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

**held on Tuesday 1 August 2023 on webcam**

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

**Also present on webcam**: Cllr Liz Kraft, Cllr Patrick Logue (from 7.00pm until 8.30pm), Tina Hartley (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC from 7.00pm until 9.20pm), Andrew Biddlecombe (Chairman, Achnasheen Amenities Association), Kathy Grist & Moira Harris (Achnasheen Amenities Association from 7.00pm until 7.30pm) and one member of the public.

**Apologies**: Community Council members Jennifer Haslam & Joe Stewart and co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone, especially Cllr Logue, as this was his first time attending a Garve & District Community Council meeting since he was elected in May 2022. Our Chairman 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 us by post or email with any issues they wish raised at garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com 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). The Community Council area covers from Garve to Aultguish and from Garve to Achnasheen and is the only organisation that represents the whole community.  We are elected by the community every four years or so and usually meet once a month.  Draft minutes and a list of current members of the Community Council can be viewed at our website.

Our Chairman was very honoured to attend HM The King’s first garden party at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh on Tuesday 4 July 2023. Our Chairman was invited as it is nearly 20 years to the day since he was first elected to the Community Council and next spring marks 20 years since he started his day job. It was a mild but very wet day in Edinburgh where our Chairman first lunched with the Vice-Lord Lieutenant of Ross & Cromarty and his wife before heading down to the garden party. He wished to place on record his thanks to all those who suggested he be invited to Edinburgh to mark the anniversary’s and to everyone for their help and support over the (many) years.

The former Mossford resident Douglas Macqueen passed away on Wednesday 5 July 2023. Our thoughts are with his family. The Treasurer informed us that Pat Macdonald, a long time Achterneed and Gorstan resident has passed away. Our thoughts are with her family.

Our Chairman was unable to attend an EGM of the South West Ross Community Car Scheme on Thursday 6 July 2023 or the Wester Ross Deer Management Group AGM held on Wednesday 19 July 2023.

**Declarations of Interest** – the Vice Chairman is a Garve Public Hall Trustee and a Friend of Garve War Memorial. The Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Community Council member 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 June 2023 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. Minutes will be signed by our Chairman and Treasurer in due course via post. Community Council members were also asked to note that although the draft Annual General Meeting minutes cannot be approved until next year’s AGM, no proposed amendments have been received.

**Matters arising** – **Future of Achnasheen Village Hall & public toilets** – the Vice Chairman declared an interest in this item as he is a Hall Trustee of a neighbouring Hall so took no part in these discussions.  Andrew Biddlecombe (Chairman, Achnasheen Amenities Association) updated us that the outstanding issues regarding the roof and leaks into the building continue to be left unattended by The Highland Council who, as Landlord, has a responsibility for their building and to their tenants.  Rainwater running down the inside walls is a serious worry.  The longer it is left, the more damage and therefore costs to the council.  The Achnasheen Amenities Association Committee, the four ward Councillors and Highland Council officials are all due to meet later this month to discuss the urgent repairs and the long-term future of the Hall.  Delays with Network Rail regarding permission for scaffolding has not helped but they too have a duty of care to their passengers.  Cllr Kraft commented that the matter was raised at ward meetings, but budget constraints are an issue.  Continued closure of the toilets has been raised by other Councillors from other areas such as Skye.  Moira Harris (co-opted member of the Achnasheen Amenities Association committee and Kathy Grist, Secretary of the Achnasheen Amenities Association committee) noted that it is difficult to plan events in the Hall when you do not know what is happening or if the toilets will even be open because of their sudden closures.  Short term repairs to the Hall two years ago were estimated to cost £20K - £40k and were budgeted for at that time.  This would have addressed the west end gable, slates and chimney.  Moira Harris asked Cllr Kraft to go back to The Highland Council to request that the urgent repairs to the west end gable, separate from the more extensive roof repairs, be undertaken ASAP, as the roof void is open to the elements and water is coming in. These repairs were agreed by The Highland Council and funding allocated in 2021.  Cllr Kraft asked which budget within The Highland Council was the money budgeted from?  Achnasheen Amenities Association will send her the report issued by The Highland Council in 2021.  The Achnasheen Amenities Association do have a letter of comfort to use the Hall.  Moira Harris stated that the letter of comfort, issued in 2021, was the result of The Highland Council allowing the lease to lapse in 2012. Achnasheen Amenities Association discovered this when it needed a copy of the lease to apply for LCT funding to make good the Hall in 2021 as a polling station for the Scottish Parliament elections. The letter of comfort states that the lease remains in place until either party ends the agreement with one month's notice.  Our Chairman asked, would taking on the Hall also mean having to take on the toilets?  Who wants a Hall with no toilet facilities?  Would planned events in the Hall be affected once the work does get underway?  The Achnasheen/Achanalt community survey from two years ago was noted but the current committee do not recognise it as it was a yes/no question about buying the Hall without offering other possible options.  Furthermore, the yes/no question was put to the Achnasheen/Achanalt community only but since last year, Achnasheen Amenities Association membership is now open to the entire Garve & District community therefore the views of the entire community should be considered.  The committee have lots of events planned <https://garve.org/forthcoming-activities-at-achnasheen-hall>, all welcome and the **HALL REMAINS OPEN**.  Tina Hartley (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) noted this new committee are a very passionate group willing to run the Hall, previously there might not have been the capacity to take on the Hall but circumstances are now very different.  Moira Harris stated that the Achnasheen Village Hall is vital to the community, currently offering a regular venue for community groups, the Outreach Post Office each Tuesday afternoon and as a meeting space.  Cllr Kraft stated she must be objective, due process followed starting with a community survey.  Our Chairman suggested that the members of the Achnasheen Amenities Association committee write down all the questions they have for The Highland Council, then pass them onto their Secretary who can pass them onto Cllr Kraft.  That would give Highland Council officials time to investigate all the issues before everyone meets up in a few weeks’ time.  Hopefully that meeting would be more fruitful and informative.  Kathy Grist asked that communications regarding the Hall be sent directly to achnasheenamenities@gmail.com rather than receiving information second hand.  Our Chairman agreed with this but also stated that the group would be very welcome to attend a future Community Council meeting when they had more updates to share, no invite required.

