

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15th DECEMBER 2009
AT THE STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK

Members present:

Mr M. Houston (Chairman)	Mrs E. Merther (Secretary)
Mrs K. Grant (Treasurer)	Mr M. Bateman
Mr K. Fraser	Mrs L. MacGregor
Mr A. Sutherland	

Also present:

Police Constable A. Mathieson

Apologies received:

Mr P. Higham	Mr A. MacPherson
Mr A. Nicol	Cllr. H. Carmichael
Cllr. M. Davidson	Cllr. D. Hendry

1. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2009 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr K. Fraser Seconded: Mr M. Bateman

2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Key Worker/Affordable Housing

A letter had been sent to Albyn Housing requesting an update on progress with the housing scheme in Gorthleck. A reply is awaited.

(b) Wade's Bridge at Whitebridge

Mr Bateman reported that arrangements are in hand for the bridge Trust to obtain ownership of all the necessary areas relating to the bridge.

Mr John Townshend is getting the Stratherrick schoolchildren involved in a project about the bridge.

(c) Fraser Monument & Burial Ground at Foyers

The Secretary reported that the Discretionary Budget might be able to help with the cost of a survey of the monument. She will prepare an application.

(d) Right of Way through Knockie Estate

The Chairman will be having a meeting arranged with Stewart Eastaugh to look at the alternative route being considered through the Estate.

(e) Dog Fouling - Children's Play Area, Lower Foyers

There has been no further report as yet.

(f) South Loch Ness Trail

The Secretary noted that Mr Graeme Ambrose had asked for a letter of support from the Community Council for the plans to complete this route. Members agreed that a letter should be sent.

(g) Photocopier

There was some further discussion about obtaining a second hand machine, which it was felt would be adequate for the amount of use.

3. Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence

Housing & Property Service Current Consultations:

Papers available at: www.highland.gov.uk/livinghere/housing
or by phoning: 01463 702888

Ward Forum - Consultation on Gaelic medium education. 9.12.09 (circulated)
Acknowledgement of our letter to David Alston re bridge at Lower Foyers

Other Correspondence & Circulars Received

Inverness Area Community Council Forum:

Minutes of meeting 01.12.09 (circulated)

Information on 'Inverness City Vision' project & Heritage Lottery Funds
(circulated)

Highland & Islands Green Party - Views on Inverness City Vision (circulated)

Scottish Natural Heritage - SSSI Reviews:

Glendoe Lochans

Easter Ness Forest Site

Inverfarigaig

Planning Aid for Scotland - Leaflets

Loch Ness Marathon - Charity funds raised

Scottish Health Council - Newsletter

Letters Sent

Letters regarding bridge at Lower Foyers:

Emergency Planning Officer

Resources Committee

Budget Information Group

Further letter regarding enforcement notices in Errogie

Letter to Albyn Housing for update on Gorthleck development

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported account balances as follows:

Ordinary A/c - £1100.16p. (including £124.03p. held for Mr J. Campbell - Senior Citizens' Fund).

Cheques written at the meeting totalled: £351.16p for the following items:

Secretary's honorarium £250.00

Stamps & stationery £23.16

Hire of Gorthleck Hall £48.00 (two invoices: £18.00 and £30.00)

Donation to South Loch Ness Nursery for
the children's Christmas party £30.00

This will leave a balance in the Ordinary A/c of £749.00.

Mr Campbell had requested that the CC should write to the Knockie Trust on behalf of the Senior Citizens' Fund for their annual donation towards the Christmas dinner, so that the cheque can be handled through the CC account. The Secretary will write.

Project A/c - £6663.58p. This includes £3000 received from the Community Trust to pay for someone to run the Project.

