

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28th AUGUST 2012
AT THE STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK**

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:

P.C. A. Mathieson	Mrs F. Kirkland (Fire Brigade)
Mr S. Forsyth (Coriolis Energy)	

1. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of 26th June 2012 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr K. Fraser Seconded: Mrs E. Merther

2. Wind Farm Proposal - Dell Estate, Whitebridge

Mr Stewart Forsyth kindly presented information on the proposal, which is in the early stages of planning. The number of turbines and final proposed capacity are yet to be decided. A draft design should be available mid to late September. A public exhibition is planned, possibly in November. Target date for full planning application is Spring to Summer 2013. There was some discussion on issues surrounding the project, and Mr Forsyth encouraged anyone with queries or comments to contact him. The CC will consider the proposal when final planning application is made.

Mr Sutherland advised that as negotiator for community benefit on behalf of the C. Trust, he will take no part in consideration of the planning application.

The Chairman thanked Mr Forsyth for attending and for his presentation.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Affordable Housing Scheme - Gorthleck

Highland Small Communities Housing Trust advised that their 'surgery' in Gorthleck was well attended and very useful information gathered on housing needs and views on local housing matters. A report will be given to the CC shortly.

(b) Foyers Public Toilets

Further paperwork is awaited from HC.

(c) Parking - Foyers Shop and Cafe

Cllr. Davidson reported Mr Charles Stephen is in discussion with the land-owner.

(d) Foyers Schoolhouse

Cllr. Davidson suggested a meeting of CC members and other interested parties to discuss options.

(e) Community Web Site

The C. Trust has given a grant to cover web site costs for this year.

(f) Water & Power Connections to Property

Mr Sutherland continues to press the case for connections for properties without mains supplies where householders wish it.

(g) Broadband Provision

Information received on Scottish Government scheme for rural broadband. Cllr. Davidson advised that BT have been awarded the contract. Final plans due in October. It is not known what improvements will be made, or how extensive they will be.

(h) Street Lighting Energy Saving

A trial of energy saving from midnight to 6.00 a.m. has taken place over several months. Feedback has been received from the community, greatly assisted by Mrs Hall's questionnaire to Foyers households. The majority are in favour of the switch-off period, but those most worried by the loss of this amenity are the elderly and more vulnerable residents. In view of this the CC felt they were obliged to request re-instatement of lighting throughout the night, while recognising that many residents will be disappointed.

4. Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence

Acknowledgement of comments on IMF Local Development Plan

email - Mr Charles Stephen - Permission for Secretary to hold office as Acting Treasurer

Licensing Act - Foyers Stores. Application for variation of opening hours.

Licensing Committee - Review of Permitted Opening Hours, Late Hours Establishments

Licensing Board - Door Entry Policy for Premises Operating After 1.00 a.m.

email - Margaret Davidson - Report of meeting on community transport

Charitable Trusts - Funding update (circulated)

Highland Council Quality Awards 2012 - Invitation for nominations (circulated)

Supplementary Guidance Consultation - Small-scale Wind Turbines (circulated)

Other Correspondence

email - Alex Sutherland - Dunmaglass Wind Farm Community Liaison Group

email enquiry - Mrs Ellam (Chairman responded by phone)

Copy letter from Boleskine Environmental Network - Objection to Stronelairg Wind Farm
(circulated)

Grant award from Community Trust - BB printing and Web Site costs

email - Mrs M. Speight - Road closures by Scottish Water

email - Mrs M. Speight - Closure of Gorthleck Play Park (circulated)

Copy letter from Chairman to BB regarding closure of Play Park

5. Treasurer's Report

Cheques written on Ordinary A/c since last meeting:

Boleskine Bulletin (printing of Minutes) £168.00

Tourism Site Fix (web site hosting & domain) £212.00

Highland Council grant received: £1002.18

Ordinary A/c balance: £1647.52 (This includes £362.00 for monument survey.)

Project A/c balance: £7066.71

6. Planning Matters

(a) New applications:

Water pumping station at River Farigaig, Torness (No information available on HC web site. Enquiries to be made)

Five serviced house plots - Wildside, Whitebridge (Information circulated to members and comments forwarded to Planning.)