Kathy Grist & Moira Harris (Achnasheen Amenities Association) were thanked for attending and left the meeting at 7.30pm.

**Boralex update** – on Thursday 29 June 2023, Craig Conlin, Construction Site Manager for the Lochluichart Windfarm extension II updated our Chairman on this project via video call. Craig has worked previously for SSEN and Siemens and worked on the Corriemoillie Substation so knows a little bit of the geography and of previous projects in the area. Craig has been on site a few times already and has met with Glyn Robson, Lochluichart Estate Manager who has been particularly helpful.  Craig would prefer to start construction in March 2024 rather than October 2023 to avoid winter weather.  This is still to be agreed by other parties.  A tender process for the work was planned to start last month.  Work will be available on site for anyone with appropriate skilled qualifications.  Craig is aware of flooding issues in the past and some traffic issues when turbines were delivered to site but hopes those lessons will be carried forward into this project.  Craig hopes to attend future Community Council meetings but will also send email updates from time to time to keep us/the community up to speed. Our thanks to Craig for the update which we have already posted on our website.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – **Personal Injury Claims** - how much are they costing The Highland Council each year? Cllr Kraft is still making enquiries.

**Replanting trees in The Avenue** – discussions between Roads and Amenities departments are ongoing. Our Chairman asked for an update via email on Monday 10 July 2023, no reply received.

The Treasurer has reported a **pothole in Matheson Road** - FS531789673 which she feels is getting bigger and deeper by the minute! Someone has put stones into the pothole until the council get round to fixing it. 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 appreciates photos showing the actual problem.

**Broken fence in Garve** – a local resident has put in a temporary post to help keep the fence in place for now until The Highland Council get round to repairing the fence they installed. Cllr Kraft has asked the Access Officer, Education department, Community Services, Seasonal Access Officer and Safe Route To Schools to investigate this, she will try Safe Routes To Schools again … ongoing for just a simple strainer post!

**Trees/bushes are overgrowing** into Stirling Drive in Garve reducing sightlines and brushing against

cars. Cllr Kraft has been sent photos and will see what can be done.

Grass has not been cut in the **Old Cemetery in Garve** all year, but in the new Cemetery it has.  Also, grass verges between Stirling Drive and Matheson Road have not been cut.  Cllr Kraft made enquiries and it seems the part of the Old Cemetery that remains active should have been on a two weekly, ‘general amenity’ cutting cycle. The inactive old areas where there will be no more burials will be low amenity and not cut so frequently. It was noted that there are still lairs in the Old Cemetery that can be used. Community Council members felt that both Cemeteries in Garve should be cut on a regular basis, whether there will be more burials in either or not as respect to the dead of this community should be shown. *(Post meeting note – the Old Cemetery grass has now been cut).*

**Motorbikes using Wades Bridge** – what Traffic Orders, if any, are in place? Cllr Kraft noted that vehicles such as cars are unable to use the bridge due to the weight restriction and bollards are in place.

