

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 2011
AT THE STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK
(Inaugural Meeting of New Community Council)

Present:

Mr A. MacLure (Local Returning Officer)	
Mrs M. Cameron	Mr K. Fraser
Mr M. Houston	Mr L. MacNally
Mr A. MacPherson	Mrs E. Merther
Mr F. Ross	Mr A. Sutherland

Also present:

Councillor M. Davidson	Councillor D. Hendry
Mr N. Kirkland (Fire Officer)	

1. Election of Office Bearers

Mr MacLure opened the meeting and welcomed the new Community Council members. He thanked the retiring members and all those who had put their names forward for election. He noted the excellent return of 71% of voting papers, and that the new CC has a clear mandate from the community.

He then invited nominations for Chairman. Mr M. Houston was unanimously appointed as Chairman. Proposed: Mrs E. Merther Seconded: Mr A. Sutherland
Mr MacLure then handed the meeting over to Mr Houston, who thanked him for presiding over the launch of the new CC.

The Chairman then invited nominations for the other Offices.

Secretary: Mrs E. Merther Proposed: Mr A. MacPherson

Seconded: Mr K. Fraser

Treasurer: Mr F. Ross

Proposed: Mr A. MacPherson

Seconded: Mr M. Houston

Deputy Chairman: Mr K. Fraser Proposed: Mr A. MacPherson

Seconded: Mr M. Houston

All Officers were appointed unopposed.

2. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th October 2011 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr A. Sutherland

Seconded: Mr K. Fraser

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Key Worker/Affordable Housing

Cllr. Davidson confirmed that funding for these schemes is not available at present due to the difficult financial climate. The developers in Gorthleck hope to place two plots on the market for private sale to provide funding for the infrastructure required to develop more of the site. Mr Ronnie MacRae of the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust is arranging to meet with the original seller of the land to discuss the situation and explain the reasons for the proposed course of action. Mr Sutherland agreed to go along with him. Following this a public meeting will be arranged to explain the proposals to the community. Mr Sutherland said that the Community Trust will almost certainly wish to invest in the scheme when funds allow, but must complete their current building project first.

(b) Care in Strathnairn

The Secretary has drawn up a simple questionnaire for inclusion in the next Boleskine Bulletin to gauge interest in setting up a similar scheme in this area.

(c) Car Parking - Foyers Shop and Cafe

Cllr. Davidson reported that Highland Council is proceeding with the necessary land searches.

(d) Foyers Public Toilets

It was reported that the toilets have now been closed for the winter and water drained down. Cllr. Davidson is making enquiries about a payment from the Highland Comfort Scheme for use of the Foyers Cafe toilets. She is also awaiting quotations from HC for the required work on the public toilets. The toilets have not yet been passed to the community. Mr Charles Stephen, the Ward Manager, is progressing the necessary steps through the various committees concerned to allow this. The Secretary will enquire about progress.

(e) Street Lighting - Energy Saving Measures

It was agreed to put a brief notice in the Boleskine Bulletin to gauge local feeling about a switch-off period from midnight till 6.00 a.m. each night. The Secretary will prepare this.

(f) Snow Clearance - Gorthleck Fire Station

The Secretary had written to the Chief Fire Officer regarding TEC Services response to our enquiry. The Fire Service is now in contact with TECS to try to make a formal arrangement for clearance.

(g) Shinty Pavilion - Lower Foyers

The Secretary had written to SSE Estates Office regarding possible removal of this building on safety grounds. She is awaiting a reply.

4. Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence:

- Community Council election results
- New timetables for local bus routes
- Poster for Inverness Hogmanay party

Other Correspondence and Circulars received:

- Highland Small Communities Housing Trust - November Newsletter
- Poster - Homecoming Parade - The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

5. Treasurer's Report

Mr Ross will liaise with the outgoing Treasurer for hand-over. She had informed the meeting of current balances as follows:

Ordinary A/c: £1667.02 Project A/c: £12,573.52

6. Planning Matters

(a) New applications:

- Old Brackashie, Whitebridge - Replace existing extension with similar
(Planning permission granted on this application in the interval between CCs)
- Former Errogie Church - Change of use to dwelling (Full)
Members agreed to make a site visit.

