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

**held on Tuesday 4 October 2022 on 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**: Nick Sage (Infinergy, from 7.00pm until 7.30pm) and Cllr Liz Kraft (from 7.40pm until 8.40pm).

**Apologies**: Community Council member Joe Stewart.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone. He reminded everyone that 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).

Members of the Garve & District Community Council and the wider community were saddened to hear of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.  Our thoughts are with His Majesty King Charles III and the wider Royal Family at this sad time. We send our thanks to the late Queen for over 70 years of dedicated service to this country. We have signed the condolence book on behalf of the community at [www.highland.gov.uk/condolence](http://www.highland.gov.uk/condolence) Our Chairman and co-opted member Hamish Leslie-Melville attended the Ross & Cromarty area reading of the Proclamation of Accession of HM King Charles III which was held outside Dingwall Town Hall on Sunday 11 September 2022. Our Chairman took time out from a personal visit to London on Tuesday 13 September 2022 to visit Buckingham Palace on behalf of this community to pay his respects for us.

Best wishes to Ilsa Jack, Uisdean Menzies, Eddie & Flora Smith and our own Community Council member Joe Stewart who have all been unwell.

Our Chairman reminded everyone of additional standing order one where ordinary meetings are not supposed to last longer than two hours unless agreed otherwise.

**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 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 6 September 2022 via webcam were proposed without amendment by Bob Moir and seconded by Caroline Gamble, 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/> We have asked for a written update directly from Intelligent Land Investments as we have had no word from them since they attended our August 2021 ordinary meeting. Greig Templeton, Planning Project Manager replied very quickly to say that they have been reading the Community Council updates and minutes with interest since their visit and thank us for sending them through. They have had to do lots of surveys and studies that were unique to the proposed site which has taken time however, they intend to submit a planning application before the end of the year. We thank Greig for his update. Community Council members had no questions at this stage.

**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 from Infinergy updated the meeting that the planning application to increase the turbine tip height is expected to go before the NPAC (North Planning Applications Committee) at The Highland Council on Tuesday 18 October 2022. The S37 application (power line on poles down to the Corriemoillie Substation) has taken longer to be determined than first thought by the Energy Consents Unit at The Scottish Government but The Highland Council’s planning department have recommended its approval. Nick hopes all permissions will be in place by the end of the year. Community Council members had no questions for Nick who was thanked for attending.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – **Trees in The Avenue** – Cllr Kraft tells us that a contractor has been appointed and it is hoped all surgery/felling works will be completed by the end of this month. Our thanks to all involved. This update has already appeared on our website. Community Council member Bob Moir had a look yesterday and today and noted no works so far. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris is also on lookout duties! **In slightly related news**, it is noted that both the 2012 and 2022 Jubilee’s have been marked in this community with our tree planting project’s. Uisdean Menzies in Garve has suggested as a memorial to the late Queen’s overall long service, he would like to suggest that the proposed pathway from the Garve War Memorial to Gorstan be named after the late Queen as a long-lasting memorial. The proposed path that will run along the hillside will look up all the glens that link our community together and would be lasting memorial for generations to come. Community Council members noted the suggestion but felt it would be up to the working group on this project. A public consultation on the path network is due to be held in Garve Public Hall on Thursday 20 October 2022 from 3.00pm until 6.30pm.

**White lines in Garve Village** – it appears the white line machine was in the garage and hasn’t visited ward five all year, let alone our Community Council area. It has since broken down again and has been condemned so a list of jobs is to be drawn up and then put out to a contractor by the roads team.

**Potholes at the Garve Recycle bins** – have not been filled in as well as we had first thought. Cllr Kraft made enquiries and the roads team will revisit. They feel it is just “ponding”. Community Council member Bob Moir had a look yesterday and noted it is more like a loch than just ponding! Cllr Kraft will be asked to visit the site and liaise with the roads team. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted further issues in Strathgarve regarding potholes. Our Chairman recommended photos showing how deep they are with a ruler be taken and set to Cllr Kraft as she had requested at our last ordinary meeting.

**Sign for Wyvis Playpark** – in hand with Cllr Kraft.

**Layby at Boathouse east of Achanalt** – Cllr Kraft has spoken to the Access Officer and he is receiving regular updates from the Seasonal Access Ranger who is keeping a close watch on this spot for further instances of vandalism. There does not appear to be any further major concerns raised. Jos Seligman, who first raised the issues, still feels that the layby should be closed, especially as it is located near a blind corner on the A832 as you drive west. Cllr Kraft has passed Jos’s concerns onto the senior roads officer and is awaiting a reply. Last Sunday, Cllr Kraft visited the site for herself and found there to be no evidence of vandalism that she could see however, storm damage to the roof of the Boathouse was found where a tree has fallen onto it. Bits of roof missing on the other side, perhaps wind damage as the roof is now open on the side where the tree has fallen. Cllr Kraft has already written to Jos about her visit. The Treasurer, although no longer a member of the Garve Litter Busters group, recalled the number of tyres and building rubble thrown down the bank there is by far the worst of the dumping. The Secretary recalled issues there before when visiting with our Chairman some time ago and all agreed the trees/bushes between the layby and the main road should be cut down by the Strathbran Estate as Lochluichart Estate did at the Grudie Bridge laybys as the trees do make the layby more secluded for those dumping.