**Is it possible to get "unmarked police car" signs?** – Cllr Kraft thought this unlikely.

**Flash flooding in Garve and Gorstan** on the afternoon of Sunday 11 June 2023 following heavy rain. Stirling Drive drains struggled to cope, and several gardens flooded. Water also ran down into Gorstan onto private land and gardens. Cllr Kraft was informed at the time and next morning The Highland Council roads teams were out to inspect. They noted with the volume of water, the drainage in Stirling Drive probably could not have coped anyway but agreed that the drains needed attention, so the Gully Sucker was requested (the Gully Sucker was on site about ten days later). Sandbags have been issued in Gorstan until further works can be undertaken. Our thanks to Kevin from the roads team and Cllr Kraft for their speedy responses to the situation. A Gorstan resident was also grateful for the site visit undertaken by our Chairman who had also had a walk around Stirling Drive earlier that same day. **In related news, further flooding** issues on the A835 trunk road in Station Road on Saturday 15 July 2023 near the Telephone Exchange were attended to by BEAR staff at the time including using pumps and the Gully Sucker. It was noted that the drains were probably never designed for such large volumes of rainwater.

**The verges** beside the A832 between Gorstan and Kinlochewe and the A890 between Achnasheen and Glencarron were cut over several weeks from w/c 19 June 2023. Several overhanging trees and bushes were also cut back at the same time which we very much appreciate. Cllr Kraft informed us that a request for **white bollards at Lochluichart Church** (and other locations) would have to be evidence based, such as the number of actual accidents for instance.  Have trees/sightlines been improved first etc …

**The Old School Road** in Achnasheen needs repairs/jet packer.  The roads team will have a look next time they are passing, thanks to Cllr Kraft for the update.

The Treasurer found a very useful **online leaflet about responsible camping**, chemical toilets etc …

<https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/23767/enjoying_the_highlands_in_your_motorhome_or_campervan.pdf> Perhaps Cllr Kraft could supply hard copies for local distribution?

We were concerned to receive reports via Wester Loch Ewe Community Council that the **mobile library service** that visits many areas including our own has been suffering problems as the van keeps breaking down. It has been reported that the van is unlikely to pass another MOT according to emails received by Wester Loch Ewe Community Council. Gairloch Community Council have also raised concerns. At a recent meeting of the Torridon & Kinlochewe Community Council, Cllr Chris Birt was present, and he was not aware of any Highland Council plans to discontinue the service. Cllr Kraft attending this meeting noted the service is provided through High Life Highland and The Highland Council who work in collaboration to provide the mobile library service to rural communities. High Life Highland are responsible for operating the service while The Highland Council are responsible for the provision, maintenance and replacement of the vehicle fleet.  As is the case with several mobile libraries, the vehicle which serves the Garve & District community is now long overdue for replacement and is in extremely poor condition, due to its age and its excessive mileage. The Highland Council had agreed to procure three new replacement vehicles for the mobile fleet just before the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Due to the challenging financial circumstances post-pandemic, this schedule was never met and no timescales of when they might be. Should the council commit to procuring new vehicles (at c. £150k each) there will be a lengthy lead-in from point of order to delivery which means that services will increasingly further be disrupted as the current vehicles continue to deteriorate. As an interim measure High Life Highland will provide an alternative service for rural customers at times when the vehicle is off the road. All customers will be given the option of a drop-off of books to their homes to ensure that they have access to reading material. Community Council members questioned how people order books, especially if they are not online? How many use the service in our area? Cllr Kraft will keep us updated.

We were made aware yesterday that the **A890 is to be closed** between Achnashellach and the Stromeferry Bypass from 9.00pm on Monday 21 August 2023 until 6.00am on Friday 1 December 2023 for resurfacing works. It is presumed these are overnight works or rolling daytime closures, but the notice is not very clear. Both Cllr’s Kraft and Logue thought it was all overnight closures but will keep us and Lochcarron Community Council updated.

**Trunk Road issues - Killin Farm railway crossing works/barriers east of Garve** – no further news. We note the Community Council have never been informed directly of any such works. *(Post meeting note – Flora Smith at Killin Farm wrote to us on Tuesday 8 August 2023 to say she has been told work on the barriers and hard standing for Killin Farm railway crossing are due to start in September. Our thanks to Flora for the update).*

**Retaining wall at Hazelbrae and between Hazelbrae and the Garve Hotel –** the wall which holds up the **road beside Hazelbrae** is cracking following several accidents and winter weather. The wall between Hazelbrae and the Garve Hotel is also falling into disrepair. BEAR have confirmed they will carry out another inspection of both walls to determine if repairs are required. We have already updated the Hazelbrae homeowner of these updates for which they are most grateful.

