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

**Tuesday 30 January 2024 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**: Ewan Bush (Connecting Communities Project Officer from 7.30pm until 8.10pm), Peter Kane (PR Consultant for the Kane Partnership from 7.30pm until 8.35pm), Scott Vallance (Principal Project Manager, Statkraft UK from 7.30pm until 8.35pm), Seumas Skinner (Community Liaison Manager, Statkraft UK from 7.30pm until 8.35pm) and one member of the public.

**Apologies**: Cllr Liz Kraft (updates provided in advance as usual). *(Post meeting note – late apologies received from Cllr Patrick Logue).*

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed everyone and explained the February ordinary meeting had been brought forward by one week to tonight due to other commitments and that the revised date had been advertised through the usual channels. 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 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. We are also on social media - [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552992414355](http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552992414355)

Our Chairman was unable to attend the community party in Achnasheen on Saturday 16 December 2023, or the carol service in Lochluichart Church on Sunday 17 December 2023 but did manage to attend the Strathgarve Primary School Christmas carol service around the Garve Christmas tree on the evening of Wednesday 20 December 2023. Around 30 people attended, hot drinks and mince pies were served after. The weather was breezy but mild, the rain stayed off for the most part. Our Chairman then took a walk around Garve village and the Christmas light displays were looking great on the houses, well done to all for making the effort. Our Chairman attended the Marybank, Scatwell & Strathconon Community Council meeting held online on Thursday 25 January 2024.

Community Council members were very sad to hear Jonnie Nibblett, a former resident of Lochluichart passed away on Thursday 14 December 2023, aged 89 years after a short illness. Jonnie was a retired tea planter having spent many years in Africa and enjoyed fishing. He was a real character! Our thoughts are with the family.

Our Chairman wished to send thanks to former Community Council member Jennifer Haslam who has sent him a new flashing magic wand to keep order at these meetings. Some people may recall our Chairman’s old wand that went missing after the 2019 AGM. He is delighted with his gift.

Our Chairman was sorry to confirm that news reached us this morning that Julie Wileman (Assistant Ward Manager) died very unexpectedly last week.  This came as a shock to us as Julie had not shown any signs of illness and had been carrying out all her work duties to the full – with all her usual enthusiasm and good humour. Highland Council officials and local Councillors are very distressed at the loss of Julie and will need time to come to terms with the news. Our thoughts are very much with Julie’s family at this time.

**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 ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 5 December 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.

**Matters arising** – **The “Connecting Communities” project** – The Connecting Communities Project Officer Ewan Bush has been working to set up a community transport service for Garve & District, Contin, Jamestown and Tarvie.  Ewan is keen to meet people and groups from the communities to understand how the proposed transport service can best support the community’s needs.  More info at <https://garve.org/cc-dec23>  Ewan started by thanking us for the invite and apologising for missing our last meeting, his computer let him down but he had bells and whistles blowing this time to remind him!  Ewan has been sourcing funding since September 2023 for revenue and capital costs to set up The Connecting Communities Transport Project. A Highland Council school transport contract would give the community bus a regular service/income yet remain available for the community out with school run times.  Availability for community use during term time would be approximately 10.00am – 2.00pm and 4.00pm – 7.00pm weekdays including weekends and holidays.  The Highland Council has offered a diesel bus with a minimum of 7 passenger seats - tbc.  Two paid part time drivers will be needed, recruited locally where possible plus trained volunteer drivers for community outings out-with normal operating hours.  An EVC in Contin as well as an upgrade to the existing Aultguish EVC including a suitable long range EV replacement for The Highland Council diesel mini bus in Year 2 are currently being considered.  Admin, bookings (both app and telephone) etc all need to be investigated and set up.  Funding to support active travel (walking, cycling) and sustainable tourism may be available so a community bus could be a way of getting hillwalkers and cyclists out into the more remote corners of our community.  Our Chairman asked about Shopmobility and how would this service differ.  Ewan explained that as this bus would be based locally rather than by an outside organisation, it would be more readily available for community use outside school transport times.  Shopmobility was only available one day every two weeks just to Dingwall.  Contin community and Church services could also benefit from the community bus plus trips to support health & wellbeing, reduce single car journeys medical centres, Raigmore, Inverness, theatre etc …  The younger people could attend after school activities more easily.  There would need to be a charge to contribute towards costs but less for residents.  Quotes for a rapid EVC's and associated infrastructure at Contin and Aultguish Inn have been secured with the aim of having them installed in 2024 pending outcome of funding applications. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted a range of an electric vehicle is reduced by 80 miles if the heating is on, which it will be in winter months.  Ewan agreed with this point and noted that would need factored in when eventually looking at the purchase of an electric bus.  The Vice Chairman asked about hybrid and hydrogen but more is needed to be known about those technologies first and where would we fill up a hydrogen bus around here?  The Vice Chairman also noted a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) self-charge taxi he used recently was very comfortable and the driver was very happy with.  How much charge would the bus need between school runs and was there time? (all to be looked into).  Where would a community bus be based?  That could depend where the main drivers live.  Ferintosh have had an EV service for around 18 months now which has seen demand grow but high demand here due to distances could cause issues when charging time is less.  The Highland Council providing a diesel bus is a help to get this project off the ground but there would be some disadvantages such as covering services when the bus is off the road or getting serviced, discussions on these points are ongoing.  Insurance – would volunteer drivers be covered? (Yes named drivers if available in the community).  Our Chairman suggested once demand with the diesel bus is known, that may help decide which electric vehicle best suits the community’s needs.  He asked Ewan to keep up updated via email.