Wind monitoring mast - Dell Estate, Whitebridge

Two wind test masts - Corriegarth Estate, Gorthleck

Storage barn - Purple Lodge, Gorthleck

Garage/storage barn - Land N of Bridge Cottage, Torness (Mr MacPherson declared an interest.)

Alteration/extension - Craigdarroch House Hotel, Foyers

Information was circulated and discussed. There were no objections.

SSE - 300MW wind farm - Stronelairg

It was agreed that a major concern is the impact on local roads during any construction programme. Appropriate comments will be sent to Planning.

7. Fire Brigade Report

Mrs Kirkland reported their enquiry to Scottish Water regarding road closures had received no reply.

She reported that recruitment for the local Station is good. There is now a twelfth member, and two more applicants.

8. Policing Matters

P.C. Mathieson reported that Police have been busy with a number of road traffic accidents. This seems to have followed an increase in tourist numbers following the conclusion of the Olympic Games.

9. Roads and Signage

Outstanding Matters

Boulders on grass verge, Gorthleck - HC have approached the householder.

Corkscrew road - Cllr. Davidson has requested patching of the worst areas.

Calanour junction priorities - Further discussion necessary. CC opinion being over-ruled.

Bridge parapet, Inverfarigaig pass - Still unrepaired. Also a new drainage problem adjacent to the bridge due to tree roots.

No new information on the following items: Aberchalder causeway; Boleskine bridge surfacing; Improvements on the B862/851; Timber transport; New bridge in Lower Foyers. Further enquires will be made and new matters reported.

Road closures - Scottish Water - Meeting arranged for 29.8.12.

Cllr. Davidson wished to record her thanks for the support of the CC and the pressure they have applied over roads issues in the district. This has helped in obtaining some substantial funds for improvements.

10. Water and Sewerage

Cllr. Davidson has arranged for CC members to meet with members of Scottish Water and TEC Services regarding current and planned road closures. There was considerable discussion about the very unsatisfactory conduct of Scottish Water in relation to the new pipeline scheme.

11. Community Project - Gorthleck

Following an anonymous complaint to Highland Council from a member of the community, it had been necessary to close the play park over the summer holiday. Matters raised were very minor, but HC failed to give a positive decision on whether the area could be kept open. In view of the insurance implications there was no alternative but to close the area. The Chairman expressed extreme disappointment that the complainant did not approach himself or anyone else involved in the Project, rather than go to HC.

Work required has now been completed, approved, and the play park re-opened. Grant monies from Leader should now be released. This was delayed by the complaint. HC will now inspect equipment annually, and there is the option of asking them to take full responsibility at some stage.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to all those from the Fire Brigade who had worked extremely hard over a week-end to get the jobs done.

Mrs Speight expressed her thanks to the Chairman and Mrs Kirkland for organising this work.

The Chairman noted that input from other CC members in maintenance of the area would be helpful. Employment of a local contractor for regular grass cutting was suggested.

Cllr. Davidson noted that the Gorthleck project was a trail-blazer in obtaining funds from Leader for this type of scheme. Other areas, such as Glenlia, have benefitted from the setting of this precedent.

12. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

Mr Sutherland reported that figures are awaited from the Aberchalder scheme.

Once work starts on Dunmaglass funds will be released for road improvements. Noted that the old, non-functioning turbine will be removed from Dunmaglass.

13. Any Other Competent Business

Mrs Morag Cameron - Volunteers now needed for the Loch Ness Marathon, and should get in touch with her.

Mrs Morag Cameron - Concern over shortage of local home carers. Cllr. Davidson said funds are available and applicants should be encouraged to contact her initially. Recruitment has been poor.

Cllr. Davidson - Following a meeting on community transport, a bid is being made to work up a car scheme initially.

Mr Ian Brown - Concern over effect of timber harvesting on A82 on local roads.

Mrs Elspeth Hall - Confusion on whether to approach CC or Glenlia Residents on local issues. Chairman advised her CC is always first point of contact.

Mrs Ellam - Request for CC contact details on Web site, and any other local information. Chairman advised CC will endeavour to do this.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 25th September 2012 in the Foyers Primary School.

The meeting was closed at 9.50 p.m.