

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27th NOVEMBER 2012
AT THE FOYERS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Members present:

Mr M. Houston (Chairman)	Mrs E. Merther (Secretary/Acting Treasurer)
Mrs M. Cameron	Mr K. Fraser
Mr L. MacNally	Mr A. MacPherson
Mr F. Ross	Mr A. Sutherland

Ex officio members present:

Councillor M. Davidson

Also present:

Police Sergeant A. Blakey	WPC Fiona MacColl
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Apologies received:

Councillor D. Hendry	PC A. Mathieson
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1. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of 23rd October 2012 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr A. Sutherland

Seconded: Mr K. Fraser

2. Farigaig Sub-station Site Location

Representatives of SSE kindly attended to present information. Connection of windfarms in the area is proposed via a new sub-station in the Farigaig area. This will be a large site (approximately the size of two football pitches). Several sites are under consideration, each having its own problems, and further surveys are to be carried out. When surveys are complete SSE will bring the information back to the CC, and also plans an information day for the community.

Cllr. Davidson suggested, and CC members agreed, that SSE should look at the possibility of connecting the new windfarms (and other green energy projects likely to come on line in the next five to ten years) to the existing sub-station at Auchterawe, where, we were advised, there is plenty of spare capacity. It was agreed that in the long run this would make considerable savings for SSE, and would also protect local, wild, sensitive landscape areas. SSE representatives agreed to make enquiries, but advised that this comes under a separate section of the organisation, over which they have no control. CC members agreed we should express our view to senior management in SSE about the need for an integrated planning strategy in this matter.

There was some discussion on the routes of power lines and the need for undergrounding in sensitive areas. There were also some comments about the situation where power lines are being routed near property without access to the national grid, and the apparent inability of SSE to offer them connection without very great expense to the households concerned.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of SSE for attending, for their information and useful discussions.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Affordable Housing Scheme - Gorthleck

Cllr. Davidson and Mr Sutherland met with HSCHT and Albyn Housing. It is hoped things will move forward in the New Year, and a further meeting is planned for January. Costings are being undertaken for several housing options. The current difficulty for people seeking self-build mortgages was noted.

(b) Foyers Public Toilets

No further information.

(c) Parking - Foyers Shop and Cafe

Cllr. Davidson reports negotiations are ongoing.

(d) Foyers Schoolhouse

Cllr. Davidson will organise a further meeting in the New Year.

(e) Street Lighting

Mr MacNally asked if security lights could be offered to vulnerable residents through the C. Trust so that street lights could be switched off. The Chairman pointed out that this had been fully discussed at the August meeting, when every member had agreed that lights should be restored. It had been a difficult decision, but the duty of care to the vulnerable in the community took precedence. It was felt that HC had been pushing local CCs into taking decisions over this. It was unanimously agreed that if HC impose a switch-off then the CC will look at the matter again.

Cllr. Davidson noted that HC had not found any great savings where lights were switched off, and is now installing low energy alternatives. Some other communities where a trial of switching off had taken place had also asked for lights to be restored.

(f) Scottish Water Tankers

Cllr. Davidson had raised this matter with SW who had agreed to re-route tankers. Members agreed that tankers no longer appear to be travelling through the Strath.

(g) Any Other Matters Arising

The Chairman will collect the photocopier from the Hall and take it to recycling.

4. Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence

Information on Quality Awards 2012

Draft Houses in Multiple Occupation: Supplementary Guidance 2012 Review

Information on neighbour notification in planning (circulated)

Other Correspondence

e-on - Advance notice of application for temporary masts near Fort Augustus

Mrs Ellam - email about fireworks display The Chairman pointed out this is not a CC event. He had done this on a goodwill basis in previous years. Pressure of work prevented him from doing so this year.

Green Highland Renewables - Notice of presentation of information about possible hydro scheme near Knockie Lodge (circulated)

HSCHT - Woodland crofts information day in Gairloch (circulated)

SSE - Information on SSE and University of Highlands & Islands partnership (circulated)

Rhoda Grant MSP - Update on rural broadband (circulated)

Mrs Ellam - email about Boleskine bridge resurfacing

Information on Scottish Health Campaigns Network (circulated)

Community Council Forum - Minutes of 2.10.12 & Agenda for 20.11.12 (circulated)

CC Forum - Information on future agendas (circulated)

CC Forum - Information on meetings about A9 dualling (circulated)

RES - Notice of preliminary site investigations prior to work on B851 (circulated)

Paths for All Leaflet

Invitation from Glenlia Residents Association to their Carols on the Green (circulated)

5. Treasurer's Report

Ordinary A/c: Balance: £2025.52 (Includes £362 for Monument survey)

Cheques written and still to be cleared:

£296.99 - Secretary (Honorarium & Expenses)

£27.00 - Remembrance Day wreath (very kindly obtained for the CC by Mr J. Campbell)

Project A/c: Balance: £2729.74

Cheques cleared since last meeting:

£4,336.97

plus £5,663.03 from Ordinary A/c

£10,000.00 Repayment of HC loan

Cheques written and still to be cleared:
£200.00 - Community space rent
£242.80 - Surfacing materials for maintenance

6. Planning Matters

New applications:

3 run-of-river hydro schemes, Garrogie Lodge, Whitebridge House, land SW of Croftdhu, Errogie

Applications and plans viewed by members. No objections.

