

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26th MARCH 2013
AT THE FOYERS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Members present:

Mr M. Houston (Chairman)
Mr L. MacNally (Treasurer)
Mr K. Fraser
Mr A. Sutherland

Mrs E. Merther (Secretary)
Mrs M. Cameron
Mr A. MacPherson

Ex officio members present:

Councillor M. Davidson

Also present:

Police Constable A. Mathieson Mr N. Kirkland, Fire Service
Mr Andrew Shaw and Mr Graham Irwin (North British Windpower)

1. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of 22nd January 2013 were adopted as a true record:

Proposed: Mrs E. Merther Seconded: Mr A. Sutherland

With three amendments (already made) to item 12(a) requested by Mr MacNally,

Minutes of 26th February 2013 were adopted as a true record:

Proposed: Mr A. MacPherson Seconded: Mr K. Fraser

2. North British Windpower - update on Corriegarth Windfarm

Delays in this scheme reported to be due to issues related to SSE grid connection.

Original application still awaiting final approval. New application planned for increase in output (but not in size) of turbines, and for three additional turbines. This will be subject to the usual consultation requirements.

Possible timetable for the scheme is: start of roadworks late 2013/early 2014; start on work for infrastructure 2014; erection of turbines 2015.

No programme or route yet decided for transport of turbines. This will be subject to approval by Highland Council.

Chairman emphasised the problems caused to the community by road closures and traffic restrictions, and the need to minimise these, and keep the community fully informed about them at the earliest opportunity.

Mr Sutherland raised several matters:

He first declared that as community benefit negotiator for the Community Development Trust he takes no part in any planning discussions.

Enquiry regarding ownership of NBW - 50% British owned and 50% owned by a Chicago based Company.

NBW confirmed they cannot apply for any changes until original application finalised.

The community benefit offer of £2000/mw is less than half the rate recommended by Highland Council. NBW declined to comment.

To acquire land for the Errogie corner improvement they paid an elderly, vulnerable resident a tiny amount plus a magazine subscription for her land. When asked about this NBW declined to comment. Mr Sutherland expressed extreme disappointment at the attitude and behaviour of NBW in this matter, and advised that this was felt throughout the community.

Cllr. Davidson confirmed, as previously reported, that HC is now taking this corner improvement forward.

The Chairman thanked NBW members for attending and again emphasised the importance of community consultation.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Affordable Housing Scheme - Gorthleck

Cllr. Davidson reports money now available for this scheme. Further meetings with the CC and the CDT are needed to take this forward.

(b) Foyers Public Toilets

Secretary received an email today advising the toilets are subject to a water charge of £1600, and electricity charges are as yet unknown. Further detail is needed about these costs before going further. Meantime the toilets need to be open for Easter. The Secretary will ask Mr Hargreaves if he is willing to deal with this in the meantime, and the CC will cover any costs for the Easter week

(c) Parking - Foyers Shop and Cafe

Cllr. Davidson advised progress still being made.

(d) Possible CC Blog/Diary

Members had thought about this and discussed the pros and cons. Agreed this should be purely to report on CC activities such as attending meetings, and not a platform for expressing opinions. Mr Fraser suggested any items for inclusion could be decided at the end of each CC meeting. This was agreed, and Mrs Cameron agreed to collate and post any items on the website.

(e) Safe Routes to School - Foyers

No progress is being made with this. The CC will write to the land owner.

(f) Bin Collections Ardoch Road

Chairman spoke to TECS and contractor but had no definite information. Suggested the householder should make a note of dates and times if problem observed again.

4. Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence

Notice - Temporary traffic restriction B851 (circulated)

Reminder - Aird & Loch Ness Ward Forum 28.3.13 (circulated)

Other Correspondence

e.on - Moriston Wind Farm, invitation for member on Community Liaison Group email and Chairman's reply - C. Trust constitution

Inverness Community Council Forum - Meeting with Fergus Ewing (circulated)

NHS Highland Briefing Note (circulated)

email & photo - part of Squirrel Trail through Dell field [Secretary will contact Stewart Eastaugh in HC]

March Invoice from Boleskine Bulletin (forwarded to Treasurer)

Glenurquhart CC - Enquiry on Dell Windfarm proposal

Newsletter - Dave Thompson MSP

Budget Newsletter - Danny Alexander MP (circulated)

5. Treasurer's Report

Ordinary A/c: Balance; £1338.53

(Cheque for £168.00 for Boleskine Bulletin written at meeting)

Project A/c: Balance unchanged: £2286.94

6. Planning Matters

(a) New applications:

Forestry Commission consultations: Garrogie and South Loch Ness (Farigaig)

(b) Any other planning matter:

Invitation from HC for CC member to attend Stronelairg site visit. Mr Sutherland will attend.