Although not in our area, the **A9 Kessock Bridge** has been closed several times in recent weeks due to the ongoing *“police incidents”*.  This seems to be happening more often resulting in some of our own residents taking four hours to get home from Inverness via Beauly.  This was raised at our February 2023 meeting, but no updates were received. Our Chairman and other Community Council members have been asked by residents what measures will be taken to finally address the issues?   Our Chairman understands that a working group has been set up with local organisations including BEAR Scotland, Transport Scotland, NHS Scotland, The Highland Council, Emergency Services, Mental Health Groups and related charities.  They are working together to consider various short, medium and long-term solutions at the bridge and approach routes to the bridge and a feasibility study has already been initiated.  The range of measures under consideration by the group includes (according to press reports) improved CCTV cameras on the Kessock Bridge and physical barriers for people’s safety.  Lovat Bridge over the River Beauly and Clachnaharry Bridge over the railway are often pinch points when traffic is diverted via Beauly because of the narrow bridges being managed by traffic lights.  The Beauly road (A862) is a Highland Council road and Cllr Kraft has already spoken to Councillors in the Beauly ward who share our concerns over the whole situation and have asked what can be done to improve traffic flow over these bridges.  Our Chairman suggested the traffic lights be re-phased to allow more traffic over at a time and has asked Cllr Kraft, Maree Todd MSP, BEAR and Transport Scotland for updates. BEAR Scotland replied that they support the Police in dealing with police incidents on the Kessock Bridge so would therefore refer our enquiry to Police Scotland, no response from Police Scotland. Maree Todd MSP has written to the Transport Minister to highlight the rise in closures linked to police incidents and to inquire whether Transport Scotland is actively considering any preventative measures to help protect vulnerable individuals and avoid future bridge closures. The MSP will inform the Community Council of the Minister’s response once received. Transport Scotland have emailed us directly to say the work of the working group is ongoing and those meetings will continue to ensure a connected and sustainable approach with each partner bringing their own expertise to the table. The working group is considering several approaches which are being actively progressed. This is alongside work by the wider Suicide Prevention Steering Group to ensure that individuals can access the right support at the right time. Cllr Kraft updated this meeting that Black Isle as well as Beauly Councillors are also raising concerns and Cllr Kraft thinks the matter is also being raised at the Inverness City Committee. The Vice Chairman noted in Aberdeen the parapet height was increased on a bridge which helped to address a similar issue there, can’t Transport Scotland/BEAR do the same on the Kessock Bridge? The time to act is now. Doctor referral times were also noted.

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

**Garve mains water supply** – Gavin Steel at Scottish Water tells us that although there was some more routine leakage-related work going on in the area in April 2023, there had in fact also been a burst at the same time. It has now been confirmed that a project is being promoted to renew the section of water main that has been the cause of recent problems but timescales of when this work will be done are unknown.

The Vice Chairman has heard that Scottish Water has contacted the landowner and confirmed with them that a new pipe will be installed under the full length of the field. They will lay a temporary pipe across the field to maintain supplies while the work is carried out, dates tbc but late August 2023 has been suggested, especially as the issues in Conon Bridge have been resolved, which resulted in resources being taken away from other projects/communities. The works in Little Garve have been noted as resulting in a much more reliable supply of water. Works in Achnasheen many years ago also resulted in a more reliable supply.

The position in relation to **fire hydrants** is slightly complex as Scottish Water liaise with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service about these. Scottish Water would always seek to support firefighting as far as possible, even when this can cause short term disruption to water supplies for customers, but the water network is primarily designed and sized to supply drinking water, so its capacity is limited.  Fire crews are aware of this and will often obtain water from other sources such as rivers, as well as making use of hydrants where they are available. Our thanks to Gavin for the updates which we have already shared with concerned residents directly and posted on our website. Community Council member Jennifer Haslam (when speaking to our Chairman recently) recalled a time a few years ago when a fire hydrant in Garve was used for a steam train. Overall, Jennifer felt Garve is still troubled by low water pressure, and should the fire brigade urgently need a supply, it could be tricky to provide it, especially if supplies keep going off. It was noted new hydrants were installed during recent replacement works in Little Garve so perhaps the same will happen in Garve.

