

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 26th SEPTEMBER 2023
AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE, WHITEBRIDGE
WITH OPTION OF VIDEO LINK

1. Present

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

Public attending

Cllr David Fraser, Cllr Chris Balance, Catriona Fraser, Zoe Iliffe, Peter Faye and Sharon Ferguson
(Admin)

Apologies

Simon Hargreaves

2. Adoption of minutes – 29th Aug 2023

Minutes of the CC meeting on 29/08/2023 were adopted as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed by MH, seconded by CL

3. Matters arising

Cllr Ballance had got a reply from planning re the voice of the CC on a planning application; if the CC are not a consultee on an application or have not requested to be so within 7 days of the planning being published, then there objection or otherwise, is considered the same way any third party comment/objection/support would be.

4. Micro Grant Applications

Children's Christmas parties, applicant Kirsty Balfour £500 – all agreed

Indoor carpet bowls, applicant Janet Hobson £242.45 – all agreed

5. Reports

Treasurer

Main account - £15,705.50

Admin to contact the bank to see if MH has been put on as a signatory and get forms to add and remove signatories for after election. PH now has a direct contact for the bank.

Project/Micro grant account - £1,217.97

This balance has increased as the payments from the QR code set up for the toilet donations have been going here in error. Admin to amend the bank details to the main account. Ideally when new CC in place, a 3rd bank account can be set up just for the running of the toilets.

Fire Report

No report received

Boleskine Community Care

BCC wishes to convey our deepest condolences on the recent death of Davy Shand. A well-known community member who attended, with his wife Val, most of the hub social activities, bringing joy and laughter to all. Our thoughts are with the family at this sad time.

Sunflower Care - BCC continues to promote and support recruitment of 'Care at Home' workers in partnership with the Highland Hospice. Sunflower care has recently recruited 2 new carers referred by BCC and an enquiry to BCC from someone moving to the area shortly, who is currently a carer and wishes to join the Sunflower Team. 2300 hours of care have been delivered within the Stratherrick and Foyers area over the last year.

Befriending/helping hands - BCC also is in partnership with the Highland Hospice in delivering the befriending service which has strong links with supporting 'Sunflower Care'. Our new Community Services Coordinator, Olivia, will work with the proposed Community Engagement coordinator (awaiting funding) and take on the Befriending Coordinators role, forming a strong link with both services.

Vaccine clinics - Held today Monday 25th Sep at the hub 9-12pm with 35 appointments. The next Covid/Flu clinics are 1st and 15th December.

Oct Calendar - The social activities continue to expand at the hub. Two new services have been introduced with more in the pipeline as per suggestions from the BCC survey. The hub 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 printed issues can be picked up at the hub or at the Foyers Stores. Next online issue in October will be emailed out to the friends of BCC with printed copies available as above.

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. 2 new volunteer drivers have come forward. Once the paperwork is completed it will bring our driver numbers up to 11. Over 250 volunteer hours donated this year Jan to Aug.

Stage 2 grant application to SFCT - This will be heard by the SFCT board at their meeting in October. BCC Trustees continue to liaise with HTSI to resolve the differences between BCC/SFCT. Recent informal meeting with chairs of SFCT/BCC is a step forward. BCC has had no formal signed agreement re the Hub lease as yet, however a number of notifications have been emailed to inform us that it is taking longer than expected.

BCC Trustees - following the AGM in Aug representing Gorthleck, Whitebridge, Foyers and Inverfarigaig: Kit Cameron-chair, Neil Robertson-treasurer, Katherine Grant-secretary, Isobel Allan, Billy Mackenzie, Gordon Batchen and newly co-opted Susan Erlam.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

The Trust and Community Council attended the Community Catch Up event which was well attended at the weekend. The exhibition, a summary of the work currently being undertaken by several groups across the area, will be available to see at Wildside and Errogie over the next few weeks. Our thanks to everyone who attended.

