

## **MINUTES OF MEETING 24th FEBRUARY 2009**

Members present: Mark Houston, Elizabeth Merther, Katherine Grant, Martyn Bateman, Kenny Fraser, Paul Higham, Lesley MacGregor, Sandy MacPherson, Alex Sutherland.

Also present: Councillor M. Davidson

Apologies received: Alex Nicol, Councillor H. Carmichael Councillor D. Hendry Councillor H. Wood Police Constable A. Mathieson

### **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

Wade's Bridge at Whitebridge M.B. reported that there is a meeting scheduled for the evening of 3rd March when Mr John Townshend will be presenting information received from Historic Scotland.

Possible future development - Lower Foyers: E.M. reported that she had been present at a meeting arranged by Mr & Mrs Forbes with Mia Scott, Project Director of the Highland Buildings Preservation Trust, and Drew MacFarlane-Slack, Highland Regional Manager of the Scottish Rural Property & Business Association, who had given information and advice on possible development. They have suggested an options appraisal should be carried out & Mr & Mrs Forbes will keep the CC informed of progress.

### **Tabling of Correspondence**

#### **Highland Council Correspondence**

Draft - Open Space in New Residential Development: Supplementary Guidance

Community Councils and Scottish Government Planning Consultations and Publication

Highland Council Local Transport Strategy Forum

#### **Other Correspondence & Circulars Received**

Scottish Natural Heritage - Notification of Site of Special Scientific Interest

Letters from residents of Foyers regarding closure of footbridge

#### **Letters Sent**

Correspondence - bus service to Lower Foyers

#### **Treasurer's Report**

K.G. presented a balance sheet covering the time since the new Council took office. She said that some confusion had arisen over management of the Ordinary and Project A/Cs meaning that additional funds will be required to cover expenses until the next grant is due. The Project A/C balance is now £3663. The Ordinary A/C balance stands at £125. Known amounts still to be paid from this A/C total £285. There will also be additional running costs, as yet unknown. Following discussion it was agreed that the CC will apply to the Community Trust for funds to cover the cost of some donations to community events. This will provide funds to tide the CC through till the next grant. M.H. and E.M. will deal with this.

#### **Planning Applications**

Sign Boards - 3 locations Foyers & Gorthleck: There were no objections to the formal application for these signs advertising a B & B facility.

Signs are believed to be already in place.

### **Fire Brigade Report**

It was suggested that the CC should write to the head of the Fire Service in Inverness for information on how new EU regulations may impact on the volunteer force. E.M. will do this.

### **Policing Matters**

A situation involving dangerous parking had been mentioned to a Council member. The CC felt that this would be best reported to the Police by the member of the public concerned, who would be able to give accurate details. It was pointed out that this could be done anonymously.

### **Roads & Signage**

(a) TEC Services meeting 20.2.09 – M.H., E.M. and K.F. attended a meeting with Neil Gillies (N.G.), Director of TEC and Mike Stephens of TEC in Inverness, along with Cllr. Davidson. Members of the Dores and Strathnairn CCs were also present. The following matters were on the Agenda:

South Loch Ness roads - There was discussion about the poor state of the roads over many years. N.G. agreed that these needed to be included in the Capital Programme currently under development. Cllr. Davidson indicated that she will monitor the situation to make sure that this happens.

Winter gritting - Discussion took place about the unsatisfactory winter gritting of roads in the area. It was felt that this has been getting worse over the last two winters. N.G. said that this would be looked into to try to identify the problems. As far as TEC Services are concerned he said that there had been no change in the priorities or standards of gritting expected.

Glendoe improvement fund for the B862 - Mr Stephens had no further details on the finances as yet, but promised to provide these soon. K.F. re-iterated the CC's view that the project had been poorly handled and that the community did not appear to have had value for money.

Closure of footbridge at Lower Foyers - The need for a replacement bridge for both vehicles & pedestrians was discussed. The detrimental impact of the loss of this bridge on local residents was emphasised. N.G. informed us that a priorities assessment is being carried out for bridges across the Highlands. E.M. will prepare a letter detailing the case for a new bridge to be included in the current Capital Programme. This will be sent to N.G. and to Mr David MacKenzie, Chief Structural Engineer, who is carrying out the priorities assessment. Copies of all the letters sent to the CC by local residents on this matter will be included. The failure to deal with loose plates on the bailey bridge was also discussed.

Timber extraction - Damage to roads by heavy lorries carrying timber was discussed. It was felt that remedial road work following extraction is not being enforced adequately, and examples were given. There was felt to be a definite problem with lack of communication between contractors and the relevant authorities about extraction operations and this will be looked into.

(b) There were reports of several pot holes needing attention & the state of the Dell road was raised. This is now almost unusable and is causing damage to cars. Cllr. Davidson suggested that calls should be logged to the Council Service Point number who deal with dangerous hazards.

(c) Bus service to Lower Foyers – E.M. reported that she had contacted D & E Coaches and Highland Council Transport Dept. Following their visit to Foyers, the bus route was immediately extended to cross the river to an official stop beside Riverside. A bus stop sign has now been installed.

### **Water & Sewerage**

Further to Cllr. Davidson's report last month, she informed the meeting that it has now been confirmed there are no problems with provision of water supplies, following the repair of several large leaks.

### **Renewable Energy & Community Benefit**

A.S. reported that there is a meeting on 3rd March with Scottish & Southern Energy and Fort Augustus representatives to discuss responses to the energy audits questionnaire. Options on the best way forward will be discussed. He also reported that the amount due to the Community Trust will be paid annually and retrospective. Approved grant applications copied to the Scottish Community Foundation every year.

### **Any Other Competent Business**

(a) K.G. reported the poor state of the Trinloist road following timber extraction. There have also been cut trees left 'hanging' in the wood which are likely to fall, as well as spindly, roadside trees which are vulnerable to high winds. M.H. reported a similar situation on the Knockie road. A letter will be sent to Forest Enterprise.

(b) A.S. reported that he had requested details of proposed 'green energy' schemes which Forest Enterprise might have in the pipeline for this area, with a view to the possibility of a community stake in such schemes.

(c) A.S. suggested that tourist signs directing cyclists along this side of the Loch might be beneficial. Concern was expressed about the safety on sections of road. Cllr. Davidson reported that a cycle way between Dores & Inverness is planned by 2010 which will make the route much safer.

(d) Cllr. Davidson notified the CC about meetings on the Highland Leader Programme for funding for local projects.

(e) M.B. raised the issue of the steep drop alongside the road below the school turning in Foyers. E.M. reported that a letter had been written about this previously but no response received. Cllr. Davidson will make enquiries.

(f) L.M. again raised the issue of lack of visibility for drivers leaving the Medical Centre. The possibility of setting up a mirror was suggested.

(g) E.M. had been approached regarding the fencing around the Cemetery in Lower Foyers and the problem of marauding deer. A resident had suggested that if materials were provided, volunteers would probably erect a fence. A.S. indicated that the Trust would almost certainly fund such a project. The CC felt that a group of volunteers need to get together with someone in charge with the necessary skills in fencing. They should then obtain costings for materials and make application to the Trust. This information will be passed on to the resident concerned.

The continuing poor state of the Cemetery road was also raised. Again a letter had been written about this and action promised but nothing has happened. Cllr. Davidson said that she would ask Mr Fridge to come to Foyers to meet with E.M. at the Cemetery to see the state of the road.