

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24th JANUARY 2012  
AT THE STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK**

Members present:

Mr M. Houston (Chairman)  
Mr F. Ross (Treasurer)  
Mr K. Fraser  
Mr A. MacPherson

Mrs E. Merther (Secretary)  
Mrs M. Cameron  
Mr L. MacNally  
Mr A. Sutherland

Also present:

Councillor D. Hendry  
Police Constable A. Mathieson

Mr N. Kirkland (Fire Brigade)

Apologies received:

Councillor H. Carmichael

Councillor M. Davidson

**1. Adoption of Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 13th December 2011 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr A. Sutherland

Seconded: Mr A. MacPherson

**2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

**(a) Boleskine Bulletin**

Chairman, Jane O'Donovan, and Committee members of the Boleskine Bulletin attended. Details of the new Committee and Editorial Team were outlined. She indicated a problem with printing the Community Council Minutes owing to the increasing length, and asked if they could be made shorter. The present payment by the CC does not cover the total cost of printing. Their Committee also felt that Minutes are out of date when printed, the oldest possibly up to four months old. Mr Houston responded that additional funds could be provided to cover costs if necessary. The Minutes are now much longer because of the increasing number of issues the CC deals with, and it is not possible to pick and choose which items should be included. Minutes are posted on the Web site and placed in Foyers shop when approved, but the BB is the only access many community members have to full information. Arrangements can be made to place Minutes in local notice boards also. A notice will be placed in the next Bulletin to ask the community their views on reporting of the Minutes..

**(b) Broadband Provision**

Mr Graeme Ambrose (Destination Loch Ness) reported that a survey around Loch Ness had been carried out late last year. The full report should be available shortly. The plan is to bring a feed in at Dores. The signal will bounce back and forth across the Loch, hopefully providing broadband access for those areas where provision is currently poor or totally absent. The company doing this will only go ahead if there is sufficient demand, so the likely uptake will be investigated once full details and costs are known.

**(c) Foyers Pier**

Mr Ambrose reported that British Waterways had carried out a survey, and indicates that, while basically stable, some work is desirable to make the pier fully accessible in the long term. This will make the pier usable for vessels of any size currently using the Caledonian Canal. £165,000 is needed and he is hopeful that this can be jointly sourced through Highland Council, SSE, and Leader. The possibility of water access for companies installing renewable energy equipment was noted.

**(d) Key Worker/Affordable Housing**

Cllr. Davidson has suggested that we request a public, drop-in session to update the community on the Gorthleck proposals, and has offered to arrange this. This was

agreed and she will be asked to go ahead.

(e) Local Care Project

The Secretary reported only a small number of responses have so far been received to the flyer in the BB. A brief notice to encourage further replies will be placed in the next issue. Mrs O'Donovan suggested a talk at the Lunch Club might help. The Secretary will contact Paul Davies of Care in Strathnairn to ask if he could do this, accompanied by a CC member.

(f) Street Lighting - Energy Saving Measures

The notice for the BB missed the last issue so will appear in March. Initial feedback from Glenlia residents seems to be largely in favour of some reduction in lighting.

(g) Parking - Foyers Shop and Cafe

Cllr. Hendry reported that Land Registry searches are ongoing.

(h) Foyers Public Toilets

No new information received.

(i) TV Reception - Glenlia and Inverfarigaig

Mr Tony Williams (Glenlia Residents Assn.) had sent a copy of the Ofcom response, which is not at all helpful. Cllr. Hendry noted that if the broadband access project is successful this may also help with TV access.

(j) Foyers Schoolhouse Appraisal

There was further discussion on the problems of letting the property in close proximity to the School. Cllr. Hendry noted that the suggestion of conversion for use as a Nursery could be a good alternative.

### **3. Correspondence**

Highland Council Correspondence:

Letter from Trading Standards - Doorstep Crime (circulated)

Other Correspondence and Circulars received

Letters and emails re new Whitebridge bus service

Letter from Boleskine Bulletin Committee

Letter advising of Community Trust grant for firework display

email and Ofcom response to Glenlia Residents re TV reception

Copy of GRCA Letter of support to DLN re internet access

Letters re Foyers Planning Appeal website (circulated)

Scottish Water - Drawing of first proposal for new water main

email from Iain Cameron re proposed Dunmaglass grid connection

Forestry Commission - information re Forest Renewables scheme

SSE - Notice of Public Event re Balmacaan Hydro Electric Scheme

### **4. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer reported receipt of £1850 from the Community Trust for the firework display, and a payment of £21 for a flyer in the BB.

