & Steven Bannister who have both been unwell. Congratulations to Ella Moxon of Lochluichart, an employee at The Midge Bite in Achnasheen who recently won The Highlands & Islands Food & Drinks young ambassador award 2022.

**Declarations of Interest** – Community Council member Bob Moir is a Garve Public Hall Trustee and a Friend of Garve War Memorial. The Treasurer and Community Council members Bob Moir and Sadie-Michaela Harris are all members of the Traffic Calming group. 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 4 October 2022 via webcam were proposed without amendment by Sadie-Michaela Harris and seconded by Bob Moir, 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** – we have received a request from the **“On ya Bike” group** via Tina Hartley (Principal Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) asking us to write a letter of support to funders for a foot/cycle path.  The “On ya Bike” volunteers have tasked themselves with developing a safe alternative walking/cycling route from Garve to Contin.  This would enable a safe active travel and leisure route to be established rather than using the main A835 road.  The path would follow the forestry trail along the North side of Loch Garve to Rogie Farm, then onto Contin.  An open day took place on Saturday 22 October 2022 in Garve Public Hall.  TP&E [www.cycling.scot/transport-planning-and-engineering](http://www.cycling.scot/transport-planning-and-engineering) were also present as they had been undertaking a feasibility study into the project.  Reuben Whitaker from TP&E attended this meeting tonight to take any questions from the Community Council members, most of whom had been unable to attend the open day.  Reuben took us through the posters that had been on display at the open day.  He explained that TP&E had been hired by the Development Company for their specialist knowledge in this area as they are part of Cycling Scotland [www.cycling.scot](http://www.cycling.scot/)  Although the main focus is on Garve to Contin, they have also looked at paths up to Gorstan either via Little Garve and crossing the A835 or south of the railway.  Reuben noted the 2016 Community Needs Survey which showed demand for safe paths in the area and further surveys since have confirmed this still carries weight in the community.  LCT financed the feasibility study which included this stage of gathering feedback on the proposed paths from the community.  It is hoped that, if funding allows, concept designs can be drawn up next month.  It was explained that the proposed new path up to the Garve War Memorial then onto Gorstan will not be prioritised, the main focus moving forward will be a route from Garve to Gorstan via Little Garve with a proposed new crossing of the A835 and a route from Garve North of Loch Garve onto Contin.  There has been various desktop and site visits made as part of this feasibility study and the main aim now is to improve existing forestry tracks for walkers and cyclists, a smoother surface using “smart” surfacing and a low carbon footprint in keeping with the natural area.  In answer to many questions, Reuben told us that the proposed surface is being discussed with Forestry & Land Scotland who are aware of these proposals.  They are yet to make formal comments on the plans.  TP&E’s equipment that went missing in Contin was never recovered.  The proposed paths can be used by road bikes, in fact a wide amount of people can use the paths such as pushchairs, buggies, dog walkers etc …  The more walkers/cyclists who are attracted away from using the A835 the better (and safer).  It was noted some people prefer “real” roads such as racing bikers, the proposed path will not be tarred as that would not be in keeping with the area and would cost more to do.  This may also make it less likely to attract funding.  Three different surfaces were priced/compared/considered in the feasibility study.  The proposed paths will share access with forestry quads/machines.  Are Forestry & Land Scotland happy with people accessing their land?  They aim to support safe and active travel initiatives where possible and are open to considering this suggestion but routes can be closed temporary from time to time during harvesting for instance for people’s own safety.  Forestry & Land Scotland are supportive in principle of this project but TP&E are awaiting their formal comments.  TP&E are happy to work with Forestry & Land Scotland for find any solutions if required.  Who maintains these paths in the future?  Those discussions are still to take place.  The base material for the proposed paths is a specialist binder ingredient that makes the current ground conditions stronger *(pictures shown at the meeting gave an idea how the paths may look)*.  It was pointed out that this project has been talked about in one form or another for 25-30 years, not just in recent surveys so perhaps funders should be made aware of that.  Can Tarvie be linked into the proposed path network as requested on social media?  This could be looked at in the future but for now the remit is to establish the Garve to Contin path.  Regarding the open day, ten people spoke to Rueben on the day and others were seen to be looking at the posters on display.  It was still unclear if full planning permission was needed but it was suspected that it would be.  Community Council member Bob Moir attended the open day and felt the consensus of opinion there was that all were in favour of the paths but didn’t believe it would take the Tour de France type of cyclists off the main A835 road.  Former Cllr Dr Ian Cockburn, the MSP and MP have already written general letters of support, Cllr Kraft has been asked to write a letter along with other local groups.  Cllr Kraft confirmed tonight she can’t write a letter as she is on the planning committee (conflict of interest).  It was proposed by Sadie-Michaela Harris and seconded by Bob Moir that we do indeed write a letter of support to funders as this has been a long running topic over the years, unanimously agreed.  It was also suggested that Contin Community Council and “Peffery Way” also be asked to write letters of support for the project.  Reuben noted that Contin Community Council has already been approached but would note the “Peffery Way” suggestion.

