

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 29th MARCH 2022

HELD BY ZOOM CONFERENCING

1. Report from SSE – Loch Mhor Spill Weir works (Alan Greenwood & Alasdair Couttie from SSE)

See report that was given (still awaiting written report)

CL (noted to the meeting that although he was an employee of SSE, he was attending this meeting as a member of the Community Council) questioned why SSE had applied to planning for non-compliance with Condition 2 (meaning the land would not have to be returned to its original condition as previously agreed by planning); Alasdair said that they were trying to be helpful to the land owners and it wasn't uncommon to apply for a non-compliance should a land owner want something left i.e. a track.

PH asked about the water levels as concerned had been raised by members of the Community that if the water levels were to be raised higher on a regular basis, this would affect bird nesting sites; Alasdair replied that they don't have much control over the water levels but rather react to the needs of the national grid but they employ their own environmentalists to help avoid any such issues. Alan to forward on any information that he has on this.

PH thanked Alan and Alasdair for attending and they both left the meeting.

2. Present

Patrick Haston (PH), Simon Hargreaves (SH) Jim Cameron (JC), Gill Gray (GG), Craig Lightbody (CL) & Cllr David Fraser. Sharon Ferguson (Admin)

Public attending

Peter Faye

Apologies

Cllr Margaret Davidson & Tony Foster

3. Adoption of minutes – 22nd February 2022

Minutes of the CC meeting on 22/02/2022 were adopted as a true record of the meeting

Proposed by GG, seconded by JC

4. Matters arising

CL reported that he was still to look into the need for the proposed Two Span Spur of 33kV Overhead Line on land 155M North Of Glen Mhor Lodge Whitebridge

5. Micro Grant Applications

None received.

SSE contacted the members and asked if they agreed to extend the Stronelairg Community Fund; the fund which takes £50k per year from the Stronelairg Community Benefit and SSE manage it with

a panel of community members for distribution to local Community groups. This was originally for three years until 2022 but due to lack of applications throughout the pandemic, SSE are requesting that the fund is extended until 2023 and max amount is increased from £10k to £25k – all agreed. Discussion had about the micro grants as they also come from this fund; all agreed to increase them from £500 to £1k max if the yearly amount to the CC for distribution is increased from £5k to £10k

6. Reports

Treasurer

- The Main bank A/C stands at £14559.60. This includes the 2022 Community Council Grant (£501.40) from Highland Council and a Visit Inverness grant of £2500. Final Admin timesheets and invoice for the 2021 – 2022 financial year have been received and payment made (£3418.95 for Oct 21 – Mar 22) £2000 of toilets money from Highland Council is due to be transferred soon to the Trust who are taking over the payments, though £248 will come back as the CC paid the planning fees. Peter Leyden has received his last payment of £200 as he has resigned from cleaning the portaloos.
- The Micro-Grant A/C stands at £2004.96
- Virgin Money - The bank has indicated that it will be bringing in charges from 01 June 2022. A fixed monthly fee of £6.50 per account will apply if there are more than 10 transactions per month, plus individual charges for paying in money and BACS items. We rarely have more than 10 transactions per month.

Police Report

No report received

Fire Report

We have no local significant incidents to report but the appliance was mobilised to a domestic flooding and has been out supporting our neighbouring station on a number of occasions.

Recruitment - Our newest recruit has completed his BA initial course and is now is on the run.

We have a further 2 new recruits who have been given conditional offers off employment and should be attending the initial fire service course prior to going operational. This will take the Foyers crew up to 8 firefighters. We are still looking for additional crew members to join us and we welcome any prospective candidate to come along to our drill/training night on a Monday at 7PM. Community Engagement.

The RVS WC Stewart Macpherson will be liaising with local camp sites on caravan and tent safety, also as we are approaching the Easter break will also be in contact with the local forest rangers, about fire safety. With any wild camping there is a strict no camp fire policy, and we would like to remind members of the public to contact 999 should they be concerned about any fire.

There are a number of events taking place over the summer in the Foyers station area and the crew at Foyers are hoping to attend, promoting recruitment, home fire safety visits and general fire and water safety.

Boleskine Community Care

Our Community Liaison and Development Officer started in post 1st February and has quickly got to grips with the demands of the job. She is busy getting out and about and establishing herself as the contact for all the services and activities we offer at the Hub. As the Befrienders Coordinator she will ensure that the service meets the needs of the community in combatting isolation and loneliness in a caring and professional manner. Our ongoing drive to enrol more carers continues. Our Community Liaison and Development Officer held a recruitment event at the Hub this week (Wednesday 23rd March) but we still struggle to attract new carers. The Highland Hospice stand-in coordinator was pleased to report that she had just recruited a bank carer which will be really important for continuity of service.

