

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 27TH FEBRUARY 2024

AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE, WHITEBRIDGE

WITH OPTION OF VIDEO LINK

1. Present

Mark Hindley (MH) - chair, Craig Lightbody (CL), Janet Hobson (JH), Gary MacGowan (GM), Helen Grainger (HG) and Olivia Grant (OG)

Public attending

Cllr David Fraser, Cllr Chris Ballance, Neil Kirkland, Catriona Fraser, Kyra Motley and Sharon Ferguson (Admin)

Apologies

Mike Slater (MS) and Chris Joyce (CJ)

SSEN were unable to attend to discuss the Loch Kemp Pumped Hydro Scheme Connection pre-planning liaison but will attend a future meeting. Statkraft stepped in and took their spot on the agenda at short notice

2. BayWa r.e. – Corriearth 2 Windfarm; update and plans for community liaison

Jilly Adams (Lead Renewables Developer) and Alda Forbes (Community Engagement Manager) attended the meeting person to give an update on the project and discuss the community liaison group that will be set up.

Planning permission for this project was consented in Dec 23. Start date of construction is likely to be within Apr 25 and Apr 26, there are several factors that will determine this. The construction period is 12 – 18 months.

Discussion had about the community liaison group that will be set up to keep the community updated throughout construction. Alda had shared a draft agreement; SFCC to reply with thoughts and amendments. Discussion also had about the amount on consented schemes in the area and whether a joint liaison group could be set up. This would depend on all the developers agreeing. There has been no Community Benefit negotiations taken place yet but the developers said they will pay the £5k per MW and asked the Community Council their thoughts on how that would be distributed. The Community Trust was set up by the Community Council to receive such funds but negotiations could take place to look at how this would work and could any investment models be considered.

3. Statkraft – Update from new owners of Red John and details of community events

Peter Kane of Kane Partnership, attended the meeting. There is to be two community events held on 12th March, 2 – 5pm at Farr hall and 7.30 – 9pm at Dores hall. There will also be an event in Inverness that the CC will be invited to. These event will be to introduce the Statkraft to the

community, discuss how the project will be constructed and allow people to ask questions. The project website will be live from 28/2/24 - www.redjohnpsh.co.uk

The project is going to be re-named and this will be announced at the events. The project construction period is likely to be from 2025 to 2029, with circa 450 workers. The intention is to bus them in daily from Inverness. Accommodation has not yet been arranged. The working hours are to be Mon – Fri, 7am – 7pm but Cllr Fraser pointed out that there is a noise restriction as part of planning out with 8am – 6pm. Discussion had about the amount of HGV's and busses this will mean on the roads and there was many questions unanswered about this but project managers will be at the exhibitions to answer more on this. There is the possibility of tracking vehicles and cameras in the Lorries. HGV levels are based on 90% of material needed being found onsite. Discussion had again about the potential of a joint liaison group with any other active schemes.

4. Adoption of minutes – 30th January 2024

Minutes of the CC meeting on 30/01/2024 were adopted as a true record of the meeting.
Proposed by JH seconded by HG

5. Matters arising

Aviation light on turbine at Corriegarth wind farm – admin has contacted the owners, Greencoat but no reply; raise with compliance officer at HC

Firework control zone – Admin clarified that the new firework legislation being brought in by the Scottish Government is a Firework control zones, not firework free areas as had previously been mentioned. Admin had contacted HC to get information on how to make a community request to your local council as per the SG's documents; the officer in charge of this, Gregor MacCormick, Senior Environmental Health Officer, was not aware that a process has been set up as yet to consider such requests from Community groups but was due to attend a meeting with other council officials to discuss the legislation and potential implementation. His initial understanding of the legislation is that it was more intended to curb anti-social behaviour type issues with fireworks in an area (i.e where been history of complaints/issues arising from their use) as opposed to simply stopping their use altogether. More information to follow after the meeting has taken place.

Website – MH requested those members that had still not send him a short paragraph on themselves for the website to please do so.

6. Micro Grant Applications

FIRA (local youth group) – requesting £294 to part subsidise a ski trip to the Cairngorms where all attendees would get 4 hours of instruction, ski hire and lift pass. All agreed.

7. Reports

Treasurer

Main account - £15,316.13

Project/Micro grant account - £5,536.20

Not had up to date bank statement yet and still awaiting MH getting internet access

Boleskine Community Care

Sunflower Care at Home - A copy of BCC's February Statistics: 8 service users (-2), 62 hours of care per week (-13), Travel time - 23 hours per week, Total hours per week - 85 hours, Staff – 1x co-ordinator (20) 6 staff members (-3). Focus is on recruiting for evenings and weekends to build up resilience needed.

Befriending - We currently have 13 referrals to the service and only 1 volunteer. We really need volunteers for this service as there is clearly an unmet need within the community.