On Sunday 16 July 2023, **no mains water supply** was reported in the Garve area. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris called Scottish Water to be told that they believed between 50 and 70 properties were affected and believed the cause was a pump malfunction (sensor fault) which pushes the water around the network, but a fallen tree did not help matters either. A local power outage in the Little Garve area the previous day may also have been a contributing factor. Sadie was advised that Scottish Water can issue bottled water if anyone needs it but people must call in individually to ask for it. It was pointed out that bottled water used to be left outside Strathgarve Primary School. Later the same day, the Scottish Water website was providing updates that mentioned bottled water was available at the Garve Public Hall. It appears there was, but residents soon got hold of the bottles, probably to make tea! Water supplies were fully restored later that afternoon. Cllr Kraft and Community Council members were concerned to hear bottled water was not readily available. It was noted that water pressure in Matheson Road and over in Strathgarve is low making it difficult to shower. Residents are again reminded to report such issues directly to Scottish Water at the time at <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/Help-and-Resources/Contact-Us/Contacting-Us> or by calling Scottish Water directly on 08000 778 778 and keeping a note of the reference number. *(Post meeting note – we have been made aware that Garve mains water will be off from 9.00am until 3.00pm on Wednesday 9 August 2023 for work on the supply).*

Cllr Patrick Logue left the meeting at 8.30pm and was thanked for attending.

**Garve Hotel** – grass around the Hotel was cut w/c 12 June 2023 but it was felt to be to a very poor standard, weeds remain. Around Sunday 25 June 2023 the Hotel was damaged, Police are already aware. Tina Hartley (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) confirmed Police had spoken to the Development Company and like us, the Development Company has not received a reply to letters sent to the owner. Around the same time company number 11327557 Amayo Properties Ltd filed to be dissolved. Cllr Kraft was looking to see what could be done to improve the appearance of the building, but it seems very little at this stage. The matter has already been raised within The Highland Council along with a Hotel in Strathpeffer. When Cllr Kraft asked about enforcement orders, she received an inconclusive reply.

**Garve Public Hall refurbishment** – Bob Moir as a Hall Trustee updated us that monthly updates continue to be placed online <https://garve.org/gph-aug23> and on the noticeboard outside the Hall. The works continue to be on budget and on schedule despite recent heavy rain in the area. The building is wind and watertight and drainage/sewer improvement works are ongoing. The new kitchen is on order and plumbing/electrical work is nearly complete. Plasterboard/insulation works are well on. It is still hoped an open day, especially for the school children, can be held so people can see the works for themselves, depending on Health & Safety. Bob was thanked for his update and our Chairman was sure that if anyone had any questions about this project that Garve Public Hall Trustees would be happy to answer such questions directly.

**The Midge Bite Cafe in Achnasheen** **is NOT** closing down despite rumours to the contrary. They are only closed Mondays and Tuesdays for now until they can find more staff to fill current vacancies. Our thanks to Hazel at the Midge for the clarification.

Tina Hartley (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) has confirmed that the **Shopmobility bus** stopped running in June 2023. Over the previous twelve months the bus which ran every second Thursday made around 66 pickups. Our thanks to Tina for the update. Norma Ross, Chair of Contin Community Council does not think anyone from Contin took up the offer of the Shopmobility service. Is there another way such a “dial up” service could work in our area? Maybe a more personalised approach is required? In the meantime, TG&DDC will work in partnership with Contin, Jamestown and Tarvie and Cllr Kraft to pilot a 12-month community transport service. The more people a service serves, the more likely it is to be viable. More details at <https://garve.org/connecting-communities-july-23>

In slightly related news, Bruce Morrison at Ferintosh Community Council notes that Dingwall Academy now has **an electric trishaw** (a light three-wheeled vehicle) which offers opportunities for people with limited ability to be taken out for bike rides in the countryside. The best person to contact is Amy Alexander at Dingwall Academy. Amy looks after the administration side of the trishaw and will be able to put people in touch with the team who provide the training, etc … Our thanks to Bruce for the update.

Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris attended the **Dingwall Medical Group & Community Council Quarterly Liaison Meeting** online on Monday 17 July 2023. Minutes are available in the library section of our website <http://www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict/library> Our Chairman thanked Sadie for attending. Sadie noted that local “jab” clinics such as in Village Halls were looked at before Covid and social prescribing, getting out and about more in the community were the main themes of the latest meeting. It was thought that the Strathpeffer Medical Practice were no longer operating a service from their surgery in Dingwall. *(Post meeting note - they are operating in Dingwall, just three half days. Mondays 2.00pm until 6.00pm, Wednesdays 8.30am until 1.00pm and Fridays 8.30am until 12noon. More details at* [*strathpeffermedicalpractice.co.uk*](http://strathpeffermedicalpractice.co.uk/)*)*

**SSEN Spittal - Loch Buidhe - Beauly 400kV project update -** a [Consultation Summary Report](https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/globalassets/projects/projects/spittal---loch-buidhe---beauly-400kv-connection-downloads/consultation-report---spittal---loch-buidhe---beauly---july-23.pdf) for the proposed project provides an overview of the project need, why SSEN carry out consultations, attendance figures at the events and some detail regarding the level of feedback received and the themes that were identified from the feedback. As mentioned within the document, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is currently being finalised to further address the feedback received. A detailed Report on Consultation will also be published later in the year to explain how feedback has been considered to inform the ongoing project development. Further communication and engagement will take place as part of the Report on Consultation, particularly with affected communities and statutory stakeholders. Neighbouring Community Councils including Garve & District are keeping in touch and plan to meet online again soon to discuss their next steps.

**Lochcarron Community Centre signposting service -** one of the potential remits of the new Lochcarron Community Centre (Howard Doris Centre) would be to act as a signposting service to the local community about events, activities, organisations, and other opportunities available in the whole of the Lochcarron area. They would ideally like to set up a database of what is available, with the name and contact details of a lead person for each service. If you would like to be on the database, and are willing to have your contact details shared with interested parties please contact Jenny Hendry on hendry010@btinternet.com

**The LCT** are holding an online EGM and community update on Tuesday 22 August 2023 from 7.00pm.

**TG&DDC** updates on the Community Development Plan and GD Core are available at <https://garve.org/cdp-review-2023> and <https://garve.org/community-land-updatejul23>

Following the last **joint local group meeting** held on Tuesday 18 April 2023, a revised application form for the Community Support Grant has now been sent to LCT Directors and Community Council members to review by Tina Hartley (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC). Community Council members and LCT Directors were content with the revised form, but Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris wondered where/how personal information was stored? Tina has updated the Community Council to say data is processed within internal and external policies of the Development Company and that only two people have access to the data, namely Tina and the Company Secretary, who is responsible for administering the grant. Paper copies of application forms are securely shredded once processed. Some basic information is stored on their cloud-based accounting software QuickBooks which can only be accessed by the Company Secretary, their Treasurer, Tina and their accountants. Bank details of applicants are securely stored with the bank – which can only be accessed by authorised signatories. All this information is processed with the specific consent of the individual (part of the application form provides this consent). Our thanks to Tina for the clarification. As a point of information, since Community Council member Jennfer Haslam stood down as Secretary, only our Chairman has access to the email list and the members list which are password controlled on his computer. We have a GDPR statement and are registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office. Only the three signatories to the bank account have access to banking information.

Having talked to **Community Council member Joe Stewart** about his continued absence from our meetings since April 2021, our Chairman and Joe agreed that his increasing work commitments will make it more unlikely for him to attend future meetings so as things stand Joe will probably not seek re-election. We thank Joe for his input via email over these last few years and agreed Joe would probably like to be more at home if he could. With both LCT and the Development Company also having empty seats around their tables as well as other groups, there are currently plenty opportunities for community minded people to get involved. Community Council election day has been provisionally set by The Highland Council as Monday 27 November 2023. Our Chairman noted it was very appropriate for elections to be held this year, the 50th anniversary since Community Councils were established under the Local Government (Scotland) Act of 1973. If anyone is interested in joining the Community Council, please get in touch directly.

**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.

We note police traffic patrols have continued in several locations in our area throughout the summer using marked and unmarked cars at various locations including Garve, Gorstan, Lochluichart, Achanalt and Achnasheen.

Inspector Mackinnon updated us to say they work alongside numerous partners regarding traffic issues.  Some of these are: Transport Scotland, BEAR, The Highland Council, The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, The Scottish Ambulance Service, DVSA, DVLA, Cycling Scotland, NC500 business members, The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, Road Safety Scotland, Rosa, Scoria, Older Drivers Forum, NHS, The Road Haulage Association, Good Egg Charity, Amey, The Federation of Small Businesses, Highland Driving Instructors Group and various private companies whose employees the police deliver road safety advice to. Inspector Mackinnon also noted that priority road policing patrols on the weekend of 10/11 June 2023 detected one vehicle travelling at 117mph on the A832 at Achanalt.  These patrols Inspector Mackinnon tells us will continue and the police aim to robustly deal with offenders and promote road safety through roadside interactions and media messaging. Our thanks to Inspector Mackinnon for his update which we have already posted on our website.