Ewan Bush was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 8.10pm.

**Boralex** – <https://www.boralex.com> – no further news, timescales for construction still tbc.

**Kirkan Windfarm** – <http://www.kirkanwindfarm.co.uk> – no further news at this stage.

**Proposed Tarvie windfarm** – <https://tarviewindfarm.com> – no further news but their website appears to be in the process of getting updated.

**Proposed SSE Fairburn extension** – <https://www.sserenewables.com/onshore-wind/in-development/fairburn-extension> - no further news.

**SSEN Spittal – Beauly 400kV project** - <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/spittal--loch-buidhe--beauly-400kv-connection> - an online public meeting was held on Wednesday 13 December 2023 which had been advertised on their website. A recording of the meeting is available here - <https://vimeo.com/894471699/a9a355e799> Further public exhibitions are to be held in the spring and again in the summer and our Chairman has requested a public exhibition be held in Garve as the proposed line could come near to the east end of Loch Garve, the suggestion has been noted by SSEN. This update has already appeared on our online channels. Marybank, Scatwell & Strathconon Community Council are concerned timings of public exhibitions may not work for those who work during the day but Hall availability will also be a factor.

**SSEN underground cable** from the Western Isles to Beauly – Lisa Marchi, Community Liaison Manager at SSEN has been in touch to say they are currently working to pull together information for the underground cable route. SSEN plan to hold several information events during March 2024 along the route to share information about the work they will be undertaking, answer any questions the community may have and will be looking for information and local feedback on any events or activities that are taking place along the route that may be impacted by their work. Once the dates and venues for these events have been confirmed, SSEN will be in touch again with all the details but Lisa has already confirmed that they are looking to hold an event in Garve. We thank Lisa for her update and have advised her of the tree planting plans in The Avenue.

**Proposed Carn Fearna windfarm** – <https://projects.statkraft.co.uk/Carn-Fearna/> - Peter Kane, Scott Vallance and Seumas Skinner updated the meeting that they continue to work through the feedback received since their initial exhibitions but hope to compile a report in the next few weeks. They also hope to answer those who left questions if they have left email or postal addresses. FAQ’s page on their website will also be updated. Statkraft would like to hold further public exhibitions, possibly in May 2024 and asked when would be suitable days and times subject to hall availability. It was suggested Garve, Contin and Strathpeffer, afternoons, perhaps 2.00pm until 7.00pm or weekends. A temporary meteorological mast will be needed onsite for perhaps 1-3 years subject to planning permission. This will help to confirm wind data from desktop studies. The lattice tower is usually 120m high tied down by 3-4 guide ropes. Full details will be available in the planning application when available. A disabled resident who requested hard copies of Statkraft’s proposed windfarm received hard copies today via Peter while he was out on his travels. Statkraft are happy to talk 1-to-1 to people in a similar position if necessary. **In related news**, we note Statkraft, Europe’s largest renewable power generator, **has agreed to acquire the Red John Pumped Storage Hydro Scheme**, from Intelligent Land Investments Group (ILI).  The 450MW scheme, first conceived in 2015, was granted consent by Scottish Government ministers in June 2021. The acquisition demonstrates Statkraft’s latest commitment to helping Scotland meet its renewable energy targets and strengthening UK energy security.  Located on a site around 14km south-west of Inverness, it will capture excess renewable energy, and store it until needed, helping provide security of supply of around 10% of Great Britain’s electricity network demand as energy production shifts away from fossil fuels. Our thanks to Seumas for the heads up! The gentlemen thanked the Community Council for our time and input.