February/March Activities:-

- Art Group, running fortnightly on a Mon afternoon from 2pm-4pm, the next session 4th Apr
- 'Moovin About' and 'Strength and Balance' held fortnightly on a Tues, next session 12th April
- The Hub Walk is held as usual on the second Tuesday of every month.
- Coffee Morning at the Hub is held every second Wednesday of the month
- The 'Music and Song' group is a popular addition to the activities and next session is 14th April running fortnightly and will alternate with the Cinema Group.
- Cinema Group's next session will be 7th April
- Broth 'n' Blether has started up again, being held on a Friday and the next gathering is on the 22nd April

Professional services: - Additional to "Care at Home" and "Befriending"

- Foot Care will run every 4 weeks. We may have to look for an additional podiatrist to meet the demand we are currently experiencing.
To book an appointment call us at the Hub on 01456 486247
- Holistic Therapies, next session 11th April 10% of all proceeds go to BCC
To book an appointment ring Lindsey on 07787506093 or call us at the Hub on 01456 486247 Offering therapies such as Swedish Massage, Reflexology, Reiki, Crystal Healing & Hopi Ear Candles
- Our Community Transport Scheme – continues to be an important facility in our community and we welcome the continued demand for this service - call 07944 228830 to book.

BCC Survey – shaping future services - Boleskine Community Care recently commissioned a survey to be circulated to all in our – we look forward to receiving feedback on the services we currently offer as well as new activities we hope to support and develop.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

- COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN - All Action groups have now met and the notes will be circulated shortly. The Skills and Volunteering Audit continues until the end of March – please do fill it in if you haven't already.
- TRUST EMPLOYMENT AND TENDERS - Sarah Byrne and Sharon Ferguson have started their employment. They have written a letter introducing themselves and how they can help all community groups in the area. We have also launched a regular Funding Thursday section on our website which this week covered how to get help with your heating bills.

- COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE REVIEW - We've received the first draft of the Review and will progress soon.
- SSE - SSE are aware of draw down request for Errogie and will take us through that process.
- Q&A - We ran a Q&A online with myself, SSE and the two new fundraisers. No one turned up but that gave us an opportunity to discuss possible funding avenues for the community.
- PROJECTS AND ENGAGEMENT –
WILDSIDE -The Steering Group is due to meet this week. Soup 2 Go celebrated their first birthday this month.
- ERROGIE - The Errogie Consultation is ongoing with Wind and Watertight building expected to start in the new four weeks. Initial designs will be shared by the architects shortly. I am pleased to say we have influenced how the architects will develop their community engagement on build projects in the future.
- RIVERSIDE - Riverside Field has been granted 'planning in principle'. There is a number of conditions and we very much hope Community Council members will be part of a liaison steering group to help feed into the Operational Management Plan. A newsletter, which summarises the decision made by Highland Council, will be delivered to residents shortly.
- FOYERS BAY SLIPWAY - All documentation to take forward planning is complete with a few updated drawings to be completed before submitting to planning.
- INVERFARIGAIG -The Forest School and surrounding land has been costed and we are looking to purchase. Forestry are following up with colleagues to try and get final approval to instruct solicitors to progress the disposal.
- BROADBAND - CFWN has agreed a lease at Dunmaglass Estate.
- CRAFTS AND CROFTERS FAIR - This will be taken forward by Fundraiser Sarah Byrne, supporting local crafters and food suppliers, four times a year. The first event is in May.
- MAGAZINE - The magazine is out now and distributed door to door. We have requested if people want to opt out of receiving a paper copy they get in touch.
- INFORMATION - We intend to keep the community, stakeholders, staff and Directors informed of activity on all projects via the website. This will be updated every Thursday with additional information in the Trust Manager 5 Things for a Friday on the website. We are also starting a Funding Thursday section identifying help for people re funding. Regular news items can be found here [News | Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust \(stratherrickcommunity.org.uk\)](#)
- If you have any questions in between Trust meetings on any of these matters please contact Tony at tony-ceo@sfctrust.org.uk
- Check out each section here [Projects | Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust \(stratherrickcommunity.org.uk\)](#)

7. Toilets

The Building warrant for the new toilet block is still being processed and the QS is working on the tender documents with a view to the project going to tender in April. We have been told by the main funder, Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund that we will have to use the Public Contract Scotland system for the procurement. We did try to request an exemption as the QS didn't feel it was a large enough project to warrant going through PCS but this has been refused. We will inform local contractors when it goes onto PCS to ensure they have an opportunity to submit a quote but it is not the easiest system to use and is very time consuming.

