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

**held on Tuesday 7 March 2023 on webcam**

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

**Also present on webcam**: Cllr Liz Kraft (from 7.20pm), Kathy Grist (Secretary, Achnasheen Amenities Association from 7.30pm until 8.00pm) and one member of the public.

**Apologies**: Jennifer Haslam (Secretary), Community Council member Joe Stewart and co-opted member Hamish Leslie Melville.

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 cannot attend our meetings can, as always, write to us 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 learnt a few days after our last ordinary meeting that Pat Wilson of Lochrosque Estate had passed away. Our thought are with his family. Last week, Ann Grant of Garbat passed away. Ann was a friend to many and a long-serving Garve Public Hall Trustee. We send our condolences to her family. Ann’s funeral is next Tuesday at Lochluichart Church.

**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 7 February 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. A summary report of the meetings is available in the local newsletter and in the An Carrannach. Minutes will be signed by our Chairman and Treasurer in due course via post.

**Matters arising** – **Infinergy** – [www.lxxwindfarm.co.uk/](http://www.lxxwindfarm.co.uk/) The Section 37 has now been granted to connect the five turbines to the grid. Our thanks to Nick Sage for the update.

**Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – **the area committee** met on Monday 20 February 2023 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Tn1gEiHPdg&feature=youtu.be> There was discussion about the roads including the A832. **A budget meeting** took place last week that agreed a 4% rise in Council Tax, a commitment to maintaining the roads capital investment at £20m for 2023/2024 as well as an additional £1.266m to establish a rapid repair team, mainly around pothole repairs. It was also noted that if The Highland Council keep dipping into reserves at the current rate (about £23m for 2023/2024), the reserve will run out in 3-4 years’ time. Charges at EVC points across the Highlands have also been increased.

How much are **compensation claims against The Highland Council** costing them? Cllr Kraft informs us that the additional funds made to the roads budgets for 2023/2024 was impact assessed against the risk of not investing and hopefully in the longer term saves money. There were several outcomes assessed under the impact assessment, compensation was one of them. From The Highland Council website … *Cost Avoidance: 10% reduction in compensation claims and resulting pay outs per year (Vehicle Damage). External Customer Satisfaction: Reduction in complaints relating to vehicle damage. £23,895 – this figure is based on 10% of average no of annual claims (177 x £135) 2024/25 Claims for potholes (average pay out = £135) are generally paid for from the Roads budget so any cost avoidance allows the budget to be used for what it was intended (road maintenance). Year on year, this avoided cost will accumulate.* Cllr Kraft confirmed these are Pan-Highland figures, not ward five figures. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris asked two questions 1) Are people able to claim for damage by potholes if the pothole has already been reported but remains outstanding? (Yes, a claim can be made whether the actual pothole has already been reported or not.  Photos of the burst tyre and the actual pothole are advantageous) and 2) How much was the compensation paid out by The Highland Council in the past 12 months/past financial year? (Cllr Kraft will double check but our Chairman thinks it was around £250,000).

**Potholes** – this was a major topic at our last ordinary meeting. Works have continued on the A832 since including clearing out roadside ditches, especially in the Achanalt area. We also note the “patchwork quilt” at Mossford following pothole repairs there. We have asked for various road matters to be clarified at the upcoming joint community council meeting. We also noted the photos circulating on social media of a car supposedly damaged out with our area by the state of the roads. It appears the damage was not caused by potholes yet Cllr Kraft and the roads teams were taken away from their work on this matter resulting in real potholes not getting filled in until a later date. Our Chairman recalled his own time being wasted before now … Cllr Kraft noted that the recent budget saw investment in IT services.

**Materials** to fix roads readily available? According to the local roads team, there are no supply issues and Cllr Kraft is also not aware of any issues now.

**Grit boxes for Little Garve and Strathgarve** – requested, awaiting delivery.

**Speed survey on A832 and Garve Village** – due to take place in the spring – see <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/1049/20mph_programme/5>

**Trees in The Avenue** – no news about the replanting plan is expected until the spring.

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

**Fence on the riverside path in Garve –** Cllr Kraft has now emailed the Education department and the Access Officer twice about this fence. It seems both are still trying to decide who is responsible for any upkeep! Cllr Kraft will talk to another official whose housing environmental budget might be able to be utilised to help resolve the problem. Community Council member Bob Moir noted all it needs is a new strainer!

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.

**The Freedom of Information request** regarding the A835 speed survey tells us the average speed of traffic through Garve over seven days last October was 37mph but around 4,000 vehicles of the 23,000 who passed through Garve were travelling over 40mph (mainly 41-45mph). Full traffic reports are available in the library section of our website and the Police, who are responsible for ensuring the speed limit is adhered to, have been informed. We have asked that extra patrols take place. This update has already been shared with the Traffic Calming group and our website has already been updated. Traffic police were seen in Garve recently. Some attending this meeting were surprised the figures of those speeding were not higher.

**Killin Farm railway crossing works/barriers east of Garve** – no further news expected until the spring.

**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** – Murdo Maclennan at Scottish Forestry has been in touch to say they have been waiting for dry weather and have been going back and fore with Historic Environment Scotland to get approval for a suitable method of cleaning. The work to clean the bridge was carried out on Tuesday 14 February 2023. The paint has been successfully removed without having to use chemicals. There is some “shadowing” where the graffiti was but the untrained eye should not notice anything. The shadowing is due to the lichen being removed during the cleaning and was expected. This update has already appeared on our website, our thanks to Murdo for the update.

