

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 28TH MAY 2024

AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE, WHITEBRIDGE

NO VIDEO LINK AVAILABLE

1. Present

Mark Hindley (MH) – chair, Olivia Grant (OG), Chris Joyce (CJ) and Mike Slater (MS).

Public attending

Ken Sinclair.

Apologies

Cllr Chris Ballance, Sharon Ferguson (Admin), Craig Lightbody (CL), Janet Hobson (JH) and Helen Grainger (HG).

2. Adoption of minutes – 30th April 2024

Minutes of the CC meeting on 30/04/2024 were adopted as a true record of the meeting, Proposed by CJ, seconded by MS.

3. Matter arising not on the agenda

Joint SFCT & SFCC meeting 15th May 2024 – all present believed that the combined meeting was a very worthwhile exercise. MH stressed, that if repeated in the future the format should not be so ‘choreographed.’ A more relaxed and open floor discussion approach should be fostered, which should include public in attendance. OG liked that format but felt it was ‘rather rushed’ with little opportunity for discussion from the floor. All present reaffirmed the need for the SFCT to be more open, transparent and accountable to the whole Stratherrick & Foyers communities that they represent.

Drawdown of funds from SSE (in support of community housing at Inverfarigaig) – MH reported that both he and Sharon have now completed and sent the SFCT requested letter to both Catriona Fraser (Chair SFCT) and Tony Foster (Trust Manager SFCT) in support of their drawdown request to SSE. MH stated that SSE (via email) have now confirmed the drawdown application has now been approved. MH noted that the SFCC letter also contained a request for SFCT to be more open and provide further detail to the whole community with regards the drawdown and building project moving forward.

4. Micro Grant Applications

None received.

5. Reports

Treasurer

Main account - £11,010.27

Micro grant account - £5,536.20

MH stated the annual accounts have been completed and circulated and all paperwork has been sent for an independent check and signature ahead of the CC’s AGM (June SFCC meeting), when the

accounts will be approved. The SFCC bank account issue is still ongoing with little headway being made with current provider, Virgin Money. Both Sharon and Janet are in contact with Bank of Scotland as an alternative provider.

Boleskine Community Care

Care At Home -The Sunflower Care at Home service is under extreme pressure due to staff shortages. We have tried to target students that will be on holiday from university by advertising it as regular holiday work. This has proved to be successful as we have had 1 new start and a 2nd application from this.

BCC will also be contributing towards the carers wage. Once this has been decided with the HH we will begin to advertise the new wage which we hope will make the role more attractive.

Befriending - Both Olivia and Jo have been putting a lot of work into the Befriending Service. We now have 3 active befriending relationships within the community! Jo and Olivia have also been using a Wednesday to get out into the community to visit those who have been referred to the service. We are always looking for Befriending volunteers.

Picnic & Party 29th June - We are getting really excited about our Picnic & Party to celebrate the 10th anniversary of BCC. We have a giant bouncy slide, a Pimms, Prosecco & Pints Tent, The Coffee Pod and a complimentary buffet all booked for the day.

We really hope that the community support us with this event as it is something we would love to do annually.

Hub Services - Services at the Hub have been becoming very popular. We are working closely with our service providers to try and up their capacity to take additional appointments at the Hub. We currently have a waitlist for Footcare appointments, and our hairdresser has been fully booked every time she has been here. We are always looking to add new services to the diary to continue to meet the needs of the community.

Training - On Thursday the 23rd of May, Olivia and Jo attended Last Aid Training at the Highland Hospice. Last Aid training refers to end-of-life care and supporting individuals neat the end of their life. The focus was on providing physical, emotional and social support to individuals and their families during this sensitive time. They both found this training extremely beneficial and came away feeling much more confident about discussing these difficult subjects with people.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

Craig Lightbody was unable to attend in person or via video link. However, as there has not been an SFCT meeting since the last SFCC meeting there is nothing to report.

Riverside Field – Community Liaison Group

As above.

6. Foyers Public Toilets

Report from Sharon Ferguson - Still awaiting final snagging works by the contractor and the signs for the toilets will be up soon too. Car park issues have not been dealt with by the HC officers that came out in March. I am chasing this up. We have now been told that it will be September before the HC meeting that will decide what is happening with the money from the car parking meters. The recommendation of officers is that the local share will be added to local members' ward discretionary funds, and be backdated to include everything raised so far, after costs.

It would appear that we would then have to apply to funds to help cover the running costs of the toilets.

