

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd AUGUST 2011
AT THE FOYERS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Members present:

Mr A. Sutherland (Chairman)
Mrs K. Grant (Treasurer)
Mr K. Fraser
Mr J. Sharp

Mrs E. Merther (Secretary)
Mr D. Forbes
Mr M. Houston

Also present:

Councillor M. Davidson
Police Constable A. Mathieson

Mr N. Kirkland
Mr Paul Davies (Care in Strathnairn)

Apologies received:

Mr A. MacPherson

Councillor D. Hendry

1. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2011 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr M Houston

Seconded: Mr J. Sharp

2. Care in Strathnairn

Representatives from Care in Strathnairn attended to advise on setting up a similar scheme in this area. Mr Davies had already had some discussion about this with Mrs Grant. In Strathnairn they had found best way to get things started was to hold a public meeting to inform the community about what such a scheme could offer. At the same time information could be collected about the sort of help people might need, and volunteers could put their names forward. They advised that the scheme is totally dependent on finding a small number of reliable volunteers who can make a commitment to offer a few hours each month. They have found that six to eight volunteers is an adequate number. They will be happy to come along to any meeting to offer their advice and experience. Members will discuss suitable dates and get in touch with them.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Key Worker/Affordable Housing

Albyn Housing has reported that progress is being made towards the sale of affordable plots in the Gorthleck scheme. A detailed timetable is now awaited.

(b) Broadband Provision

No new information had been received.

(c) Bottle Banks - Whitebridge

The site suggested at a previous meeting is being looked at by the Council and their response is awaited

(d) Public Toilets - Foyers

Cllr. Davidson reported that Charles Stephen is taking the necessary procedures through the Committees concerned in order to allow a community take-over. A number of other communities are also involved. When all the procedures have been completed the best way for the take-over to proceed will be considered. Cllr. Davidson advised that if improvements are required then that will be the best time to apply to the Ward Budget for funding.

(e) Firework Display - Gorthleck

The Secretary had made enquiries about public liability insurance. If the CC takes on responsibility for the display then it has the necessary insurance already provided through Highland Council. Mr Houston will obtain costings so that an application can

be made for funding. He is willing to set up the display and asked for some CC volunteers to help with the set up and with the bonfire. Mr Fraser, Mr Sharp and Mrs Grant offered to help. The intention is to tie-in the official opening of the new play area in Gorthleck, earlier the same day, and Mrs Grant suggested that the school children might be asked to create some posters for the events.

(f) Home Care in Stratherrick & Foyers

The Secretary had made enquiries about proposed changes in this service. She had received assurances that the intention is to maintain a high standard of home care of the rural areas. There are changes to the shift patterns being offered to Care Workers, and it is hoped that this will not cause too many problems locally.

4. Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence

Notice - Kirking of the Council

Planning Dept. Documents:

Draft - Houses in Multiple Occupancy

Draft - Supplementary guidance on Statutorily Protected Species

Notice - Ward Forum 22.09.11 on Timber extraction & transport

Notice - Workshop Highland Community Development Strategy 02.09.11

Information on CC elections and CC grants

Enquiry - Community Development Officer re over 50s lunches

Other Correspondence and Circulars received

Kiltarlity CC - Information on Druim Ba Windfarm

Loch Ness Marathon - Road closures and event information

Rt. Hon. Danny Alexander MP - Notice of Advice Surgeries

Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust - Newsletter July 2011

Stagecoach - Offer of email notification of service changes

Information on Britain in Bloom

Guide Dogs - Appeal for volunteers

5. Treasurer's Report

Account balances were reported as follows:

Ordinary A/c - £4540.18 (including £362 in grant money for Fraser Monument)

It was noted that the CC grant has been received and seems to be an unusually large amount. The Treasurer will query this.

Project A/c - £23464.05.

6. Planning Matters

New applications:

Erect house S of Suilven, Gorthleck (PIP)

Replace chalet with house Easter Drummond Lodge, Whitebridge (PIP)

New House NE of Lyne, Gorthleck (Full)

Members studied the documentation and there were no objections.

It was agreed to make a comment in relation to the application at Lyne, Gorthleck that members are slightly concerned at the unusual/non traditional design of this property in such a prominent location, and hope that suitable screening will be provided.

7. Fire Brigade Report

Mr Kirkland had no new matters to report.

8. Policing Matters

PC Mathieson updated the CC on recent staff changes at Beauly and Drumnadrochit.