Proposed deletion of planning condition in relation to application adjacent to Suilven, Gorthleck. A further enquiry will be made.

7. Fire Brigade Report

Mr Kirkland was not present. No new matters reported.

8. Policing Matters

WPC MacColl presented the results of the speed wire surveys:

Foyers (30 mph limit): 41% travelling N over 30 mph. 37.6% travelling S over 30 mph. (Only 5% of these at a speed liable to prosecution. Most only marginally over the limit.)

Gorthleck (40 mph limit): 21% travelling N over 40 mph. 14.8% travelling S over 40 mph. (Only 2 people would have been prosecuted.)

Errogie (40 mph limit): 23.9% travelling N over 40 mph. 15.3% travelling S over 40 mph. (None of these would have been prosecuted.)

There is a small amount of leeway allowed above the speed limit before drivers become liable for prosecution. The majority of those above the speed limits were only marginally so.

WPC MacColl also reported that no new crimes had been recorded in the area since the last meeting.

9. Roads and Signage

(a) Outstanding matters:

No new information as yet on: Calanour junction priorities
Aberchalder causeway
Patching of 'corkscrew' road

Boleskine bridge surfacing - Further enquiry made. Advised not likely to be done until SW work complete and top road open again.

Reflective roadside posts near Calanour junction - Advised these will be replaced.

White lining at junction in Lower Foyers - Has been done.

Bridge in Lower Foyers - Letter sent requesting higher priority for this project.

Errogie corner re-alignment - A further meeting with TECS. Re-alignment will be done, as reported in last Minutes.

(b) Other roads items:

Several matters raised in relation to SW work:

Increasing damage to roads by spoil lorries.

Spoil lorries through Errogie at week-ends. (This now thought to be finished.)

Rock breaking hammer working late into evenings (after 7.00 p.m.)

Concerns about winter maintenance arrangements.

There is a meeting with SW on Thursday to discuss passing places for the Newlands road. These other matters will be raised.

Mr MacNally - Concerns about near-misses on the Whitebridge brae. Possibility of foot-path, or improved road markings. Cllr. Davidson will make enquiries in the New Year.

Noted that roadside vegetation still an issue. TECS advise there is no money for this work.

10. Water and Sewerage

Further meeting with SW arranged for Thursday as above.

11. Community Project - Gorthleck

The HC loan has now been repaid. Agreed that a local contractor should be sought to carry out grass cutting etc. next year.

12. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

Mr Sutherland reported as follows:

Next payment will be from Dunmaglass - due in the New Year.

Discussions on the Dell Estate proposal are taking place.

Corriegarth proposal - No planning permission as yet.

Several small hydro schemes in preparation. Power generated will be very small, but there will be some community benefit from them.

Planning application for Stronelairg wind farm due in January. Cllr. Davidson will ask SSE to attend discussions in the New Year.

Draft of the new CT Constitution should be available for the CC to see shortly.

Mr Sutherland had become aware that his position as CT negotiator, and involvement with planning discussions by the CC has been misrepresented locally. He re-iterated that he takes no part whatsoever in any planning discussions in relation to renewable energy schemes which come before the CC, because of his position as CT negotiator. His position has been stated and clearly Minuted in the past.

13. Any Other Competent Business

Mrs Cameron - Will there be public consultation on Dell wind farm? Cllr. Davidson advised await planning application.

Cllr. Davidson - Enquiry from Mr Kirkland regarding 'Safe Routes to School' for Stratherrick. Now being taken forward.

Mrs O'Donovan - Enquiry if any road closure dates available from Scottish Water. Chairman will raise this on Thursday. Mr Fraser advised no notice served on landowners as yet.

Mrs Chattington. - Concern about need to switch off water for the winter in Smithy Cottage. The Chairman will deal with this.

Mrs Pledger - Concern about lack of provision of public services by providers routing cables/pipes close to properties without services. Possible benefit of obtaining publicity for this situation suggested.

Mrs MacDougall - Footpath to Foyers School incomplete. Report that landowner has been unco-operative. Cllr. Davidson will enquire in the New Year.

Cllr. Davidson - With new draft Local Plan due, query whether protection can be requested for Farigaig area.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th December 2012 at the Stratherrick Hall, Gorthleck.

The meeting was closed at 9.15 p.m.