We announced at the weekend that Highland Council have verified the Community Place Plan, submitted by the Community Council. This is a great achievement and is the first submission by a community to the Council. Congratulations to all. This will ensure support from Council departments and potential funding opportunities for the objectives identified by the community in the Community Action Plan and Place Plan.

The SSE Community Investment Review for last year has been published and is on the Trust website to read.

Events in October coming up include a Community Consultation on the playpark at the Wildside Centre and a tie in with the archaeology festival in Errogie.

Riverside field

The minutes of the last meeting have been agreed and should be published shortly. The next meeting is scheduled for 3rd October. CL spoke as member of the local residents group and said that Cllr Balance had found out that the Community Trust could apply to vary the conditions of the planning agreement and request that they do not put in four parking spaces in the land that is currently a children's playpark. This needs further discussion.

6. Toilets

A quiet month for the toilets. Final works will be happening soon including CCTV, outside tap and payment system for the waste disposal point to be fitted.

7. Planning

23/04565/PNO | Application under Regulation 62 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 for ground investigation works | Land 1300M SW of Dell Lodge Whitebridge – *this is works required to enable a full Environmental Impact Assessment to be completed ahead of full planning for Loch Kemp pump storage development on Dell Estate. As this is a Prior Notification, not a planning application, there is no scope for the CC or the public to comment but MH asked that we find out from planning what effect the SAC will have on this request*

8. Renewables

- Aberarder (SSE) – going ahead with original plans for 12 turbines at 130m. SSE bought from RES – SSE have been in touch to arrange a meeting to discuss enabling works and the liaison group. Community Benefit discussions to take place too. Catriona Fraser suggested that we request electronic signs for when turbines are being delivered as they have been useful in the past.
- Cloiche (SSE) – Await outcome of planning.
- 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 there 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. **Now in for planning**
- Red John – Pump storage at Dores, approved at public inquiry. No further updates received
- Loch Kemp (Statera) - proposed hydro pump storage at Dell Estate. **Still awaiting planning app**
- 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

The planned closure at Gorthleck Primary School to do the resurfacing following the road works there will take place from Mon 16th – Fri 20th Oct. This has been planned for the school holidays to minimize disruption.

CL asked about the house site at The Glebe being used for the storage of spoil from the works; Catriona Fraser said that the land owner had given permission. Query on the process of this and admin to get confirmation from Colin Ross as HC as to whether permission is needed for this.

10. Correspondence

Letter received from Peter Faye expressing concern that planning for some housing in the area is not being supported. The new National Planning Framework that has come into force has a policy to protect and expand forests, woodland and trees and despite the wording being to 'protect any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition; adverse impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value', this appears to be being interpreted by planning officers as the loss of any trees for building of houses is not permitted, even sub-standard woodland. This prompted discussion on whether this would affect the land just sold to SFCT from HC for housing at the Wildside Centre. Admin to write to the planning department to ask for clarification on this policy and also to ask if the Local Place Plan is being considered for housing applications in the area.

Invite received to Ward 12 forum on 5th December

Email regarding progress of new bus shelter at Aberchalder road end; admin contacted Colin Ross who had been dealing with it before but it was a condition of planning for the micro distillery there and has that hasn't been constructed, they have not had to do the road improvements and the bus shelter. Was raised that the entrance works have begun; admin to go back to Colin for clarification.

11. Upcoming events

Loch Ness Marathon – Sun 1st Oct

Playpark consultation - Thursday 5th October 9:30am-11:30am - The Wildside Centre and Friday 6th October from 1:30pm-4:30pm - The Wildside Centre

12. AOCB

PH & GG let the Community Council know that they will not be standing again at the CC elections. Both were thanked for their time as members of the CC and Patrick for being the chair. Agreed to feedback to HC that the online only nominations and lack of paperwork being sent to the community has made attracting nominees a lot harder.

Catriona Fraser raised that there are some estates with defibrillators and they should be added to a map of them all. SFCT plan to have one at every building and run more training courses.

Pater Faye thanked all of the members of the Community Council for all their work and effort.

Catriona Fraser echoed that sentiment.

13. Next meeting

Next meeting - to be decided after Community Council elections