Peter Kane, Scott Vallance and Seumas Skinner were all thanked for attending and left the meeting at 8.35pm.

**The Highland Council updates** – [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) – The Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Committee met yesterday. One of the items for discussion was the area roads capital programme 2024/25 where it was agreed surface dressing would hopefully take place west and south of Achnasheen.

**Strathgarve Primary School** buildings – Cllr Kraft has asked for an update and is awaiting a reply. Like us, she feels the parents should have a meeting with officials first to discuss any plans. **In related news**, the **Community Council logo project** is in hand. *(Post meeting note – a meeting between parents and officials is due to take place shortly).*

**Replanting Trees in The Avenue** – awaiting a contractor to be appointed. Following Sunday’s stormy weather, the Treasurer was concerned that some more trees are leaning badly and that the frequent storms we have been getting lately might quicken their deterioration further. She will try and get our Chairman some photographs. **In slightly related news, a Tree Preservation Order** came into force in the Inchbae area on Thursday 7 December 2023. More details are available in the library section of our website.

Stormy weather on Sunday has resulted in the **glass recycle bins in Garve** blowing over. This has already been reported to Cllr Kraft and bins have been returned to their rightful place, thanks to all concerned. (The journey recycled items goes on is detailed in the library section of our website). Those in attendance felt the wind on Sunday had been like a mini tornado through Garve.

The **rapid pothole repair team** are recruiting … <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c51zj5l24xro>

**Grit bins** – an additional grit bin for Strathgarve has been requested and delivered. A grit bin for Little Garve, for Gorstan and up beside Myrtle Cottage have all been requested and delivered. A replacement grit bin by the old schoolhouse in Achnasheen is now in place. Thanks to Cllr Kraft and the local roads teams in Silverbridge and Lochcarron for their help in this matter. Refills for grit bins are requested at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/report> (there is an option on the list "grit bins"). With all these grit bins, who needs a gritter up their side road!

**Blackwater Bridge –** works are ongoing this week which we welcome and thank all those involved.

**The damaged path sign next to Blackwater Bridge –** Scottish Forestry have confirmed this is not their sign so has instead been reported again to theAccess Officer who has confirmed that the sign post is on the job list for the local ranger but he is currently on leave and does only work part-time in the winter. Cllr Kraft confirmed funding for the Seasonal Access Rangers is being sought for 2024/25.

**The broken school sign** in Matheson Road, Garve was reported on Friday 29 December 2023 via Cllr Kraft and was replaced before the schools returned on Monday 8 January 2024, thanks to all involved.

**Fence Post** on Core Path RC20.04 - The Access Officer has confirmed that the ranger has already replaced the fence strainer post, thanks to all.

**Wooden fencing and Wyvis Natural Playpark sign, nearest toilet signs** **and hedge cut backs** are all still outstanding. Cllr Kraft continues to make enquiries.

**Achnasheen Village Hall and Public Toilets** – concern has again been raised about the future of the public toilets. We are still **awaiting the survey results** due in November 2023. Kathy Grist, Achnasheen Amenities Association Secretary tells us they have received feedback from The Highland Council and have communicated their position back, currently awaiting what happens next. Our thanks to Kathy for the updates. Cllr Kraft has confirmed that discussions within The Highland Council are taking place and her understanding is that officials will meet with the Achnasheen Amenities Association in due course, survey results to follow. The Treasurer attended the Christmas party on Saturday 16 December 2023 and thought about 14-16 people also attended. There was lots of food, games etc … Well done to all involved*. (Post meeting note – a further update plus the survey results is available at* [*https://garve.org/aaa-survey-feb23*](https://garve.org/aaa-survey-feb23)*)*

**The A890** between the Achnasheen roundabout and Strathcarron Junction will be closed nightly from Monday 19 February 2024 until Friday 29 March 2024 for further resurfacing works. Local access and emergency vehicle access will be permitted at the discretion of the contractor. Pedestrian access will be maintained at all times. Exact details of which nights/times to follow.