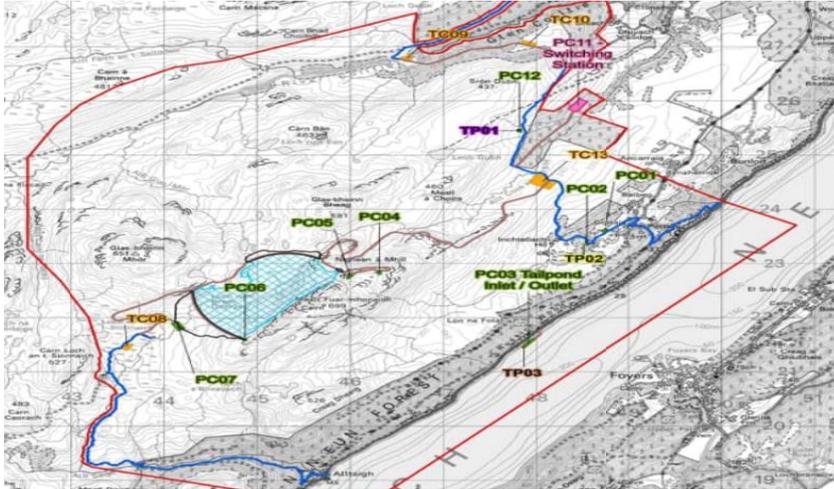
7. Planning applications lodged since last SFCC meeting

24/01995/PNO Erection of agricultural building Easter Aberchalder House Gorthleck Inverness IV2 6UJ	Decided – Prior approval is required
24/01961/PNO Formation of access track Land 530M NE Of 1 Allt Na Goibhre Errogie Inverness	PNO for new forest road
24/00879/FUL Sub-division of house to form 2No. houses and one annex Keeper's Cottage Gorthleck Inverness IV2 6UL	Corriegarth estate
Out with area but major development – 24/01092/FUL - Construction of mountain bike trail centre, hub building, cafe, retail, bike hire/store building; 40 motorhome pitches, 8 shepherd's huts; play areas; maintenance storage building, parking	Link – https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SAQPOJIHMZU00

8. Renewables

Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro

Report from SF - New scoping application in for pump storage scheme directly opposite Foyers – see map below. Closing date for comment on the scoping is 6th June. Admin has written to developers to express the disappointment that despite the website stating that 'We are committed to seeking the community's views on how best to integrate the project into the environment and the community', the only community consultation that was held was in Drumnadrochit during working hours.



There was discussion about the relative advantages and disadvantages of the different PSH schemes.

Aberarder (Dunmaglass)

SSE have been in touch asking to arrange a meeting with community representatives to discuss the proposed community benefit related to Aberarder Wind Farm. We are also seeking clarification as to how the community wishes to manage the funds to ensure maximum benefit and impact to the community. The host community is Strathnairn but they recognise that during construction the project will have some impact on Stratherrick and Foyers. The next community liaison meeting is scheduled for 18th June.

Loch Kemp planning – MH stated that he has not heard back from the ECU regarding the missing information from the planning application. As such, it is questionable if the ECU can make a transparent and open decision regarding the application. Therefore, the SFCC should possibly look at raising our concerns with the Scottish Information Commissioner and relevant MSP's regarding this issue.

Dell Windfarm – objections to S42 & S36 were submitted. Both Cllr David Fraser and Colin Ross (HC Roads) will review all new information on Cllr Fraser's return from holiday.

CJ reiterated the need to arrange a combined contractor/HC/CC's/interested parties meeting at the earliest opportunity in order to discuss all current planned/proposed projects. CJ is in communication with Cllr Chris Balance regards this issue.

9. Roads

Scaniport road will be closed from 0900 – 1700 on 10 June 2024 for minor road works.

10. Correspondences

MH has been contacted by Tony Foster about a meeting with the James Hutton Institute regarding researching land ownership/usage in SFCC area. This maybe something that members of the SFCC or wider community may like to consider supporting.

Email received (15 May 2024) from Highland Council (HC) regarding Stagecoach taking over the Foyers bus run. The new service started on the 20 May 2024 however, there is no timetable on

Stagecoach website. Sharon has raised this issue with HC, who have emailed Stagecoach Commercial Director for the area about the missing timetable.

OG raised a serious issue regarding two dogs attacking people and a delivery driver in Lower Foyers. It was agreed that this should be taken as a serious Police matter and as such, OG will forward further details direct to MH for him to send directly to Fort Augustus Police station.

11. Up and coming events

BCC 10th anniversary picnic & party – 29th June.

Highland gathering – 20th July.

12. AOCB

MH raised the point regarding the recent lengthy SFCC meetings (over 3 hours long) and that some members of the SFCC thought they were too long. It was discussed that maybe the use of specialist consultants/lawyers may be of significant benefit (and reduce meeting lengths) when it came to planning applications and negotiating community benefits from renewable projects. It was also discussed if holding more frequent meeting would be beneficial. MS stated a preference for the monthly meetings to stay as is despite the length, due to the need to deal with such important and significant issues affecting the community.

There maybe a requirement to hold an SFCC meeting in July following any outcomes from the current planning submissions to HC regarding 'Green' schemes.

There is some movement regards the old bridge over the river Foyers and trying to have it reinstated as a cycle/walking road only. The local community are trying to get a group of volunteers together in order to forward this action. Bob Main is the contact for this.

13. Next meeting

AGM followed by normal CC meeting – Tuesday 25th June 2024