An accident at the Gorstan Junction on Thursday 15 June 2023 apparently involving one motorbike. Police/Ambulance attended; road not closed.

An accident below Strathbran Lodge on the afternoon of Thursday 22 June 2023, road not closed and no reports of any injuries.

A car parked in the Achnasheen Village Centre was damaged on Tuesday 25 July 2023. It appears someone threw a large concrete block at the windscreen causing major damage, the police are aware. It is thought a similar incident happened in Ullapool recently.

An accident between Grudie Bridge and Lochluichart on Thursday 27 August 2023 resulted in traffic being diverted through a roadside layby. We understand the one vehicle accident resulted in no major injuries, but Police/Ambulance/Fire Service did attend as a precaution.

Out with our area, an accident at the Marybank junction on the A835 yesterday resulted in four vehicles running into one another. No sign of any injuries, Police attended.

**Treasurer’s report** - The Treasurer confirmed our total bank balance is now £1,829.56 following receipt of The Highland Council’s grant for 2023/24 of £445.20 on Thursday 20 July 2023. The breakdown of the figures is treasurers account £291.11 and reserve £1,538.45. Changes to bank signatures appear to be ongoing as the Vice Chairman has received nothing from the bank. The Treasurer has spoken to the bank who say the paperwork is being processed but will chase up. There were no questions for the Treasurer.

Tina Hartley (Community Engagement and Development Officer, TG&DDC) left the meeting at 9.20pm and was thanked for attending.

**AOB from Community Council members** – The Vice Chairman noted the **white lines** are still to be done. Cllr Kraft is seeking an update.

The Treasurer updated us that **lightning hit a transformer** in Little Garve on Saturday 15 July 2023, but electricity was restored quickly, and all has been well since. Some people lost TV’s, telephones and Broadband due to the lightning. This may be able to be claimed on house insurance.

**AOB from members of the public** – could a **“Passing Place” sign** be put up in what is known to some people locally as the “loading bank” at Strathgarve? A car keeps parking there making it difficult for other road users. Cllr Kraft will speak to the parking team to see what, if anything can be done.

There are also **potholes after the Bailey Bridge** on The Avenue. These can be reported by going to <https://www.highland.gov.uk/report> Pictures are welcomed by The Highland Council.

It was noted **Garve now has 4G** mobile coverage. 3G will be phased out across the UK eventually.

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – we have received notice of one scoping opinion which has been submitted to Scottish Ministers by Statkraft UK Limited in respect of the Carn Fearna Wind Farm proposal located approximately 1.5km northeast of Garve. The proposal (of up to fourteen turbines) are of a maximum indicative hub height is 122.5 metres; the maximum indicative rotor diameter is 155 metres; and the maximum indicative tip height is 200 metres along with a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and ancillary infrastructure. As this was all news to the Community Council, we asked the company for more detailed information on Thursday 6 July 2023. They replied late yesterday to say more details are available at <https://projects.statkraft.co.uk/Carn-Fearna/> and that they would be willing to attend a Community Council meeting. Households and businesses within 10km of the site are to be written to by the developer. It was agreed the developer should be asked to attend a future Community Council meeting.

Community Council member Joe Stewart noted that a scoping report for a site just outside our Community Council area is perhaps worth being aware of. 23/03044/SCOP is for a possible windfarm at Tarvie. The EIA scoping request is for the erection and operation of a windfarm comprising of up to five wind turbines with a tip height of approximately 200 metres along with ancillary infrastructure. Our thanks to Joe for telling us. The site is in Contin Community Council’s area who were unaware of this scoping report until we told them. It appears some residents of Tarvie were also unaware. The company behind the proposal, Koehler Renewable Energy (KRE) was founded in 2012, KRE is part of the Koehler Group, an eighth-generation family business in the paper industry. Given the energy intensity of manufacturing paper, KRE was set up to invest in sustainability projects, such as wind farms, hydroelectric power and solar energy. Our Chairman has suggested they liaise initially with Contin Community Council who intend to invite them and us to one of their meetings.