The sub-group met again this month and made final decisions on interior fit out based on cost and durability. Everyone was also very happy with the aesthetics.

The QS attended the last sub-group meeting and explained to the group about the volatility of the market at the moment which has been ongoing for some time but is not showing any signs of

settling. This is mainly fuelled by Brexit and they are seeing sharp increases in many building products along with a shortage in supply of materials and labour which is resulting in many tenders coming in a lot more than the estimated prices and with very short acceptance periods. We have been advised to get the tenders in then we will know the final price but we are also having conversations with all the funders so that they are aware of the situation and discussions can be had about further funding if it is required.

Given the protracted timescale, the CC will have to look into obtaining further funding to cover the provision of portals for the summer.

8. Planning

22/01148/SCRE | Corriearth 2 Wind Farm Grid Connection - Construction and operation of a new 70 m 132 kilovolts (kV) overhead transmission line | Land at Carn Na Saobhaidhe Gorthleck Inverness – *no comment. Will need to look at future connection plans for wind farms.*

22/01097/SCOP | Dell Wind Farm Re-Design - Erection and Operation of a Wind Farm comprising of up to 10 Wind Turbines with a maximum blade tip height 200m, access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, anemometer mast and ancillary infrastructure | Land At Dell Estate Whitebridge Inverness – *all felt turbines were too big and need to see the visual impact*

22/00666/S42 | Application for non-compliance with Condition 2 (Removal of limitation for operational period of the development) of 20/03935/FUL | Land 125M SE of Craigview Gorthleck – *object on the basis of risk that if new planning not allowed or development is lengthy, local neighbours and people passing are left with the visual of the hard standing as an eyesore.*

22/00149/FUL | Siting of lodge | Land 110M North of Scotshaven Gorthleck Inverness – *no comment*

The members noted that the proposed weir at Garrogie Estate had been approved at the planning committee meeting. Peter Faye requested to be on the community liaison group when set up.

9. Renewables

- Loch Mhor Dam – works complete, see report at point 1
- Aberarder (RES) – work to start on entrance to enable planning to continue as due to expire
- Cloiche (SSE) – Await outcome of planning. MD said it will be dealt with in June 22
- Glenshero (SIMEC) – **Refused at public enquiry**
- Dell (Coriolis) – Scoping application in to alter the original approved plans from 14 turbines to 12, amend height from 130.5m to 149.9m and to vary the layout – await further details to explain the visual differences this will cause
- Corriearth Extension (BayWar.e) – Await outcome of planning
- Bhlaraidh – Extension plans passed at last planning meeting but three turbines less
- Loch Liath – same as above for location. At pre-planning stage
- Red John – Pump storage at Dores, approved at public inquiry
- Loch Kemp - proposed hydro pump storage at Dell Estate – developers attending April meeting

- Culachy Wind Farm (Fred. Olsen Renewables) – invite to meet. On an estate in Fort Augustus) at pre-scoping stage. Will invite to a future CC meeting.

10. Roads

CL has reported many defects and is finding they are being fixed once reported. JC reported that although out with SFCC's boundary, the white lines on the road at Loch Tarff had not been replaced after surfacing works. PH thanked CL for all the time he has put into recording road defects

11. Correspondence

Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan 2 – email has been received to invite comments from the CC before the 17th June 22. Admin had suggested by email and Cllr Fraser also recommended a joint meeting with the CC and the Trust with planner Tom Stott. PH said he would discuss this with the Trust.

War memorial – an email had been received from Alister Chisholm who has been researching the names from the WW2 fallen and it has come to light that one is not included in the list of the fallen on the Stratherrick memorial and he would like to rectify this and have his name added to the list and requires the CC's permission; all agreed.

Joint meeting with Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust – email received from trust manager, Tony Foster, to suggest the date of 20th April for the next joint meeting. Items for discussion are community resilience and the local plan but members can suggest other agenda items.

12. Upcoming events

Crafters and Crofters Market – 7th May @ the Wildside Centre, Whitebridge

13. AOCB

Brolly group – admin asked for members of the CC to attend a Brolly group meeting on 14th April to discuss the current living costs crisis and Ukraine refugees; CL & JC volunteered.

AGM – all agreed to hold this year's Community Council AGM on 28th June 2022

Etape & Loch Ness marathon – CL reported that he attended the community meeting that the organisers of the both races, Caledonian concepts, had arranged. They had gone to great lengths to look into if any other routes could be used and explained why they couldn't. CL said the meeting had been very good and was very much appreciated.

Website – Peter Faye requested that the CC put more information on their website.

14. Next meeting

Next meeting will be on - Tuesday 26th April 2022 19.30, by Zoom video conferencing