The rubbish dumped at the **Achnasheen Recycle bins** has been cleared up, thanks to all.

**Achnasheen EVC** – is now up and running after a five-and-a-half-year battle. Our huge thanks to all involved. This update has already appeared on our website. **In slightly related news,** Ewan Bush (TG&DDC Community Energy Officer) tells us that he hopes to be in a position to submit the Community Transport application to the LCT soon and that site surveys are planned for locating Rapid Chargers at the Midge Bite Cafe in Achnasheen and the Aultguish Inn. We thank Ewan for his updates.

**Achnasheen Wi-Fi** – Cllr Kraft is still chasing this matter up, awaiting replies.

**Councillors meeting with Road Safety Team** – a ward business meeting took place last week. Cllr Kraft hopes the Road Safety Team can join the next meeting but they haven’t been replying to emails recently or returning phone calls. We note item six in the Wester Loch Ewe Community Council minutes of Wednesday 3 August 2022 where it appears Andrew Bone has ordered a traffic survey for Poolewe, where is our survey for the A832 at Mossford? Cllr Kraft will make further enquiries.

**Achnasheen roundabout cameras** – Cllr Kraft is awaiting replies.

**Resurfacing in Strathconon** – as explained at the joint Community Council meeting held recently, it costs around £5.00/square metre to redress, £25.00/square metre to resurface. It could be the case that a road was on capital plan for resurface, but then had some redress put on so as it has had some attention, gets moved to revenue plan instead and vis vera if a road surface breaks down quicker than expected which appears to have been the case here.

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 issues - concealed exit sign for Little Garve** - Cllr Kraft asked Transport Scotland for an update and will do so again.

No further news on the **A835 speed survey** through Garve, hedge cutting or the **white lines at the Gorstan Junction** but we note BEAR Scotland will be carrying out essential surfacing improvements on the A835 at Gorstan Junction, with works set to get underway from Sunday 9 October 2022 (please note the change of start date).  The project will see 295 metres of the A835 at Gorstan Junction resurfaced.  The project is scheduled to take place over five nights, with works planned between 7.00pm and 7.00am each night with all works anticipated to be completed by 7.00am on Friday 14 October 2022, subject to weather conditions.  To ensure the safety of roadworkers as well as motorists, a 10mph convoy system will be in place during working hours.  The convoy system will be removed out with working hours however, temporary traffic lights and a 30mph speed limit will be in place during the day as traffic will be travelling over a temporary surface.  Access through the works site for emergency services will be maintained at all times. It is hoped white lining at Gorstan will be done after these works have been completed.

Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris pointed out that the Scottish Government’s policy of not conducting **speed surveys** during the summer was detrimental in our case because it is during the summer months when performance cars are racing around the NC500 and the locality and not during the Autumn when roads are wet with leaves on the ground. Our Chairman pointed out that the speed survey will need to be done as per the policy.

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

Nick Sage from Infinergy left the meeting at 7.30pm and was thanked for attending.

**Wades Bridge** – no further update received (Sadie will chase via a neighbour) but Community Council member Bob Moir thought some patches of the graffiti on the bridge looked lighter so perhaps the testing of how to clean the bridge has begun?

**A joint meeting** of the LCT, TG&DDC and the Community Council took place on Tuesday 27 September 2022. Notes of the meeting will be published in due course (via LCT) but a possible coal buying group and the future of the shop mobility bus were both discussed amongst other topics. The shop mobility bus has been advertised on local Noticeboards and in the local newsletter but although very much appreciated by those who do use it, is only used by 2-3 people on a regular basis, sometimes 4 people. It needs 8 people on a regular basis to keep it going. It was noted that we already have many trains, community cars and buses though our area and many will have already made alternative arrangements to get to appointments. The Secretary recalled in the very early days of the LCT, there were calls then for a community bus. It was questioned then if one was really needed. Since the joint meeting, we note The Scottish Government have launched a new website providing information on the wide range of advice and financial support available to people in Scotland. The website will act as a one stop shop to help those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis - <http://gov.scot/costoflivingsupport>

Cllr Liz Kraft joined the meeting at 7.40pm after some computer problems. We briefly recapped where we had got to with Cllr Kraft’s input added above.