(b) Any other planning matter:

Members had received complaints about the site road and access which has been created to the site for three house plots in Errogie adjacent to 'Phoenix'. It was agreed that a site visit would be made.

7. Fire Brigade Report

Mr Kirkland reported that there is a meeting this week to look at the future structure of the Service in Scotland, and funding.

Gorthleck is in line for a new Station building, but this is not expected immediately as

some other areas are in greater need than Gorthleck.

New 'Midi' appliances have been ordered and Gorthleck will receive one of these. These are larger than the present appliance, but not full size. This will mean an increase in stand-by duties for the Station, and a successful bid has been made for two new crew members, despite recent cut-backs. This will bring the crew to 11.

8. Policing Matters

P.C. Mathieson was not present, but no new matters had been reported.

9. Roads and Signage

(a) Outstanding Matters

Roadside tree clearance - The Chairman reported that the Inverfarigaig pass is now open, and a very good job of clearance has been done.

Damage to Trinloist road - A temporary repair has been done. It was agreed that this will soon break down and a permanent repair is required.

Pot-holes on Garthbeg road - Cllr. Davidson reported this is on the list for action.

Drops on verges East of Calanour junction - Mr Fraser reported that work has started on this.

Errogie - need for additional passing place - HC has agreed this will be dealt with when the road is re-aligned at the Errogie corner. Mr Sutherland noted that there is still no word of planning permission for this development, despite application having been made in April. Cllr. Davidson will enquire.

Damage to bridge at Aberchalder - This work has not yet been scheduled.

Access road to Foyers Burial Ground - The Secretary reported that a good job has now been done on the second section of this road.

(b) Other Roads Items

Cllr. Davidson reported that there is a meeting on 25.11.11 with TEC Services personnel to look at the proposed strategy for spending on South Loch Ness roads. It was agreed that as many CC members as possible will attend. One of the issues was the temporary nature of the patching work being done. It was felt that this is a waste of resources and that permanent repairs should be done in the first place.

Cllr. Davidson reported that a meeting had taken place with Forestry staff regarding timber transport, and a number of commitments had been made to improve communications and other transport issues. She will ask Charles Stephen to send us details of the agreements reached at the meeting.

Mr Colin MacKenzie, one of the Forestry Managers is preparing a report on the timber extraction routes strategy for the next ten years. Cllr. Davidson will keep us informed on this.

Mr MacPherson reported that a bad pot-hole has developed adjacent to the first cattle grid on the Bochruben road. This will be reported.

British Waterways is about to present their report on the Foyers Pier. Cllr. Davidson will forward this when it is available.

10. Water and Sewerage

There was nothing new to report. The Secretary had enquired about the proposal to lay a new pipe supply, but has not yet received a reply.

11. Community Project - Gorthleck

The Chairman reported that this is now almost complete. The final funding application has been made. He thanked all those involved in helping with the opening event, and members thanked him for the excellent firework display.

12. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

Mr Sutherland reported the following:

The Dunmaglass agreement is about to be signed.

Discussions have started on the Stronlairig scheme. SSE plan a public exhibition and planning application next year. An opportunity for possible investment in a wind turbine was noted.

A meeting regarding Corriegarth is scheduled for next week. Mr Ross declared an interest in this area.

With the commencement of the new CC Mr Sutherland requested a fresh mandate to continue as negotiator for community benefit. Members agreed this unanimously.

Cllr. Davidson noted that SSE is going to be a huge investor in the local economy over the coming years, and that some discussions had taken place regarding the possibilities for employment and apprenticeships in the area.

13. Any Other Competent Business

Mr Kirkland reported that a new fire hydrant has been installed at the house sites in Errogie.

The Secretary had received an enquiry about the problems with TV reception for some residents in Inverfarigaig, and the need for a community aerial had been suggested.

Mrs Cameron reported that Glenlia residents were looking at this option to provide Freeview access. It was suggested that the technical people doing the survey might be asked to also look at Inverfarigaig. Mr Sutherland confirmed that the Trust should be able to help with funding such schemes.

Cllr. Davidson reported that an appraisal of the Foyers Schoolhouse is being carried out to look at long term options.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 13th December at the Foyers Primary School.

The meeting was closed at 8.50 p.m.