

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 25th JUNE 2024

AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE, WHITEBRIDGE

WITH VIDEO LINK OPTION

1. Present

Mark Hindley (MH) – chair, Olivia Grant (OG), Chris Joyce (CJ), Mike Slater (MS), Gary McGowan (GM), Craig Lightbody (CL), Janet Hobson (JH) and Helen Grainger (HG).

Sharon Ferguson (Admin)

Public attending

Cllr Balance, Ken Sinclair, Catriona Fraser, Brenda MacIvor, Ruth Fraser, Molly Fraser, Tammy Marshall and Ben Marshall

Apologies

Cllr David Fraser

2. Adoption of minutes – 28th May 2024

Minutes of the CC meeting on 28/05/2024 were adopted as a true record of the meeting. GM's apologies to be added. Proposed by OG, seconded by MH.

3. Matter arising not on the agenda

None

4. Micro Grant Applications

None received.

Catriona Fraser suggested that the community trust could advertise micro grants – agreed

5. Reports

Treasurer

Main account - £15,098.65

Micro grant account - £5,091.37

This year's running costs grant that we applied to the community trust for, has been approved.

Thanks to the community trust for supporting the operations on the Community Council. Previous unspent grant monies have been paid back to the community trust. They were £1,500 for road signs, £800 for cemetery gate maintenance, £2,000 for re-instating playpark and £200 playpark rent. These grant awards have not been required and have been sitting in the balances for a while.

The amendment form for the CC's internet banking has now been received and will be signed at the meeting once all members have seen it and all approve. This amendment is to make Mark Hindley, the new corporate admin on the account so that he can add the new signatories onto the online banking and open another banking account for the toilet payments and income. This role was previously held by the last chairperson, Patrick Haston

Boleskine Community Care

This month the staff have been busy preparing for the summer party. Thanks to Caroline Tucker and Matt Rhodes from the community Trust for helping us with the preparations.

The befriending service is going well with three active relationships in the area. We are still looking for more volunteers for that. The coordinator role has been split into two and someone local has been employed in that role.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

CL went through the minutes of the last Community Trust meeting. They can be found here -

[https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/userfiles/file/home/our%20documents/minutes/2024/\(d\)%20draft%20minutes%205%20june%202024%20sfct.pdf](https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/userfiles/file/home/our%20documents/minutes/2024/(d)%20draft%20minutes%205%20june%202024%20sfct.pdf)

The trust CEO, Tony Foster has given his notice and will be leaving the Trust after three years.

Riverside Field – Community Liaison Group

There is a meeting taking place tomorrow night; this is not a liaison group meeting but was requested by HC and Cllr Balance. It is a special meeting between the residents of Lower Foyers and all of the board of the community trust.

6. Foyers Public Toilets

Final snagging works have been done by the contractor and the trust have had the final invoice for the retention fee. As part of them works, we now have an outside tap that can be used to rinse out waste containers from those using the waste emptying point.

Works of the car park at the toilets have now been agreed following on from a site meeting in March and being chased up. The following will be done by the roads dept. in July –

- Potholes on the hardstanding, Cut away the smaller trees, the fence repair
- The drainage problem on the exit is a bit more involved, bits of rock will have to be broken out to at least form a channel or a filter drain connected into our drain on the main road. They think this would be best to do the drain in the back end when it's quieter.
- Longer term look at possibly sorting the mound out across from the toilets to form a disabled bay
- The parking enforcement team will carry out the following:-
- Markings on the speed bump/crossing at end of toilets.
 - Better signage to show the exit and one way system
 - Directional arrows painted on the ground
 - The double yellow lines on the road is still under consideration but will be placed by us if and when the decision has been reached.
 - Marking up the disabled bay when constructed

If we could also arrange a toilet sub-group meeting and decide who from the CC will attend. The previous agreement was that the Community Trust would pay for the cleaner and the CC would forward on all payments from the comfort scheme. This has been happening but the Community Trust CEO has said that the toilet income will have to go towards paying for the cleaner. At present we are almost breaking even without paying the extra for the cleaner; under by £237.59 but we didn't start collecting cash until August 24 and this is the biggest income so a full year should see us in profit and we are also about to start charging for the waste point. The money from the car parking will not be decided until September this year but will then have to be applied for. We could apply for costs to help pay for the cleaner but the agreement will have to be re-looked at by the sub-group. In the meantime, we could apply for a micro grant to help with the costs of supplies.

Discussion had about the fees from the car park and how what we were told would happen with the profits has changed since it was set up last year. Cllr Ballance suggested we could lobby all four local councillors and include David Haas as he will be chair of the city committee deciding what happens to the funds. Mark Greg is also the ward area manager and could be included.

CJ also raised safety concerns about the path to the falls eroding the paths and whether anyone is checking the path. Admin reports issues rather than anyone checking it. Admin to raise with HLH.

7. Planning applications lodged since last SFCC meeting

None received

A member of the community, Anna Low, has raised that Cllr Helen Crawford had written a motion to council but she has been told it is incompetent so it hasn't gone to committee yet. It was a proposal to give Community Councils more of a voice in planning application along with an interactive map of all energy schemes in planning and live schemes and planning training. Await to see if it goes to the next committee. Link to newspaper article - [Highland Council blocks bid to give public more say amid surge in major electricity infrastructure applications amid controversy over planning stampede towards UK Government's Pathway to 2030 clean energy transition \(inverness-courier.co.uk\)](https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/2023/06/23/highland-council-blocks-bid-to-give-public-more-say-amid-surge-in-major-electricity-infrastructure-applications-amid-controversy-over-planning-stampede-towards-uk-government-s-pathway-to-2030-clean-energy-transition/)

MH updated the CC that following discussions on more joined up working with other CC's around Loch Ness on energy scheme applications, three other CC's met up with MH to discuss their concerns and all agreed that they didn't feel listened too.

