

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 25th APRIL 2023

AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE, WHITEBRIDGE

WITH OPTION OF VIDEO LINK

SSE were unable to attend to discuss Aberarder Windfarm again but will provide an email update

1. Present

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

Public attending

Cllr David Fraser, Cllr Chris Balance, Keith Readdy, Kyra Motley, Stewart Clelland, Jerry Reed, Catriona Fraser, Gary Livingstone and Sharon Ferguson (Admin)

Apologies

Tony Foster

2. Co-option of new member

Chris Joyce had kindly come forward as a member of the Community that would like to become a co-opted member of the Community Council. All elected Directors (PH, GG and SH) agreed

3. Adoption of minutes – 28th March 2023

Minutes of the CC meeting on 28/03/2023 were adopted as a true record of the meeting
Proposed by CL, seconded by GG

4. Matters arising

Letter to the caravan club re non-compliance with planning matters – No reply received yet. Admin to chase up and raise with planning that pitches are already being used by staff members

5. Micro Grant Applications

FIRA – Application for £345; £85 for membership of Youth Highland, £60 for yearly insurance and £200 to run a family summer BBQ – all agreed

6. Reports

Treasurer

Main: £15,417.20

Micro-Grant: £2,722.82

Admin has been to the bank and collected the forms to add MH (new treasurer) as a signatory and get online access. The bank have confirmed that admin could be set up as having viewing access

which would help a lot in preparing monthly figures and doing the accounts. Decision required – all agreed.

Grant application to SFCT submitted for the annual running costs of the CC. The trust are looking for group to consider what they might be applying for over the next three years to help with budgeting; members to consider any activities out with what we already apply for.

The Stronelairg panel is ending but monies not spent will be returned and SFCT proposing that they still pay SFCC £5k per year to continue the micro grant scheme. Still to be confirmed with SSE what is happening with monies not spent

Fire Report

No report received

Boleskine Community Care

New Posts - BCC are pleased to announce we have appointed a team of three extremely talented people and are very fortunate that they all live locally. Olivia Grant (Community services coordinator) Jo Mitchell (Community engagement coordinator) both living in Gorthleck and Susan Erlam (Marketing and fundraising coordinator) living in Whitebridge.

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.

Baby Clinics - NHS continue to use the BCC hub to hold fortnightly baby vaccine clinics and these are to continue for the next 6 months at least. Next clinic Thursday 4th May 9-12am, appointment 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. Current issue can be picked up at the hub or at the Foyers Stores. Next issue May

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. BCC is working with SFCT to look at how we can promote and expand on this service to meet the needs of our community

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

No report received – just note at treasurers report re micro grant money and plans for Errogie church shared (see planning)

7. Toilets

The toilets are open and have been very busy. There has been a few snagging issues but the contractors have been out very quickly anytime there has been any issues and are continuing to do so. The signs should be up soon once the final design agreed as well as the CCTV and payment system for the waste disposal point and the donations box. Tony from SFCT has done a draft concordat agreement – sent separately, that is to be discussed and agreed.

Contract of employment being done and meeting being arranged for Peter as he will become an employee of the Community Trust

CL asked if an outside tap was going to be available; admin replied that it was on the list of extra work to be done as wasn't in the original plans

8. Planning

23/01280/PIP | Erection of house | Land 160M NE of Wester Farigaig Foyers (Came in day after last meeting, Admin requested and extension until 28/4) – several members of the public spoke of their concern about this planning application, although now changed to a single house rather than six, many of the original concerns still exist. PH noted that whilst the CC don't normally object to single house applications, all agreed to look at the previous objection and object to this application on the points that still apply to this application

23/01991/PNO | Installation of cattle grid | Land 125M SE of Balchraggan Torness Inverness
Prior notification only

23/01912/FUL | Alterations and extension | 1 Hillhead Inverfarigaig Inverness – no comment

Proposed plans for Errogie church from the Community Trust – PH thanked the Trust for sending the plans and giving the CC the opportunity to comment ahead of the plans being submitted to HC. MH declared an interest as he had been consulted on the plans from the perspective of a performance space but as he will not financially gain from this, it was agreed that a conflict did not exist. Comments from the members were as follows -

1. Everyone at the meeting was concerned at the lack of parking and how this would work with attracting people to the building.
2. There was mixed views on the modern extension at the front; it is very on trend to fuse the old with the new but there was varying opinions as to whether this was exciting or too modern for the setting and given its proximity to a listed building.
3. It was noted that due to the internal layout, it would not work well as a performance space.
4. Members thought there was to be a café in the building but this wasn't clear and it wasn't very clear what the whole building would be as there is a lot going on in the plans.
5. All felt that the project would benefit from pre-planning advice and would encourage that. Further things discussed that were not points of planning were that the build was costing a lot of money, although exact figures weren't known and it would require a strong business plan to show how it was going to run. It was also suggested that it could have been converted into flats for young people in the area that cannot afford to live in the area. Admin to send letter to SFCT

9. 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. **Going to planning this Thursday**
- 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
- Bhlaraidh – 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 – MH informed the CC that since the last meeting when Statera energy said that along with Loch Kemp, they are planning a further pump storage scheme between Whitebridge and Fort Augustus, Mark has looked into the further and it is planned for Loch Nan An. Discussion that the consented Red John and the Loch Lochy pump storage schemes and the producing Glendoe Hydro scheme all have underground powerhouses, whereas Loch Kemp is above ground which would set a precedent for Loch Ness. The Foyers Power station is above ground but was built in the 60's. Admin informed the CC that Brian Shaw, the River Director of the Ness District Salmon Fishery Board had been in touch as they have many concerns about the plans and the cumulative effects of water levels on Loch Ness and would like to attend a meeting; all agreed to invite Brian to the next meeting and invite all the other CC's from around the Loch to save Brain having to go to all the meetings.**
- 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

Survey for village speed limits still to be done, admin had been waiting on wording to explain why Foyers is remaining at 30mph. This was received today
Trinloist road still not been done and is very bad. To be reported again. Cllr Fraser will share HC's document on road improvements.

11. Correspondence

Nick Wright has requested to attend the next meeting to present the final Place Plan – all agreed
Email from the Education Office - advance notice of the proposal being put to the Education Committee to establish a Gàidhlig Medium catchment area for Inverness Royal Academy. The new catchment will overlay the current English Medium (EM) catchments of Inverness Royal Academy. The proposal includes to use existing school transport where possible. Discussion had about how this will mean that local families will have access to Gàidhlig Medium education but may be detrimental to the local primary school rolls. Query over whether transport would be supervised
Statera Energy emailed PH asking if there was any practical things they could do to help the community during the construction of Loch Kemp pump storage scheme should it go ahead

12. Upcoming events

Official opening of the Foyers Public Toilets – date TBC

13. AOCB

As a member of the Community, CL asked if the Liaison group for the Foyers field project could now be on the CC's monthly agenda as there is two members of the CC on the group – all agreed. CL isn't happy with the setup of the group as he feels it was advertised biased towards people who want the project to go ahead rather than to those that will be most affected by it.

14. Next meeting

Next meeting will be on - Tuesday 25th April 2023 19.30 Venue – The Wildside Centre