Members again raised the problem of hazardous parking at the Dores/Foyers junction, which is a particular problem on summer week-ends. PC Mathieson suggested that the Police could put traffic cones in place as a temporary measure, and it was felt that this would help. Cllr. Davidson will approach TEC Services to see if a more permanent solution can be found.

9. Roads and Signage

(a) Outstanding Matters

Roadside tree clearance - The Chairman informed the meeting that a further period of road closure in the Inverfarigaig pass had been agreed following meetings with Forestry officials. This could be up to ten weeks from 5th September. It was agreed that this whole process has been very badly handled by contractors and the Forestry Commission, and that the community has been badly let down. It was noted that the Ward Forum meeting in September will be in the Gorthleck Hall, and is about the whole problem of timber extraction and transport. The aim will be to get as many of the involved parties as possible to attend.

Bus shelter Lower Foyers - The Secretary reported that installation of the new shelter has been promised for the week of 29th August.

Timber lorries on Trinloist road - The severe damage to the edges of this road is still an issue.

Pot-holes on Garthbeg road - Mr Sharp reported that these are worse. It was suggested that he should put in a phone call to the Council to report these so that at least some temporary repairs will be made.

Traffic priorities at Calanour junction - TEC Services now said that they had not made a decision on this matter, and were linking it to twin tracking of the road to Errogie. Members who had been present on site when this was discussed agreed that an absolute assurance had been given that the reprioritisation would be done, and was not a big job - just a matter of paint. Cllr. Davidson is making further enquiries.

Damage to Torness road by Chisholm's lorry. Mr Houston reported that no further work has been done on this, and it seems unlikely that anything will ever be done.

Access road to Foyers burial ground - TEC Services have looked at the road and have agreed to make improvements (remove centre vegetation, cut offlets to allow water to drain, lay and compact some scalplings). No date has been given for this as yet.

(b) Other Roads Matters

Some large pot-holes on verges were reported near to Errogie, due to vehicle over-runs. It was felt that an additional passing place is needed.

There are deep drops to the verges at the Calanour junction. This is a long term problem and warning signs are buried in vegetation.

There is some damage to the bridge into Aberchalder which needs attention.

Cllr. Davidson will raise these issues with TEC Services.

With the start of the school term it was noted that there had been some problems with the capacity on the school/public buses. Provision of a 40 seater bus still did not solve the capacity problem, and meant that the bus could not access the stop in Lower Foyers adjacent to Riverside. Cllrs. Davidson and Hendry had taken up this matter, and at present there are two small buses operating - the original Foyers bus, plus a small bus from Dores to Inverness to cope with the extra numbers. This is being monitored for a month to assess usage.

Mr Kirkland raised the problem of arrangements for winter access to the local Fire Station. Enquiries will be made.

TEC Services representatives will be at the Ward Forum meeting on 22nd September. Cllr. Davidson will arrange for them to come early so that CC members will have an opportunity to show them some of the roads problem areas.

10. Water and Sewerage

There were no new matters to report.

11. Community Project - Gorthleck

The Secretary had made enquiries about public liability insurance for the area. This was dependent on a number of factors. She had put Mr MacKenzie of Highland Council in touch with the Project Manager direct so that the situation could be clarified. The outcome of their discussions is not known. Mr Houston will make enquiries. In order to obtain the final grant awarded by Leader, the Project Manager had requested that the CC formally adopt the Highland Council Child Protection Policy. The Secretary having previously circulated details to members, this Policy was adopted.

The question of ongoing costs of maintenance was raised, and the possibility of Highland Council taking on responsibility for the site. Enquiries will be made.

12. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

The Chairman reported that one final point is still to be resolved in the Dunmaglass negotiations.

Charles Stephen is continuing negotiations on the Corriegarth project.

14. Any Other Competent Business

Mr Forbes reported that he had been in touch with SSE regarding the old right of way in Lower Foyers. He is hopeful that this will be re-opened, and is waiting to hear from them.

Cllr. Davidson reported that she is due to have a meeting to discuss the creation of additional parking adjacent to the Shop in Foyers.

Mr Kirkland enquired about the provision of 'smiley faces' speed warnings in Gorthleck. Cllr. Davidson reported that a bid is about to go in for Safe Routes to Schools money, and the smiley faces may be included in this.

The Secretary informed members that notices had been received regarding the CC elections to be held in November. She distributed timetables to members. The Chairman will send information to the Boleskine Bulletin.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 27th September 2011 at the Stratherrick Hall in Gorthleck.

The meeting was closed at 9.15 p.m.