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. **Winter gritting** is done as per The Highland Council roads policy - <https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/107/winter_road_maintenance>

**A835 Trunk Road issues - Killin Farm railway crossing improvements and barriers east of Garve** – Transport Scotland have confirmed that the project is still programmed to commence within this financial year however, they are currently in the process of finalising a land access agreement between Transport Scotland and Network Rail, which is a crucial step before works can begin. As part of these anticipated works, Transport Scotland are committed to upgrading the Killin Farm railway crossing to enhance safety measures including a new hard standing area. Our thanks to Transport Scotland for the update. *(Post meeting note – works are due to begin from Monday 12 February 2024).*

We also note the damage to the **crash barrier at the “Check Rail Corner”** which is thought to have been caused by the rear of a lorry at the start of the year resulting in this only road between east and west coast communities being reduced to one lane. Concern was raised into how long this might be in place, the possible issues to the railway below should more wall become loose and the huge de-tour that would be caused should the road have to close, especially to the Ullapool ferry traffic. It was agreed we email the local MSP and ask her to raise this urgent matter with both Network Rail and Transport Scotland to see what will be done to fix the issues and when. A Garve resident suggested rock be removed from the corner to open the corner but our Chairman explained this has been raised before with no progress possible due to possibly destabilising the hillside if rock was removed, the World War Two watch posts (which we believe to be listed structures) and money.

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

There has been some further information regarding **local place plans**. Once registered, Local Place Plans will be considered as evidence for the new Local Development Plan and can also be a material consideration when planning applications are being considered by the Planning Authority however, a registered Local Place Plan is not in itself part of the formal Development Plan and that whether a Local Place Plan is material to the consideration of a planning application is decided on a case-by-case basis. Researchers from UHI and the University of Edinburgh are working in collaboration with The Wester Ross Biosphere to carry out an area place plan on behalf of The Highland Council. There are to be workshops next month which our Chairman hopes to attend. Sue Tarr noted that the Development Company will be consulting shortly to update the community plan so feels timings might be beneficial to both projects. Our Chairman could see Sue’s point but was still concerned consultation for a local plan that then carries little or no weight in the planning process is a waste of everyone’s time however, he hopes to learn more at the upcoming workshops.

As reported at our last ordinary meeting, **The Wester Ross Biosphere** have continued to investigate the pros and cons of a **National Park.** They are keen to ask communities across Wester Ross whether they would like to explore the opportunity - and what this could mean - to be a National Park.  They have been working with Lateral North - <https://lateralnorth.com/> who have been appointed by The Scottish Government to provide information, FAQ's, engagement opportunities and other support/resources.  You can access all the information that's been collated so far via this [website.](https://www.wrb.scot/resources/national-park-consultation-2023) In December 2023, an online technical workshop was held for groups exploring the nomination process, [recordings of the presentations](https://www.nature.scot/doc/new-national-park-online-technical-workshop-recordings-presentations) are also available to view.Please take some time to read through the FAQ's and Information notes, and then let The Wester Ross Biosphere know what you think by [filling out this very brief survey](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSesPT-2VeXs6SyO6tM8gEEXpdQM3RFtSFEbeKv1r81noTzM8A/viewform?usp=sf_link). Public drop in events were held two weeks ago which we advertised ahead of time through our online channels. Our Chairman was unable to attend due to poor weather conditions. **In related news,** we have also been made aware of another proposed national park which could include our area - <https://www.newnationalpark.org/> and a further proposal in our area also covering Ben Wyvis - <https://www.affric2alladale.org> These updates have already appeared on our online channels. Once a proposal is formally submitted then the statutory designation process will begin, starting with a detailed reporter investigation into the area or areas proposed for designation, including a further period of local consultation. Based on the outcome of that investigation and a positive report, The Scottish Government would expect to bring forward draft legislation in 2025 for consultation, parliamentary scrutiny and approval to designate at least one new National Park by 2026. Our Chairman attended the Marybank, Scatwell & Strathconon Community Council last week where this topic came up. It appears Strathglass Community Council are behind then Glen Affric and Loch Ness proposal and are keen to engage with communities. Public Transport and nature restoration (they feel) should be major factors in any plan for the area. They are aware of the other proposals. Those behind the Ben Wyvis proposal have since confirmed to our Chairman they hope to hold an event in Garve and would welcome Strathglass Community Council to also attend and present their plans at the same time. Our Chairman has also encouraged The Wester Ross Biosphere group to join in which they have agreed to do so. *(Post meeting note – all four Community Council members attended a public exhibition on the Ben Wyvis proposal in Contin on Thursday 1 February 2024 and all felt the event left more questions than answers and the timescales they were working to are far too tight).*