Torness sub-station: Test pits have been dug. SSE not listening to local concerns. Cllr. Davidson will write to SSE.

7. Fire Brigade Report

There will be one Force from 1.4.13, but no local effect should be noticed. Local station has good crew levels and a significant number of call outs.

8. Policing Matters

Progress towards single Force from 1.4.13 continues. No local matters to report.

9. Roads and Signage

(a) Outstanding matters:

Calanour junction priorities - Chairman noted this was apparently agreed 4 or 5 years ago, but still no progress. Cllr. Davidson will make enquiries.

No progress on: Aberchalder causeway; Boleskine bridge resurfacing; Patching of 'corkscrew' road.

Reflective roadside posts at Calanour - Mr Evans advised they should have been done and he is making enquiries.

Errogie corner re-alignment - Cllr. Davidson reports progress ongoing.

Bridge - Lower Foyers - Letter has been sent. Reply awaited.

Whitebridge brae - Feedback from speedwires awaited.

Scottish Water road closures etc. - Chairman, Secretary, Mr Fraser and Mr MacPherson met with Richard Evans on 19th March and had discussions on this and other roads matters. SW should have been present but failed to attend. Members believe the on-road work should be complete by the weekend, but there is still off-road work to be done.

(b) Other roads items:

Mr Sutherland - New signage at the bottom of the Pass incomplete. Enquiries will be made.

Chairman - Hazardous trees in several locations have been reported to Richard Evans.

10. Water and Sewerage

See under Roads above.

11. Community Project - Gorthleck

Chairman reported further vandalism to the shed. The Police will be involved. Requested people to be aware and report any problems to himself or Police.

12. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

Some run-of-river small hydro schemes are planned for Garrogie.

13. Any Other Competent Business

Mr MacNally - Query on figure in accounts for monument survey. Secretary explained since acting as Treasurer she had been trying to get the invoice for this survey, which was never sent. If the Company decide not to invoice us we will have to repay the grant money provided for the survey.

Mr MacNally - Query on meeting regarding Trust Articles of Association. Informed Solicitor advised the Trust that the new Articles automatically came into operation when the CC voted to accept them. There will still be a meeting for people to raise any matters. Mr Sutherland noted new Articles are now 'fit for purpose', and it will be much easier to make any changes if required.

Mr MacNally - Query why the next item is taken in private. Chairman advised it is not appropriate to be discussing in public members of the community who might be approached to join the CC.

Mrs Cameron - She and Mr MacPherson had attended the presentation about the new school building for the IRA. Some major improvements are planned to cater for 1400 pupils. Full details are on the HC website.

Chairman - Query whether a bus shelter is required in Gorthleck. Members will sound out local views.

Cllr. Davidson - HC have agreed (as a one-off project) to repair the road behind Glenlia. She hopes to get drainage dealt with as well.

Cllr. Davidson - Foyers pier to be repaired/upgraded. Need to involve DLN/local businesses in improvements/interpretation for whole pier area.

Mr Kirkland - Progress being made with defibrillator project. Details still to be finalised.

Mrs Cameron noted that a local First Aid course is planned.

Community members:

Some concern about builder's signs to Lower Foyers obscuring motorists' vision. A request has been made for them to be re-sited.

Request for centre line on road at high point/blind summit between Foyers and Inverfarigaig. Request will be made to TECS.

Concern expressed about narrow road adjacent to old Foyers Hotel. Long term problem known.

Redundant signage pole in garden in Lower Foyers. Enquire if it can be removed.

Enquiry about affordable housing scheme - Cllr. Davidson gave overview and assurances that local people should get priority.

Repair to fence around play area in Lower Foyers required - damaged by grass cutter. Request will be made.

Concern about blocking of trails by forestry operations. Advised to make contact with Stewart Eastaugh to discuss.

The Chairman then closed the public meeting, and moved on to the next item.

14. Resignation of CC Member

Some preliminary discussion about whether member should be replaced. Chairman suggested members think about this and put names forward for consideration at the next meeting. Agreed that before anyone is approached there must be unanimous agreement on the proposal. This item will be continued in private at the next meeting.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on 23rd April 2013 at the Stratherrick Hall, Gorthleck.

The meeting was closed at 9.45 p.m.