Past Events - We had a Temple Spa Pamper evening at the Hub, this raised £72.60 for BCC.

Upcoming Events - We are running an Easter 'Funday' on Sunday the 31st March in collaboration with Morag's Crafty Bothy. This will consist of Easter games and an Easter egg hunt! Nailed it by Mollie is now offering Eyebrow waxing and tinting alongside her nails every Thursday evening at the Hub. We are in the process of organising a Summer Festival to celebrate BCC's 10th anniversary

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

Report from Craig Lightbody, SFCT liaison Director –

TRUST MANAGERS REPORT - Tony noted the following items to be addressed by the Board:

Wildside Playpark: The project has come in under budget and is ready to move forward. The Board agreed to the project proceeding.

Community Housing Trust agreements: These have been passed onto the Trust's solicitor. Tony went on to notify the Board that there are amendments to the original quote from SSE resulting in Communities Housing Trust going back to the Scottish Government to request additional funds of £70,000. A meeting with CHT on Monday 12 February took place to discuss this. There is no report from this meeting as yet. Chris asked about the current plans [for the new houses at Dodds Park, Inverfarigaig], which do not include the suggested sliding doors for the dining room and a revision of the roof colour to match the other houses in the area. Tony responded by saying the roof colour is to be the same as the other houses and he will seek clarification on the sliding doors and come back with an answer. Chris also mentioned the proposed use of a trellis, or similar, to break up the visual mass on the East elevation. Finally, Chris suggested that given the recent power cut in Inverfarigaig, would it be an option to install wood burning stoves in the properties, given that the likely source of heating will be from air source heating. The Board agreed that this was a good idea and Tony agreed to ask the developers if this was a possibility at this stage of the project.

Sharon Ferguson (SFCT Fundraising Officer) had a meeting with the local authority which brought to light the opportunity to apply for a grant for 75% of the required £48,000 to purchase a vehicle. The deadline for this is end of March 2024. The Board discussed the options of continuing with the current arrangement, which is the lease of a vehicle for three years, or to apply for the grant to purchase a vehicle. The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of both options and agreed to allow the Transport Group to look at the best option, in consultation with the community, and refer back to the Board.

ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Tony noted the following two actions from the previous Minutes: Discuss the current Trust Action List at the next Business meeting. Tony, Catriona and Maureen agreed they would go through the list and notify the Board of any items that have been actioned between Board meetings.

Riverside Playpark: Tony has instructed the Trust's solicitor to begin proceeding on this, [the purchase of the playpark and the green area surrounding it], including maintenance of the park.

FINANCE UPDATE

Clarendon Investments: [Investment managers of the community funds which are invested for future funding should community benefit funding ceased]: Fiona Mustarde, Finance Officer,

circulated the Clarendon Investment Advice document to the Board to consider. The Board discussed this and agreed to go with the recommendations put forward by Clarendon.

DIRECTORS TRAINING (FUNDING)

Tony welcomed Tom Black, SSE Community Investment Manager for North of Scotland, as part of Directors training for a question-and-answer session in relation to funding. Questions and answers are on the Trust website.

DIRECTORS TRAINING (Roles and Responsibilities)

Tony went through updated training for all new and existing Directors. He ran through the following PowerPoint presentations: Director's Training, Role of the Director and Governance & Management of Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust LTD

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Student Grant applications and awards granted: Lisa Stuart: £400 for course costs. Angus Grant MacGruer: £500 for course costs. The Board APPROVED both grants.

AOCB

Grants: Catriona noted that student grants require a review which takes into consideration courses run over varying timescales rather than a traditional academic year as per the current criteria. She suggested Maureen, Susan, Maire and Kirsteen undertake this review. The Board agreed.

Community Liaison Officer

Steven Watson, Community Liaison Officer for the Trust, is stepping down from his role at the end of March 2024. The Board commented on Steven's valued contribution to the Trust and the community during his time in the role and wished him well for his retirement.

Thain Road update: The Board discussed the ongoing issue of items belonging to Thain Road residents currently stored on the adjacent Trust land. Catriona said that a letter had been sent to the residents in early February 2024 advising them items must be removed. The board agreed that a further letter will be issued advising residents that the Trust will arrange to remove the items by the end of February 2024 if they have not done so themselves. The Trust has an ongoing issue with a member of our community who is bombarding them with correspondence regarding the land at Thane Road, recently purchased by the Trust. It turns out that the complainant is not in fact a resident of Thane Road but is acting on behalf of a relative who lives there. The Trust has been advised by their solicitor to correspond only with the resident or their solicitor from now on.

I suggested that, since the community member is a third party with regard to the ongoing dispute with his relative, the trust direct him to take his complaint to the community council who will deal with his complaint via their liaison officer. I haven't had a response to this suggestion. What do the CC think? Discussion had and if solicitors now involved it may not be suitable in this instance but MH stressed that anyone with any issue locally is welcome to contact the CC.