Also the Ness District Salmon Fishery Board have started a petition, CJ asked if the CC could promote this - [Save Loch Ness: no more pump storage hydro in Loch Ness | 38 Degrees](https://www.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-loch-ness-no-more-pump-storage-hydro-in-loch-ness)

8. Energy Schemes

- Aberarder Windfarm (SSE) – going ahead with original plans for 12 turbines at 130m. SSE bought from RES – **Chair and Admin attended the 2nd liaison meeting on 18th June. Discussed the Flichity Bridge and a road closure that will be required. It was raised that the flooding issues weren't being**
- Cloiche Windfarm (SSE) – **Consented Dec 23 (extension to Stronelaig)**
- Dell Windfarm (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 – **Two applications in; one section 42 to extend the current planning that has been awarded and a section 36 to apply for a new version of the plans known as Dell 2.**
- Corriegarth 2 Windfarm (BayWar.e) – **Permission granted Dec 23.**
- Loch Liath Windfarm – North side of Loch Ness, on Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston land but visual from SFCC area. **Planning submitted**
- Culachy Windfarm (Fred. Olsen Renewables) – On Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston CC land. **Planning submitted Dec 23**
- Loch Na Cathrach Pump Storage Hydro (previously known as Red John) – Above Dores, approved at public inquiry. **New manager in place.**
- Loch Kemp Pump Storage Hydro (Statera) - proposed hydro pump storage at Dell Estate. **Objection submitted. MH has been trying to obtain missing documents but has now been told that the ECU do not have a copy of his email. MH to continue to chase this.**
- Foyers Substation extension (SSEN) - **Following the feedback we have received at the event, and more specifically through meetings with the Community Council, Residents and Councillors, we have**

decided to postpone the next event until early autumn. This will allow us to undertake further assessments and surveys into the issues raised, carefully re-consider all options and further engage with the community over the project development.

Expected timeline going forward:

June/July 2024	Finalising further environmental surveys/assessments
July 2024	Continued consideration of all suggested concerns and options
August 2024	Ongoing consideration and further community engagement meetings
September 2024	Public event presenting final proposed designs
October 2024 (tbc)	Submission of planning application

CJ asked if anyone has looked into whether the stripping of peat on the hills could cause flooding; this had been discussed when the Ardochy bridge was washed away but difficulty will be proofing this. Expert help would be required to show evidence of this.

9. Roads

CL reported that some of the potholes and surface damage on the Trinloist road have been fixed. HG reported that the pass road is very bad and CL raised again that the Glenlia to Farigaig Bridge is still very bad. The Glebe improvements were paid for by SSEN and some money from Sustrans. Admin to invite Colin Ross, HC road engineer, to a future meeting to discuss priorities.

10. Correspondences

School transport - many correspondences have been received about a change to the high school and public bus service by HC; they are proposing to change the route of the Whitebridge bus to go via Farr rather than Torness and Dores. The Torness pupils would then be picked up by minibus and taken to Dores to meet the Foyers bus. Five families came to the meeting and other have concerns but couldn't attend. The main concerns were safety of the pupils being transported from Torness and then having to wait in Dores for the Foyers bus, overcrowding on the Foyers bus due to numbers from Foyers, Dores and Torness pupils, potential earlier pick up and later drop off of pupils on the Whitebridge bus, the complete lack of a bus service in Torness that this will result in and the lack of any consultation with families of pupils, the school and the public in what appears to be a very rushed decision as the service is to change when the schools go back in August. None of this has been officially communicated to parents and the community. Admin and Cllr Fraser have been working on this to find a resolution and Cllr Fraser has requested a face to face meeting with David Summers from HC (in charge of passenger and pupil transport) next week. Admin and parents to get the school involved too. Parents also encouraged to contact David Summers too.

SSE Hydro fund – SSE are opening a 10 million pound fund split over 38 community council areas in Scotland that have historic hydro schemes in their area. All these areas will be able to apply for this fund. Currently, they are doing a survey to ask what communities would like to see this fund being available for (see link below) and they are also looking for people to be part of the national panel that will decide on these grant applications – <https://ibp.eu.com/hydrofund/> Paper copies have been ordered too for the shop and BCC.

11. Up and coming events

Wildside playpark opening – Thurs 27th June
BCC 10th anniversary picnic & party – Sat 29th June
SFCT Highland gathering – 20th July

12. AOCB

De-fibs – MH raised that all de-fib supplies seem to come from lucky2Bhere and we could look wider than there if needed. Admin to add the new BCC one to the map that she has done then circulate that. OG reported that the one recently installed at the hub is showing an error; she will contact Lucky2Bhere to resolve that. The Foyers shop one has an issue but is under warranty and is currently being looked at.

Foyers field CC representative – CL noted that there is no CC rep for these meetings now as CJ has stepped back from this; all asked who would like to take up this role – MS said he will.

13. Next meeting

Tuesday 27th August 2024