We have received notice of one consultation from The Highland Council. The Highland Licensing Board has begun consultation on its next Statement of Licensing Policy for the period November 2023 to November 2028. The aim of the Policy Statement is to promote consistency in decision-making on all types of liquor licence applications and to give applicants advance notice of the Board’s likely approach to determining licence applications. Consultation responses should be submitted using the Consultation Response Form which can be found at: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=brXwiRZt6E-duhdvqUD3yWfi995f9QJFmFxVep_7igVUM1RKRzM2Uk44TVhHWTFVTU5GOUpBTUY1Uy4u>

Responses should be received no later than Thursday 31 August 2023. Community Council members had no comments on this consultation.

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** – Kirkan windfarm <http://www.kirkanwindfarm.co.uk/> located to the east of the existing Corriemoillie windfarm has been granted planning permission following a public inquiry. (19/01861/S36 - construction of wind farm comprising of 17 turbines (height to hub 104m, height to blade tip 175m), associated access tracks, borrow pits, compounds, substation and 104-metre-high met mast). A copy of the decision letter and 92-page report have been placed on the Scottish Government website - [www.energyconsents.scot](http://www.energyconsents.scot) This update has already been posted on our website. Trevor Hunter at Coriolis Energy has been in touch to say he will update us more on this project in due course, our thanks to him.

There are three new building warrants currently being shown on The Highland Council website for our area. 23/01056/DOM3 is the erection of replacement extension, extension and conversion of garage and erection of annex at Silverbridge Lodge. 23/01057/DOM3 and 23/01058/DOM2 both for Silverbridge Lodge have since been withdrawn by the applicant.

We have received notice of two pre-planning applications. The first is for a proposed telecommunications installation on land west of Creag Dhubh by Loch Fannich. The Shared Rural Network is a telecommunications programme which sees the UK Government working in partnership with the four UK mobile network operators - EE, O2, Three and Vodafone - to increase mobile connectivity in rural parts of the UK. Community Council members raised no objections.

The second pre-planning application was only received yesterday afternoon for the Corriemoillie Substation Energy Storage Facility. (Grid connected and a battery energy storage facility of up to 200MW, comprising a compound of electrical equipment including batteries, access track, transmission compound, switchgear, control building, stores, fencing, security, landscaping, parking, and ancillary structures). A project website is to be established by the time newspaper adverts appear. Public events to be held at a local venue, possibly in September 2023. Households and businesses within 2.5km of the site are to be written to by the developer. Community Council members await further information before commenting further.

Threenew planning applications have been received by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. 23/02736/FUL is the proposed erection of a garage at 5 Stirling Drive, Garve. We posted the details on our website and noted neighbouring properties within 20 metres would have received neighbour notification notices directly from The Highland Council. As we were not due to meet until tonight, and to meet planning department deadlines for any comments, all Community Council members were informed of this planning application via email and were given five days to raise any issues. Community Council members raised no objections. The application has since been granted by the Case Officer. This update has already been posted on our website.

23/03048/FUL is the extension to house, extension to outbuilding and erection of holiday let annex at Silverbridge Lodge. This is a retrospective planning application as the applicant thought such works were covered under permitted development rules. All Community Council members were informed by email and a note placed on our website. Community Council members raised no objections.

23/03269/FUL is the proposed change of use from Cafe (Class 3 Restaurants & Cafe) to a dwelling and erection of decking at The Studio, Achnasheen.  On Monday 24 July 2023, all Community Council members were informed by email along with all Achnasheen residents who we have email addresses for.  A notice was also placed in the Achnasheen Village Noticeboard and on our own website. Community Council members raised no objections.

We have also been made aware of one new Prior Notification Order - 23/03576/PNO is the proposed alterations to existing access track on land 2020 metres west of Fannich Lodge. The existing track is unsuitable for timber extraction plant and requires the straightening of two of the more extreme bends on the existing track to allow tractor and trailer access. The two corners are to be realigned using crushed stone to provide a better surface. This will help when windblown trees are removed from the plantation further west along this track. Community Council members raised no objections.

We have been made aware of two possible planning breaches in our area at two different locations, but we are awaiting clarification on both issues before commenting further. A possible planning breach can be reported at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning_-_applications_warrants_and_certificates/170/planning_enforcement/2>

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 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

January 2024 – no meeting

Tuesday 6 February 2024, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 5 March 2024, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 2 April 2024, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 7 May 2024, 7.00pm, webcam

Tuesday 4 June 2024, **AGM** followed by an ordinary meeting, 7.00pm, webcam

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 this evening, a question he often asks throughout the meeting too. Nobody had any final questions or thoughts.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.  He also thanked Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris for hosting the webcam session.  The Chairman closed the (long) meeting at 9.40pm.

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 11.00am on Thursday 10 August 2023.