Cllr Kraft joined the meeting at 7.20pm. So we could hear her updates, we went back through the topics already covered as detailed above. As we were doing this, Kathy Grist (Secretary, Achnasheen Amenities Association) joined us at 7.30pm.

**Short term lets** – do individual pods need an individual licence? Please see the FAQs at

<https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/26023/short_term_lets_-_frequently_asked_questions.pdf> If several units are operated by the same person, just one licence is required. The fees are determined by the number of people that can be accommodated, see <https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/25640/short_term_lets_fees.pdf> for more information. Cllr Kraft will also check with her colleague Cllr Birt who is on the licensing committee.

**Future of Achnasheen Hall** - The Achnasheen Amenities Association AGM took place on the evening of Friday 24 February 2023 lasting some 45 minutes.  The AGM was attended by 16 people from Achnasheen, Gorstan, Garve and Strathgarve.  Accounts for the 2022 calendar year were approved by members.  Barry Peters, Andrew Biddlecombe and Kathy Grist were elected to the committee, all other committee members stood down at the AGM and were not seeking re-election.  It was agreed by all present that as the committee needs four people, a new committee could not be formed at this time but the new committee would seek a fourth person to co-opt.  Kathy updated us at this meeting that since the AGM it has been agreed that Andrew Biddlecome will be Chairman, Kathy will be Secretary, Steve Jones co-opted as Treasurer and Moira Harris co-opted as a committee member following Steve & Moira contacting the new committee offering to join.  Joe MacReany has agreed to stay on from the previous committee so a committee of six is now in place.  Kathy wished it to be known that the **HALL IS OPEN** and bookings are welcome, art classes restart from Thursday 30 March 2023 and the Outreach Post Office still visits every Tuesday afternoon.  Please see <https://sites.google.com/view/achnasheenvillagehall/home> (currently getting updated as well as social media pages) or email Kathy at achnasheenamenities@gmail.com for bookings/enquiries along with suggestions of what events local residents would like to see held in the Hall.  Committee minutes will be published online in due course.  Kathy confirmed the original lease from 1988 is still in place as confirmed by letter from The Highland Council in 2020.  The new committee are trying to find out why The Highland Council are not repairing the Hall roof and gable ends which under the terms of the lease they are responsible for, Cllr Kraft has also made enquiries and is happy to work alongside Kathy but noted that The Highland Council has little influence over Network Rail whose permission would be needed if scaffolding was required.

Kathy Grist was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 8.00pm.

We have not received any further word from **GALE** about possible changes to their articles but do note recent funding applications made to the local area committee were successful in them receiving funds for “IV21 and IV22”. This was the exact phrase that caused so much concern recently as Achnasheen is within IV22. Cllr Kraft confirmed that advice was sought from officers before determining the application. The advice was to base their decision on the actual application/criteria rather than other issues. Cllr Kraft confirmed these funds are strictly monitored and part of this application for overheads was declined. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted vast sums of money going to GALE but very little appearing to be given out to the community.

We note the concerns raised locally and further afield about the closure of **Mo Dhachaidh** care home in Ullapool. Lochbroom Community Council have kept all ward five Community Councils updated which we appreciate, especially as the closure date has been brought forward from next month to this week. A public meeting held recently was very well attended by members of the public and Cllr Kraft. NHS Highland, MSP and others are aware of the situation. The Highland Council have the statutory responsibility in this matter. It appears the local community of Ullapool want NHS Highland to buy the building as they have done in Newtonmore <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/highlands-islands/5436307/future-of-newtonmore-care-home-secured-as-nhs-highland-take-over-operations/> It was noted that care at home is highly clinical now, all needs planned, costed and staffed. Can the Ullapool Doctor’s surgery stay in the building? (Yes but that could change). It was also noted that we saw all this with the now closed Strathgarve Nursing Home some 20 years ago.

**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.

**Treasurer’s report** – The Treasurer confirmed that our balance remains the same at £1,960.62 but a cheque is still to be cashed by our Secretary for expenses of cards and stamps of £16.31. The breakdown of those figures is treasurers account £422.17 and reserve £1,538.45. Public liability insurance of £86.00 to be paid. It was agreed by both those present and absent Community Council members that the Secretary is owed £262.50 for 9months work and our Chairman is owed £87.50 for 3months work (secretary fee for 2022/23). The Chairman abstained from this vote. Community Council members fully agreed to appoint last year’s auditor as year-end is 31 March 2023 (if she is willing), the Treasurer will make enquiries. The Secretary has asked our Chairman to raise on her behalf the question of mileage for the Chairman’s travels. The Secretary feels 45p per mile should be increased to 65p per mile due to rising fuel costs <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advisory-fuel-rates> Our Chairman will monitor his mileage closely and report back in due course. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris agreed with the Secretary noting mileage is also for wear and tear, insurance etc …

**AOB from Community Council members** – The Treasurer asked if there were any plans to mark King Charles III’s coronation in May? We are not aware of any plans at this stage and it was noted that Garve Public Hall remains closed for renovations. Perhaps another venue could be utilised if people wanted to mark the occasion?

**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** - two previous planning applications have been determined by The Highland Council since our last ordinary meeting. At last month’s meeting we noted 22/05276/FUL, the proposed siting of self-contained unit for holiday letting purposes at Glentawik, Little Garve. The Case Officer has permitted the development with four conditions. More details are available on The Highland Council planning website.

23/00224/OHL was the proposed installation of 33kV overhead line on land 150M South of North Hill Forest Cottage, Silverbridge. The Case Officer raises no objection to this application.

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 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 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

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 on request.

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 3.00pm on Sunday 12 March 2023.