

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 28th MARCH 2023

AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE, WHITEBRIDGE

WITH OPTION OF VIDEO LINK

SSE were unable to attend to discuss Aberarder Windfarm but will attend the Apr meeting

Presentation from Statera Energy – proposed Loch Kemp Pump Storage Scheme

Andrew Troup and David Tomb spoke about pump storage and how it fits into the energy market. PH went through a range of concerns that the members of the CC has for this planned scheme - The cumulative effect on water levels given other pump storage currently on Loch Ness and the Red John scheme that has planning but not constructed yet, The visual impact of the over ground pump house on the shores of Loch Ness which will be similar in size to the one at Foyers and the visual impact of the dams around Loch Kemp, Environmental impact - many species will be effected and confirmed Golden Eagles are noted in the scoping report. Also concerns for aquaculture. Awaiting the full Environmental Impact Assessment Loss of amenities - popular walks/runs/cycling/horse riding in the Whitebridge plantation & water activities on Loch Kemp

New information from the meeting –

Statera are planning a further pump storage scheme between Whitebridge and Fort Augustus

The weir at Loch End would have to be changed to a variable weir to cope with the water levels

The power house has been moved on the plans but it is still in the SAC (Special area of conservation)

The power house will also be a visitor's centre but it will only be accessible from Loch Ness

1. Present

Patrick Haston (PH), Gill Gray (GG), Mark Hindley (MH), Simon Hargreaves (SH) and Craig Lightbody (CL)

Public attending

Cllr David Fraser, Sharon Ferguson (Admin) and Chris Joyce

Apologies

Cllr Chris Ballance

Stephen Steiner has resigned due to work commitments. New treasurer is required; to be discussed at AOB once members have had time to consider this

2. Adoption of minutes – 28th February 2023

Minutes of the CC meeting on 28/02/2023 were adopted as a true record of the meeting

Proposed by SH, seconded by CL

3. Matters arising

The draft local place plan has been published and is open for comment until 17th April. Members noted their disappointment that the Community Trust's success evening and discussion on the place plan had been scheduled for the same night as the Community Council's meeting. MH still looking for information on CC members to put on the website. Letter to the caravan club has been sent.

4. Micro Grant Applications

SFCT applied for £350 to pay for one day wood processing - all agreed previously by email. All noted grateful thanks to Alex & Janet Sutherland for their generous donation of firewood that was dispersed free to the community.

5. Reports

Treasurer

Main: £13,800.23

Micro-Grant: £2,717.82

Fire Report

No report received

Boleskine Community Care

Interviews - These took place on 13th March. BCC was pleased to have Highland Hospice representative Harry Tedstone (HH Community Engagement Officer) on the interview panel. BCC are pleased to announce we have appointed a team of three extremely talented people and are very fortunate that they all live locally. More news about them and their positions with BCC will be announced next month.

Sunflower Care - BCC continues to promote and support recruitment of Care at Home workers. Even if you already have a job, becoming a carer and joining a local care team is a great way of giving to our community. An hour or two on an evening or at the weekend, you choose. You could make such a difference to someone and help them to remain at home. Its simple phone BCC hub on 01456 486274 and leave a message, or drop in for a chat. We will put you in touch with the Sunflower 'care coordinator'. Email contact chair@boleskinecc.com

Baby Clinics - NHS have used the BCC hub twice now to hold baby vaccine clinics and these are to continue for the next 6 months at least. Next clinic Thursday 6th April 9-12am, appointments only.

March Activities - The activities continue to expand at the hub. The space is also used to hold formal community meetings.

South Loch Ness News - This small monthly newsletter, volunteer led, is growing very popular. Any articles from the community are welcomed for publication. The hub activities calendar can be found on the back page. Next issue will be out in April and can be picked up at the hub or at the Foyers Stores.

Community Transport Scheme funded by Highland Council – continues to be an important facility in our community – please contact the coordinator on 07944 228830 to book a journey. We would like to promote the service, however we will need new volunteer drivers, please get in touch if you would like to help.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

No report received

6. Toilets

The toilet build is now complete and the construction cost was under budget. Sub group to discuss when to open them. Some outside work to be still – signs, payment system for emptying point, CCTV and outside tap. Official open day to be arranged too.

7. Planning

No planning applications are showing on Highland Council's planning portal but the CC have been informed by a nearby resident that the owner of the last to West of Boleskine house is submitting a new application for one house after withdrawing the application for six. No comment can be made until the plans are officially lodged on the portal and available to view.

The boathouse application that the CC objected too is still under consideration. The title has now been amended to correctly show that it involves a change of use.

8. Renewables

- Aberarder (SSE) – going ahead with original plans for 12 turbines at 130m. SSE bought from RES. SSE asking to attend a meeting – agreed April 23
- Cloiche (SSE) – Await outcome of planning. Due to be heard in Nov 22 but no news yet
- Glenshero (SIMEC) – **Refused at public enquiry, no right to appeal**
- Dell (Coriolis) – Scoping application in to alter the original approved plans from 14 turbines to 10, amend height from 130.5m to 200m and to vary the layout – Admin has invited developers to a CC meeting. No reply yet. Admin will chase up again.
- Corriegarth Extension (BayWar.e) – Highland council have now removed their objection, Admin to clarify but it seems to still be going to public enquiry
- Bhlairaidh – at Glenmoriston. Extension plans passed 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. No further updates received
- Loch Kemp (Statera) - proposed hydro pump storage at Dell Estate. **Going to full planning in May**
- 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.

9. Roads

Cllr Fraser explained the upcoming change in speed limits in rural villages; most areas that are a 30mph will be moving to a 20mph speed limit but only if they fit a certain criteria. There are only two 30mph areas currently in South Loch Ness, Foyers and Dores and Dores will be the only one moving to 20mph as Foyers does not fit the criteria. Cllr Fraser suggested that all other villages in South Loch Ness could be requested to be changed from a 40mph to a 30mph. All agreed to this and also to request that the speed limit in Foyers be extended down to Lower Foyers as currently that is a 60mph area. Admin to email Cllr Fraser with the CC's support for this and also arrange a survey to find out if this would have community support for it too. Paper surveys also to be made available for those not able to access the internet and be available in the shop, BCC hub etc.

Trinloist, Killen road end and the Aberchalder roads are still very bad and need to be reported again

10. Correspondence

None that haven't been discussed

11. Upcoming events

None known about

12. AOCB

New treasurer; Mark Hindley kindly agreed to take on this role. Proposed by GG, seconded by PH
CL raised an issue about a very old 'Simpsons builders' sign in Lower Foyers that needs to be removed and also the Albyn housing one in Gorthleck; admin to contact the compliance officer
Chris Joyce noted his thanks to the CC for their support to the local community regarding the recent planning application near Boleskine house.

13. Next meeting

Next meeting will be on - Tuesday 25th April 2023 19.30 Venue TBC