Reuben Whitaker was thanked for attending and was asked to keep us informed directly of developments. Reuben left the meeting at 7.40pm.

**Eneco** – we have not received an update from Eneco since our ordinary meeting held in October 2021 however, David Lawson at Eneco has been in touch to tell us that the Lochluichart wind farm continues to operate well.  Eneco have seen above average wind speeds for the year so far which has helped to increase electricity production but they are now readying themselves for the approaching winter season.  This entails ensuring the roads and bridges on site are to an acceptable standard to cope with the winter weather and that they have snow clearing arrangements in place when required to access any broken-down turbines. Eneco has appointed a new Site Manager for Lochluichart.  Jonathan Currie comes from a background in HSE with SSE Networks, and prior to that he spent 12 years in the RAF and will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the wind farm.  Jonathan will try to attend a future Community Council meeting. Our thanks to David for his update.

**Proposed Battery Storage facility** - <https://meetings.ili-energy.com/lochluichart-energy-storage-project/> - no further news since our last ordinary meeting.

**Infinergy** – [www.lxxwindfarm.co.uk/](http://www.lxxwindfarm.co.uk/) - the planning application for the additional height of the turbines was due to be considered at the NPAC on Tuesday 18 October 2022 but this has now been pushed back to possibly December 2022.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – **Trees in The Avenue** – Cllr Kraft updated us to say tree surgery/felling on The Avenue should start from Monday 7 November 2022.  The contractor has got a bit behind and the wet weather hasn't helped.

**White lining in Garve** – this is on the list along with the white lines on the A832 as you approach the Gorstan Junction and the white lines as you leave Little Garve and travel up to the main road.

**Potholes at the Garve Recycle Bins** – a question has been asked within The Highland Council if the Garve Recycle Bins are on School owned land? It is thought to be. The Highland Council’s roads team are happy to look at the potholes again. Perhaps a photo of a ruler showing how deep the potholes are is required?

**Layby at Boathouse east of Achanalt** – Cllr Kraft passed the matter on and no issues raised.

**Achnasheen Wi-Fi** – Cllr Kraft has confirmed that in addition to Achnasheen, there were thirteen other affected sites across Highland that were not working. It appears that due to the cost of renewing licences for all the sites (around £150,000), the decision has been made at The Highland Council not to renew them. There was a general feeling that those costs were far too high for what the service was/needs. Cllr Kraft agreed to look into the matter further. Our Chairman recalled all this was budgeted for via the Inverness City & Region deal some time ago.

We note the **Aultguish Inn** **EVC** is now up and running as well as the one in Achnasheen. This update has already appeared on our website. The Achnasheen EVC is getting used. The EVC map at <https://chargeplacescotland.org/> has still not been updated. Our Chairman has brought this to their attention.

**Achnasheen roundabout cameras** – Transport Scotland have informed us that the cameras are not theirs as the A832 is not a trunk road. Hitrans who used to host the cameras on their website failed to reply to our email. The Highland Council have been unable to help us. Our Chairman got the feeling that like the Achnasheen Wi-Fi, there is no money for such pieces of equipment to be either maintained or hosted on a website anymore, especially after last week’s full Highland Council meeting where budget gaps of £40m-£60m were discussed.

Our Chairman has been in touch with The Highland Council about a **speed survey for the A832** at Mossford and Achnasheen. Discussions are ongoing but early indications are rubber/telemetry strips could be laid across the road at these locations to gather appropriate data. The equipment is currently in use on the A834 at Fodderty and on various other Highland Council roads in Inverness, Alness and Dingwall. Once actual facts have been established about the number of vehicles and their speed, then the discussion can turn to white bollards at Mossford and the Church, a “smiley” sign for Achnasheen etc … Cllr Kraft continues to also liaise on this matter as it is a good way of counting traffic volumes but there are 130 other settlements also requesting the equipment and very few telemetry strips to go round.

We note the **A890** which was closed at the Strathcarron Level Crossing last Saturday night, will be closed again tomorrow night from 10.00pm until 7.00am for emergency works at the crossing. Neighbouring Community Councils have been informed.

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.

**A835 trunk road – resurfacing works at Gorstan** has been done in recent weeks with some white lining having also been done.

**Concealed exit sign for Little Garve** – Cllr Kraft has written to Transport Scotland and is awaiting a reply.

**Hedge cut/Killin Farm railway crossing works/barriers east of Garve** – no further updates, Cllr Kraft will chase up and Flora Smith at Killin Farm will keep us updated.

**Speed survey for A835 through Garve** – the survey started on Wednesday 26 October 2022 and we note a survey is also taking place in Contin. Perhaps Contin’s survey results could be shared with us to compare?

**Faults on the Trunk Road (A835)** should be reported via [www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/](http://www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/)

**Wades Bridge update** – Murdo Maclennan at Forestry and Land Scotland has been in touch to say they now have consent from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to clean Wades Bridge after the graffiti attack. He is in the process of getting an Inverness based contractor to quote for the work. Murdo hopes the clean-up can take place soon. Murdo apologies for the delay but they must comply with HES and he was unable to engage fully with contractors until all the conditions were confirmed. We thank Murdo for his update which we have already posted on our website.