**A joint meeting of all ward five Community Councils** took place on Thursday 29 September 2022 to discuss the maintenance of The Highland Council’s road network. Our Chairman attended and Community Council member Bob Moir also attended for part of the meeting.  Around 12/19 active Community Council's in ward five attended.  The main headline is that they know there are lots of issues with the road network but lack of men (they have tried recruiting), lack of machines (they do hire when really needed but it costs) and lack of money are all issues.  More money is needed and all Cllr's present (Campbell, Birt and Kraft) agreed this needs to be raised.  They are also awaiting the decision of the levelling up fund application which, if successful, would see road improvements in the ward. Road's budget for 2023/2024 won't cover as much work as this year as there will be less money in the budget and costs are rising.  Overall, our Chairman felt we all have similar issues like potholes, road surfaces, drainage but we do quite well compared to other Community Council areas. Community Council member Bob Moir noted that there will be no more tarring this year as the roads team are now preparing for winter (drains, signage crash barriers etc …) before the snow begins to fall. In questions here tonight, Cllr Kraft confirmed that a fixed budget is in place but that can’t be confirmed for next year until the Scottish Government confirm their fixed budget, which in turn can’t be fixed until the UK Government decide their budget. A 2% wage increase was budgeted for but since then a 6% (and 10% for teachers) will need to be paid for. Drivers do claim for damage to their cars on the roads, for an insurance claim form for damage to your car, call The Highland Council on 01349 886601 but the more claims paid out, the less money for roads.

**Free Period Products in Highland -** in line with the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 which aims to tackle period poverty, promote period dignity and break the stigma surrounding periods in Scotland, free period products can now be picked up from over 70 community venues across Highland including in Dingwall. More information at <https://myperiodlive.azurewebsites.net/>

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. 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** - the latest police report covering the period from Wednesday 24 August 2022 until Sunday 25 September 2022 includes ten incidents. These include a report of a one vehicle road traffic accident where vehicle hit barrier, a call from Hampshire Police requesting the lookout for a missing person who was possibly in the Garve area. The individual was traced out with Scotland. A concern for person, a one vehicle road accident near to Corriemoillie Lodge. The male occupant checked over by ambulance staff – slight injuries. Advice call from land owner regarding members of the public accessing their land, cutting down trees, setting fires etc, enquiries ongoing. A report of people on train tracks in the Garve area. Two males traced nearby and suitable advice given. A report of an abandoned vehicle. A report of dangerous driving. Assistance provided to the owner of broken-down vehicle and a report of a hate crime involving youths. A crime report submitted to the Children’s Reporter. 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.

**Treasurer’s report** – Online banking is now in place for the Treasurer, Secretary and our Chairman who are the three signatures on the bank account. The bank statement received two days ago shows a balance of £1,634.97 but online today states it is £1,590.42 as we have had £20.55 postage expenses and £24.00 Garve Public Hall hire for our AGM in June. Paper statements will continue to be received by the Treasurer for audit purposes. The Highland Council grant of £445.20 has not been received. Dot Ferguson, Senior Ward Manager apologies for the oversight and has now requested the release of our funds which we should receive in 7-10 days. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted it was lucky we did not incur any bank charges because of this oversight and that in this day and age, surely digital banking shouldn’t mean waiting more than a day or two! The Treasurer noted from the Contin Community Council minutes that they too are looking for their grant. The Secretary again felt the Treasurer should claim for petrol travelling to and from the bank to get online banking up and running. The Treasurer was reluctant but thanked the Secretary. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**Fundraising Quiz night** – quotes for catering were requested from local businesses by the end of September 2022. Only two responses were received so it was agreed to put this idea on hold for now.

**AOB from Community Council members** – co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville informed the meeting that our former Treasurer Eliza Leslie Melville is happy to donate a wreath for us to use on **Remembrance Sunday**. We send our thanks to Eliza for this kind gesture. It was unanimously agreed that the Secretary should lay the Community Council wreath this year. Hamish understands that the service will be at the Garve War Memorial at 2.00pm on Sunday 13 November 2022, all welcome.

Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris wondered if **we could still have** Jennifer Haslam to take the minutes after the next Community Council elections, perhaps in a similar way to Carol Smith does for the LCT? Our Chairman confirmed that it is possible but it would be a decision for the next Community Council to take and elections are not due for over a year yet.

The Treasurer noted how sad **Garve Hotel** was looking, especially after it had been such a well-known and major employer in the area. We understand the building was sold at auction a few months ago so will see if we can find out who owns it and what their plans are.

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

**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** – one previous planning application has been determined by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. At our November 2021 ordinary meeting, we considered 21/03869/FUL, the proposed change of use and renovation of the existing agricultural barn into a dwelling at Dos Mucheran. Planning permission has now been granted by the Case Officer with six conditions. More details are available on The Highland Council website.

There is currently one planning application awaiting determination by The Highland Council for our area.

No new planning applications have been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting.

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 our area.

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

Tuesday 1 November 2022, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 6 December 2022, 7.00pm, webcam

January 2023 – no meeting

Tuesday 7 February 2023, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 7 March 2023, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 4 April 2023, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 2 May 2023, 7.00pm, venue/webcam tbc

Tuesday 6 June 2023, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 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.  He also thanked Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris for hosting the webcam session.  The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40pm.

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 5.00pm on Saturday 8 October 2022.