5. Planning Matters

Applications

Erection of 33,000 volt wood pole overhead line - Land at Tyndrum, Gorthleck

Planning permission in principle:

Erection of house Plot 1 Lochgarthside, Gorthleck

and Plot 2 Lochgarthside, "

Erection of house Land North of Rowan Cottage, Whitebridge

and Land to the West of Myrtle Cottage, Whitebridge
Erection of house Site 2, Land at West Drummond View, Whitebridge
and Site 4, " " " " "

Detailed - Matters Specified in Conditions:

Erection of house and garage, Site B, Wester Drummond, Whitebridge

To avoid delays in our response over the Christmas period, site visits had been arranged and carried out by CC members. All members had been notified of the date and time of the visits. There were no objections noted, and the Planning Department has been informed.

6. Fire Brigade Report

Mr Kirkland was not present, but no new matters had been reported.

7. Policing Matters

The CC welcomed Constable Mathieson back to the meeting. He is now able to attend due to a new commitment from the Chief Constable.

He reported that the Police are under pressure due to the financial cutbacks, with redundancies among civilian staff, and the moving of some officers. At least for now this area is not affected.

He reported that workmen are back at Glendoe to carry out repairs, and more are expected in the area with the proposed two new hydro schemes.

8. Roads and Signage

(a) Progress on Outstanding Roads Issues

(i) The Chairman and Cllr. Margaret Davidson had met with Forestry officials to look at problem areas of overhanging branches along the Knockie road and down the Inverfarigaig pass. There has now been considerable cutting back work done on the Knockie road, and work has also been done down the pass. It was noted that some areas in the pass are managed by Fountain Forestry, and a letter will be written drawing their attention to the problem.

(ii) The Chairman suggested that we enquire whether a cheaper alternative might be considered for a bus shelter in Lower Foyers so that something could be provided at an earlier date. Members agreed that the suggested cost of up to £5000 seemed excessive.

(iii) A follow up letter had been sent regarding inconsistencies in enforcement of planning conditions, following the enforcement notices for surfacing of accesses onto the public road. A reply is awaited.

(b) Bridge in Lower Foyers

No decisions have yet been published for the new capital programme. Further letters had been sent to the Resources Committee and the Budget Information Group. An acknowledgment from the Resources Committee Chairman indicates that decisions should be known by February/March next year.

A letter was also sent to the Emergency Planning Officer regarding the risks to the community and property in the event of closure of the bailey bridge. No reply has been received as yet.

(c) Other Roads Items

It was noted that although there has not yet been any severe winter weather, gritting procedures seem to be working more effectively.

9. Water and Sewerage

There was nothing new to report.

10. Community Project - Gorthleck

There was nothing new to report at present.

11. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

Mr Sutherland has written to Planning for an update on several proposed green energy schemes in the area.

An email has been received from Mr Graham Irwin of North British Windpower offering to update the CC on the Corriegarth Windfarm project. Members agreed this would be helpful. The Secretary will contact him with the date of our next meeting.

12. Any Other Competent Business

(a) There was a major incident in the early hours of Sunday morning (13th), when a hydro pipe in the hillside near Craigdarroch Hotel (supplying the turbine in the old BA building) burst. This caused a major flood and landslides down the slope below. Several properties have been affected. Fortunately there were no injuries or loss of life. SSE staff are working hard to get the road to Lower Foyers made safe and re-opened, and in the meantime have opened the access through the Power Station premises. They are also working with the owners of properties affected to carry out any necessary repairs.

(b) Following recent site visits in Whitebridge, Mr John Rule had sent a letter of complaint to the CC about Mr M. Bateman. This letter was circulated to members. It was agreed that the only matter concerning the CC was an accusation that Mr Bateman had failed to declare an interest in planning matters which had come before the Council. Preliminary checks, involving a review of all applications notified to the current CC, revealed none which bordered on Mr Bateman's land and in which he would have had an interest.

Of concern to the CC was an assertion by Mr Rule that members have no rights of access onto land for the purpose of carrying out site visits. It was believed that this assertion may be inaccurate, and advice will be taken from the appropriate Highland Council department regarding the legal position. A reply will then be sent.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 26th January 2010 at the Foyers Primary School.

The meeting was closed at 8.55 p.m.