**Future of Garve Hotel** – the day after our last ordinary meeting, Tina Hartley (Principal Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) provided us with contact details for the new Hotel owner. We have written to them in London for an update on their plans after it had been noted at our last ordinary meeting how sad the Garve Hotel was looking, especially after it had been such a well-known and major employer in our area. We received no reply to our letter. We note that on Companies House, their business is registered as *“buying and selling of own real estate”* and that they own four other businesses mostly in the same line of business. Community Council member Bob Moir noted lights are sometimes on in the Hotel, various vans parked outside and sometimes the Police are parked there too.

The Treasurer was promoting the **shop mobility bus** to a local resident who said they might have made use of it had it not clashed with the art class on a Thursday morning. Another local resident told our Chairman that it clashed with the mobile library. It is our understanding that the shop mobility bus is in high demand in other communities and Thursdays were the only day it could visit our area. It has been suggested that people in Contin could use it if there are seats available but perhaps that may be against the funding package that is currently in place for this service?

**Remembrance Sunday** will be on Sunday 13 November 2022. A poster in Contin tells us that a service will now take place at the Garve War Memorial at 1.00pm, all welcome. The Minister has confirmed the time as 1.00pm. This update has already appeared on our website. In related news, the Lord Lieutenant would like to attend the Remembrance Sunday service as she enjoyed her last visit to Garve.  Our Chairman has put her in touch with Friends of Garve War Memorial and the Minister.  Our Wreath is in hand, our thanks once again to Eliza Leslie Melville.

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 with your name and contact details. 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 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. Press reports inform us that an unlicensed and uninsured 18-year-old individual committed seven road traffic offences within two weeks including one of driving dangerously at over 100mph on the A9 and making other journeys between Inverness, Ullapool and Gairloch. He also made another trip despite being under a court order not to get behind the wheel. The individual, formerly from Aultbea, appeared recently for sentence at Inverness Sheriff Court and was ordered to carry out 200 hours of unpaid work as an alternative to detention.

**Treasurer’s report** – The Treasurer reported that our online bank balance today is £2,035.62 as we received our Highland Council grant of £445.20 on Tuesday 18 October 2022. There have been no expenses. Our Chairman wished to place on record his thanks to both the Treasurer and Secretary for battling on with various forms and chasing up for both online banking and grant funding. **Fundraising Quiz night** – remains on hold, we will revisit the topic in the spring. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**AOB from Community Council members** – Community Council member Bob Moir has been talking to Garve residents and it’s been noted that the strainer post at the western end of the **chain link fence** on the riverside path between Strathgarve Primary School and Stirling Drive is rotten. This is meant to be the safe route to school. Cllr Kraft will chase up. Bob also informed the meeting that all **the drains** **in Stirling Drive and Matheson Road** are sinking. We will ask the Road’s Manager to take a look next time he is passing. Bob also noted something of interest he found on the internet regarding the **Garve Golf Course** - <https://www.forgottengreens.com/forgotten-greens/ross-cromarty-aultbea/garve/>

The Treasurer noted the **Strathgarve Primary School role** has increased to nine which was encouraging.

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

**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** - no new planning applications have been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting but they have received one Prior Notification Order - 22/04265/PNO, Strathvaich Farms LLP Phase five Peatland Restoration project on land 1500M NE of Keepers House, Strathvaich. 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)

There are no new licensing issues for us to consider this evening.

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

Tuesday 6 December 2022, 7.00pm, webcam

January 2023 – no meeting

Tuesday 7 February 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 7 March 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 4 April 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 2 May 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 6 June 2023, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, webcam

July 2023 – no meeting

Tuesday 1 August 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 5 September 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 3 October 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 7 November 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 5 December 2023, 7.00pm, webcam

Proposed dates of future meetings for the whole of 2023 were proposed by Kenny Maclean and seconded by Jennifer Haslam, unanimously agreed.

**Kenny Rodgers, District Manager for NHS Highland Mid Ross District** hopes to attend our December 2022 ordinary meeting. He would like to talk about health and social care services in the area and hear from the Community Council members about what works well and what doesn't work quite so well. He would also like to harness local enthusiasm for the future model of care at the Ross Memorial Hospital in Dingwall. Community Council members would welcome his attendance and discussion tonight turned to winter flu and covid vaccines where it appears some people are getting sent all over the area to get jabs. It was noted that the MSP meets with NHS Highland regularly and that Pharmacies are now getting involved in giving jabs but you can’t always cancel appointments online. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris recalled meetings at Dingwall Surgery before covid where there had been discussions around mobile vaccine buses/hubs. We hope people from the community with any concerns about NHS services will be able to join us at our next meeting. Those who can’t attend our meeting can, as always, write to the Secretary by post or email.

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.  He also thanked Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris for hosting the webcam session.  The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

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

garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com

This set of minutes were first published (in draft form) at 10.00am on Sunday 6 November 2022.