**Garve mains water –** no further news as such but our Chairman did bump into Gavin Steel on Hogmanay who confirmed that he had not forgotten about us! *(Post meeting note – further bursts were reported a few days after our meeting but has now been repaired. Concern around household boilers has also been raised when water pressure drops. We have asked Scottish Water for comment).*

**Garve Public Hall refurbishment** – As first reported on our social media page, **the hall will be holding an open day on Saturday 10 February 2024, 10.00am until 4.00pm, all welcome**. Furniture has arrived and the broadband connection has finally been made. Bookings for the hall are now being taken at garvehall@gmail.com Well done to everyone involved in bringing the vision to fruition. **In related news**, the Vice Chairman noted the **lamppost outside the hall** has now been put in place properly and speed signs have also been put back up.

**January 2024 joint working group meeting** – this meeting was cancelled. **A joint meeting of Ward Five Community Councils** will be considered after current interim elections have concluded. The future of the mobile library has already been suggested as a topic.

**The traffic calming group** – no meeting called but we note the pavement parking ban - <https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/15852/pavement_parking_ban_enforcement_across_highlands_to_start_in_february> *(Post meeting note – it is now hoped a meeting will be held in March 2024).*

The latest **Dingwall Medical Group Liaison Meeting** took place online on Monday 15 January 2024.  Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris attended and reported as follows … *Transport to appointment difficulties came up. A CC rep spoke of the difficulties facing her community reaching Drs appointments, this is because the practice boundaries changed. Seemingly her community are no longer able to use DMG.  Details about 'The Driver Scheme' were shared and is in operation in Fortrose and Rosemarkie and now the Ferintosh area.  It was suggested other CCs might like to put a call out for volunteer drivers in their areas if a community is struggling with appointments.*

*Update from the practice, their new Dr is now in post and they are working with a student Dr who is taking on a project working closely with veterans in the area over the next year.*

*Social prescribing was also discussed briefly.* Our thanks to Sadie for attending and reporting back.  The full minutes will, as usual, be available in the library section of our website once received. This update has already appeared on our online channels. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted that after discussions about transport affecting medical appointments at the last DMG meeting, she attended an online meeting about **Community Transport Networking - a sharing of information about other schemes** that are up and running in some areas and other areas that hope to begin a community transport initiative soon. Today, we have been approached about a **Directory of Support Services**. Further enquiries will be made via Sadie but the Treasurer noted once Morven MacDonald has been replaced, it would be worth getting people in touch with one another. It was suggested the Development Officer be contacted in the meantime. Community Council member Sadie-Michaela Harris noted <https://www.highlandcommunitysupport.org/master-information/support-directory> and updated us further about Ross Memorial Hospital in Dingwall. Spending on the building/future funding is an issue. Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) – it is hoped it could return one day to Dingwall but staffing and funding is an issue. Both the MIU and the Out of Hours Service are now both based at the County Community Hospital in Invergordon.

**Police report** - no formal report received but as reported at previous Community Council meetings, anyone who wishes to raise an issue with the police are asked to **call them directly on 101** at the time of the incident and make a witness statement or at or [www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/contact/](http://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/contact/)  Video, dashcam or photo evidence is also welcomed, indeed encouraged by the police.

We note **another incident at the Gorstan Junction** sometime around Monday 18 December 2023. The crash barrier has been breached again with a vehicle down the embankment. BEAR are aware.

Concern was also raised in December 2023 following reports of an **intruder in a house** in Garve. We are not aware of any other property being targeted but wish the household well.