Account balances are as follows:

Ordinary A/c: £1383.00

Project A/c: £7227.66

### **5. Planning Matters**

(a) Caravan Park Appeal - Foyers

A number of people attended to complain about a document posted on the Appeals Website, apparently from the CC. The CC did not send this document and have been unable to establish who did. Enquiries with the Case Officer revealed that it was sent anonymously, and it is not possible to remove a document once posted. The CC has sent a letter explaining the context of the document and stating that it should be disregarded in relation to the Appeal, on which it has no bearing. The document was

produced last May in response to an official allegation to Highland Council that the CC had been biased and undemocratic in reaching its response to the Planning Application. Mrs Ellam was present at the meeting and stated that she had made the official complaint which led to production of this document. The document was sent only to our Ward Manager, Highland Councillors, and CC members at the time. The complaint had been discussed by the CC, and the response agreed, in private. Cllr. Hendry noted that this is normal procedure, and documents of complaint and response are not normally made public unless a complaint is upheld. This complaint was not upheld.

The Chairman apologised if people had been upset by the tone of the document, but could not apologise for the content, which was agreed by the then CC in response to the situation at that time. He noted that the CC had done its best for the community at the time. He wondered if any future major development could be put to a full postal ballot of the electoral register, and Cllr. Hendry confirmed that this could be arranged if the CC wished. This was agreed to be an excellent suggestion.

#### (b) New Applications

House & Garage, Land E of Larchview, Whitebridge (MSC)

House, Land NE of Lyne Cottage, Gorthleck (FUL)(PIP already granted)

Alt Na Craidhleig, Stronelairg, Whitebridge, 70m. monitoring mast for 5 yrs. (FUL)

Allt Luaidhe, Knockie, Whitebridge, Screening application for HEP generation station

All plans and documents were studied and there were no objections. Members will be interested to see the details of the proposed hydro project at Knockie when full application is made.

### **6. Fire Brigade Report**

Mr Kirkland reported a budget meeting is due next month to make decisions on the future of the service.

### **7. Policing Matters**

PC Mathieson reported there have been some thefts of copper from radio antennae, and asked people to watch for unauthorised vehicles. He noted the Christmas/ New Year period had been very quiet. Cllr. Hendry was pleased to say that reported crime locally had been below average.

### **8. Roads and Signage**

#### (a) Outstanding Matters

The following items have been reported but still await attention:

Pot holes on Garthbeg road - Cllr. Hendry will pursue this; Pot hole by cattle grid - Bochruben road; Clearance of ditches/drains; Grass etc. - pavement at Thain Road.

No response to enquiry about salt/spreading rates, but noted that this seems to have improved.

Bridge by Boleskine Cemetery - was to have been done last Autumn. Further enquiry to be made as dip in road getting worse.

Movement of timber lorries and consequent damage - Cllr. Davidson reports timber transport due to be discussed at next Ward business meeting in February.

Errogie speed limit - 40 mph limit already in place, but reduction to 30 mph is requested.

#### (b) Discussion of Road Improvements Proposed by TECS

Members would like a further meeting with Richard Evans to go over these. A request will be made.

#### (c) Other Roads Items

Mr Sutherland reported a new culvert has been run under the road on the Inverfarigaig

pass where a drainage problem was causing subsidence.

There is some recent damage to the parapet of the Altkirk bridge on the pass.

Pot holes: Glenlia road, Foyers; Dell Road, Whitebridge. Roads throughout the area noted to be in a poor condition, with major pot holes on many of them.

Cllr. Hendry offered to go round the district with a member of TECS to look at the problem areas. This was agreed. He informed the CC that there is currently some additional money available for road work, but this is limited.

Trees on the Foyers/Dores road adjacent to Easter Boleskine were reported to be overhanging and impairing visibility.

#### **9. Water and Sewerage**

The plan of the proposed new water supply pipe line has been received. Members feel the proposals are likely to be hugely expensive, and not the best solution. It is thought the problems relate to extraction licences. A representative of Scottish Water will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss this.

#### **10. Community Project - Gorthleck**

The final grant is awaited from Leader, when the loan from Highland Council can be repaid. The Project will then be wound up and a report prepared.

#### **11. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit**

The proposed Dunmaglass grid connection involves installation of a large sub-station in proximity to houses with no mains power. The possibility of connection to the grid could be explored for people wishing it. Mr Sutherland wondered if we should be enquiring about community benefit for installation of this equipment. He will write to raise this on behalf of the Community Trust.

Forest Renewables have carried out a survey of sites suitable for small hydro schemes in Scotland. Details of sites identified can be found on the Forestry Commission website.

#### **12. Any Other Competent Business**

After a very unsatisfactory first week, it was reported that the new Stagecoach bus service to Whitebridge seems to be operating as it should.

Mrs Cameron raised the problem of cars parking on the road in front of Glenlia, where visibility is poor on the approaches. Though not illegal this is undoubtedly hazardous, and it was suggested, in the first instance, car owners should be approached by the Residents' Association and asked to use alternative parking. Additional car park, or a suitable lay-by is unlikely to be provided in the present financial situation, but enquiries will be made with TECS.

Mrs Cameron also noted that, in the year of the Olympics and the Queen's Jubilee, some sort of community event would be nice. Members will think about possible events.

#### **13. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on 28th February 2012 at the Foyers Primary School.

The meeting was closed at 9.25 p.m.