Staffing/Work planning: Catriona has instructed Tony to devise a work plan outlining how he can be present in person more regularly. In conjunction with this, the Board will set out expectations on what they would like him to do when he is here. All other staff members will have an appraisal during February and March 2024.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7pm, Wednesday 3 April 2024, Wildside Centre/MS Teams

Riverside field – Community liaison group

CJ was unable to attend tonight's meeting so no update from him as the CC's representative at this community liaison group but the minutes of the meeting should be on the Community Trust's website shortly. CL requested to speak as a member of the community; he reported that the River Foyers residents group had discussed seeking funding for legal representation but are reluctant to do so but there are many aspects of this plan that are not what they would like in the field. The use of the green space to the left of the entrance, as car parking, which is not what the Community

Trust wanted to do but a planning condition, is causing a lot of angst with residents. It is not their wish to see nothing happen in the field but not something that requires this amount of parking and the associated traffic. Cllr Ballance reported that he had spoken with planning regarding this condition and it had to remain.

8. Toilets

Compass are fixing the outside tap and a door that has been sticking. Sub-committee still to meet to look at who is responsible for the cost of repairing the pipe to the waste point flush.

As per finance report, looking to set up a DD with MacGregors Industrial Supplies to cut down on the amount of BACS requests but invoices can be sent monthly to signatories.

Still awaiting a meeting to discuss the Car park issues. David/Chris – can you help with this please? Cllr Fraser will take this up.

9. Planning

24/00310/FUL | Erection of house and garage | Land 120M North of Balgorton Torness Inverness IV2 6TZ – *No comment*

24/00470/FUL | Erection of house | House of Many Blossoms Gorthleck Inverness IV2 6UJ – there is reference to 3m high wall in an area of the garden; comment that this is unusually high

10. Renewables

- Aberarder (SSE) – going ahead with original plans for 12 turbines at 130m. SSE bought from RES – **Await info on liaison group. Admin to contact for update**
- Cloiche (SSE) – **Consented Dec 23**
- 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) – **Permission granted Dec 23. See point 2 of these minutes**
- Bhlaraidh – at Glenmoriston. Extension plans passed but three turbines less
- Loch Liath – same as above for location. **Planning submitted**
- Red John – Pump storage at Dores, approved at public inquiry. **Purchased by Statkraft Dec 23. See point 3 of these minutes**
- Loch Kemp (Statera) - proposed hydro pump storage at Dell Estate. **Planning submitted Dec 23. SFCC submitting an objection based on representation received from the community. The Energy Consents Unit has agreed an extension for a reply to 15th March 2024. MH still working on trying to get sight of the confidential documents that have been withheld.**
- 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.

11. Roads

Admin to report the many potholes and raise that the Trinloist to Glenlia road has never been fixed since the timber extraction. Admin also to contact Colin Ross at HC re the ramps at the Glebe works as final surfacing works don't take place until the school Easter holidays.

12. Correspondence

Invite from Kate Forbes MSP for representation from the CC at a specific transport issues meeting at Farr on 4th April. The meeting will not be a forum to discuss the merits of any of the individual developments but purely focused on the projected traffic volumes and a joined-up and conscientious approach to communities, particularly as traffic is likely to be passing homes for a number of years. Invitees are Highland Council as the relevant roads authority, Police Scotland, the adjoining community councils and all developers with upcoming projects. MH and GM will attend and report back.

Email received from local resident, Julie Harvey; to pass on her sincere thanks to all the members of the community council for their time, energy, expertise and support in providing a response as a community council to the Proposed Loch Kemp Pump Storage Hydro planning application.

13. Upcoming events

Loch Ness Rural Communities; cooking demo Thurs 29th Feb, 6pm @ Wildside

Statkraft Drop-in Sessions - Tuesday, 12 March 2024, 2pm–5pm Farr Community Hall,
7.30pm–9pm Dores Village Hall

Etape; cycle event – 28th April

Ultra X; running event - 4th-5th May

14. AOCB

Neil Kirkland asked if there was a possibility of getting a de-fib at the clay target club; admin to look at what funds the CC hold for this and apply for funding if required. OG raised that it would be good to have a de-fib at the Hub too. Both sites will be looked into for getting one installed.

Neil also asked if there is money for more grit bins; there isn't at the moment and the winter resilience fund is closed but this can be looked into before next winter.

Wider conversation had regarding community resilience and the need for a plan. The Stratherrick hall has a generator but a plan for using this space and any other space or idea needs to be discussed. HG from the CC and Catriona Fraser from the community trust are interested in taking this forward. Admin to email other groups and arrange a meeting to discuss.

15. Next meeting

Next meeting – 26th March 2024