We also note the efforts of **Dundonnell Mountain Rescue Team** <https://www.dmrt.org.uk/> at the end of 2023 in our area when a lady lost her way on Ben Wyvis and again on Sunday 14 January 2024 on Meall Ruighe an Fhirich - <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/highlands-islands/6313425/head-torch-saved-fallen-walkers-life-as-rescuers-fight-atrocious-whiteout-weather-on-an-cabar/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Press%20and%20Journal%20-%20Daily%20Newsletter%202024-01-02&utm_term=Press%20and%20Journal%20-%20Newsletter>

*Photo of the rescue on Sunday 14 January 2024. Photo credit – Sadie-Michaela Harris …*

**Treasurer’s report** - the Treasurer reported our total bank balance is £2,275.16. The breakdown is as follows … Treasurers account £263.11 -£35.00 data protection fee and -£28.00 ink = £200.11. Reserve £1,613.45, Wreath fund (in memory of Eliza) £461.60. The Treasurer noted Insurance and Secretary fee will be due before the end of the financial year (31 March). There were no questions for the Treasurer.

**Memories from 20 years ago** – as part of our Chairman’s long service to the community, we will be looking back from time to time to remember some issues from the past. Tonight he recalled the February 2004 meeting which was held in snowy conditions in Garve. The issues of concern raised included the number of accidents on the A835 at the Blackwater bends. This eventually led to the speed reduction sign and double white lines we see today. The local newsletter was costing 7.5p per copy to print and these rising costs were concerning everyone involved, how times and prices have changed! The new large “Welcome to Garve” sign at the east end of the village that we still see today was installed, speeding along Stirling Drive and Matheson Road was raised. A speed survey was undertaken and the original 20mph zone that came into operation during the start and end of each school day was implemented (eventually!) as the speed survey did indeed highlight an issue. It was also noted that three gritters had broken down leading to many issues in the area, especially on the A832. A 1988 “E” reg and a 1991 “H” reg were some of the newer gritters available at the time. Eventually gritters that fitted onto the back of regular lorries like we see today were introduced. All minutes covering the last 30 years of Community Council meetings are available in the library section of our website - <http://www.community-council.org.uk/garveanddistrict/library.asp> Following our last look back, our Chairman was talking to former Cllr Ewan MacKinnon who was very touched some of us remember him and for all the work he did for our area during his time in office.

**AOB from Community Council members** – The Treasurer noted a **tree on the telephone lines** down The Avenue which she has reported. The location on “What3Words” is Limitless Noises Online. The Vice Chairman noted **SSEN are currently cutting trees** back from powerlines in the area. *(Post meeting note – BT engineers were in the area a few days after our meeting).*

The Treasurer also noted the **wall beside the A835** between Hazelbrae and Garve Hotel is in a poor state of repair. Recent flooding perhaps has not helped either. She will report via [www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/](http://www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/) but it was noted it is not an easy place to stop to take photographs.

**AOB from members of the public** - no issues raised by those present. Those who cannot attend our meetings can, as always, write to us by post or email with any issues they wish raised at garveanddistrictcc@yahoo.com

**Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations** – we have been made aware of one consultation. The Highland Council has released for **consultation new Biodiversity Planning Guidance** that will support the implementation of cross-cutting biodiversity policies as set out in National Planning Framework Four.  More details at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/15763/council_seeks_views_on_biodiversity_planning_guidance> The consultation closes on Thursday 23 February 2024. Community Council members had no comments.

We also note The Highland Council are still trying to save **over £50m from the upcoming budget**. Public views are welcome at <https://engagehighland.co.uk/budget-engagement>

**Building warrants, planning issues and licensing issues** - **there is one new building warrant** currently being shown on The Highland Council website for our area. 23/01967/DOM1 is the conversion of shop/café to dwelling house in Achnasheen. This related to planning application 23/03269/FUL which we considered at our August 2023 ordinary meeting. **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)

We note following a full meeting of The Highland Council on Thursday 11 January 2024, the council will write to the UK Government regarding the roll out of mobile phone masts under the Shared Rural Network Project <https://srn.org.uk> as the planning department is currently buried under planning applications for each individual mast with no end in sight! **There were 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 March 2024, 7.30pm, webcam – agreed.

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 and closed the meeting at 9.40pm.

Signed ……………………………..

Signed ……………………………..

Date ……………………………….

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