

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26th JANUARY 2010**  
**AT THE FOYERS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Members present:

Mr M. Houston (Chairman)

Mrs K. Grant (Treasurer)

Mr A. Nicol

Mrs E. Merther (Secretary)

Mr M. Bateman

Mr A. Sutherland

Also present:

Police Constable A. Mathieson

Councillor Drew Hendry

Mr N. Kirkland (Fire Service)

Apologies received:

Mr K. Fraser

Mrs L. MacGregor

Mr P. Higham

Councillor Margaret Davidson

**1. Adoption of Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2009 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr M. Bateman

Seconded: Mrs K. Grant

**2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

**(a) Key Worker/Affordable Housing**

There is still no reply to our enquiry about the scheme in Gorthleck. Further enquiries will be made.

**(b) Wade's Bridge at Whitebridge**

Mr Bateman reported that a Consulting Architect has been approached, and it is hoped that the Community Trust might assist with funding. Mr Sutherland reported that discussions had taken place on behalf of the Trust between himself, Mr Houston, and Mr John Townshend. He felt that the Trust may wish to see some funding also being provided by land owners concerned. Discussions are continuing.

**(c) Fraser Monument & Burial Ground at Foyers**

The Secretary reported that an application has been prepared for funding from the Highland Council Discretionary Budget for a formal survey to be carried out. She is meeting Mr Craig Frew of Laing Traditional Masonry this week, when he will have a preliminary look at the monument.

**(d) Right of Way through Knockie Estate**

The Chairman presented a map prepared by Mr Stewart Eastaugh showing the proposed change of route. It was agreed this should be posted on the Community Web Site in order to get public feedback. The Chairman will arrange this. It was noted that problems with obstructions due to animal pens, gates, and cattle feeding stations will need to be addressed if the proposed route is to be suitable.

**(e) Dog Fouling - Children's Play Area, Lower Foyers**

Mr Nicol reported that the problem persists, and also affects other grassy areas immediately around Riverside. A Riverside resident has suggested that a suitable letter should be sent to all householders in Riverside reminding them of their responsibilities in this matter. Members agreed that this should be done.

**3. Correspondence**

**Highland Council Correspondence**

Notice: Customer services line for trunk road problems: Traffic Scotland -  
0800 0281414

Reminder: Community Council Review - Phase 1 (circulated)

UK General Election Count Consultation (circulated)  
Notice: City Forum - The Police, Community and You - 26th January 2010  
(circulated)

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

Highland Small Communities Housing Trust - Changes at the Trust  
(circulated)

Danny Alexander MP - Meeting on Inverness by-pass - 15th February 2010  
NHS Highland - Bowel screening programme  
Highland Environmental Network Newsletter  
Notts Sport Ltd. - Synthetic sport and play surfaces  
Highlands & Islands MSPs - Letter regarding broadband provision

#### **Letters Sent**

Further letter on bus shelter for Lower Foyers  
Letter to Knockie Trust regarding cheque for pensioners' fund  
Letter and donation to South Loch Ness Nursery Christmas party  
Letter of support for South Loch Ness Trail project  
Letter to Planning Department requesting legal guidance

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer reported account balances as follows:

Project A/c - £6663.58

Ordinary A/c - A cheque for £400 was paid in from the Knockie Trust for Mr J.W. Campbell for the Senior Citizens' Fund. With the balance already held for the fund of £124.03 this made a total of £524.03. A cheque for £512.30 has been given to Mr Campbell for the Christmas dinner, leaving a balance held for the fund of £11.73.

The current total balance in the A/c is £636.70.

#### **5. Planning Matters**

Cllr. Hendry left the meeting during discussion of planning matters.

##### Applications

Erection of farm shop and tea room, land South of Glenlia Farm, Foyers - a site visit has been carried out.

Demolition of existing building & erection of general agricultural shed at Abersky Farm, Torness.

Extension to provide first floor accommodation and new store/laundry at Wildside Lodges, Whitebridge.

There were no objections to the three applications.

##### New Applications

Detailed: Erection of house at West Drummond Cottage, Whitebridge

In principle: Erection of house and garage - land 50m. West of Cairns Croft, Wester Drummond, Whitebridge.

Site visits will be made.

#### **6. Fire Brigade Report**

Mr Kirkland reported that with the recruitment of two new members the local force is now up to strength.

#### **7. Policing Matters**

Constable Mathieson had nothing new to report, but said that the Police are aware of

the incidents of theft of diesel fuel in the area.

## **8. Roads and Signage**

### **(a) Outstanding Matters**

The considerable problems on the roads in the recent severe weather were discussed. Members had received innumerable complaints from residents during this time. Residents reported being unable to get any response from the Highland Council emergency help-line. Mr Angus Fraser the Contractor was present at the meeting. Mr Fraser wished the meeting to note that he has now been given new instructions on gritting priorities to conserve salt stocks. He is to use salt on the B roads, and other routes are to have sand only applied.

It was agreed that the major problem had been falling and overhanging trees, which meant that the snow plough and gritter could not get access to many roads. In this situation members need to know who is responsible for dealing with the immediate problem, as the Contractor cannot be clearing trees and gritting roads at the same time.

Among many problems, the Fire Station was out of use due to snow, and the Foyers School road was closed for a prolonged period.

Cllr. Hendry reported that there were serious management issues during the period in question, which are being addressed. He and the other Councillors feel that there need to be effective contingency plans in place to deal with such situations. They have presented their own list to the Council, and are keen for CCs to prepare lists of their own requirements.

Mr Richard Evans of TEC Services is now responsible for roads issues in this area, and he will attend our next meeting to discuss these matters.

### **(b) Bridge in Lower Foyers**

Cllr. Hendry and the Secretary had both made enquiries with the Council Emergency Planning Department as to what steps will be taken in the event of the bailey bridge being closed due to flooding, and a major incident such as a fire or life threatening medical emergency south of the river. Cllr. Hendry presented to the meeting the reply he had received. The Secretary will go through the options suggested with a view to the CC making any necessary response.

It was noted that the limitations imposed on the emergency services in any such event, are a very good argument for a new bridge being included in the Highland Council budget.

### **(c) Other Roads Items**

(i) It was noted that there is still some mud and debris on the road in some areas following the landslide and flood. The Secretary will speak to the SSE representative about this.

(ii) A member reported that the cattle grid on the Torness road near to Bochruben House has dropped and is in need of remedial work. A letter will be sent.

(iii) It was suggested that in heavy snow conditions it is not easy to locate the piles of grit placed beside roads, and that grit bins might be better. These have been provided in some areas. Enquires will be made as to whether additional bins are an option.

## **9. Water and Sewerage**

There was nothing new to report.

**10. Community Project - Gorthleck**

There was nothing new to report.

**11. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit**

Cllr. Hendry declared an interest during discussions on these matters.

It was noted that planning permission has been granted for the Corriegarth wind farm. Mr Graham Irwin of North British Windpower will attend our next meeting to update the CC on the project.

There was some discussion about arrangements for community councils negotiating community benefit relative to projects within their areas. Mr Sutherland will draft a letter to Mr Alistair Dodds at Highland Council asking for a standard procedure to be set up.

**12. Any Other Competent Business**

(a) Mr Sutherland noted that BT are offering to sell their red telephone boxes to the local communities, and wondered whether the Trust should consider the box at Errogie. Cllr. Hendry advised caution in this, as BT would then have no responsibility for maintenance, and are free to withdraw the phone from the box at any time. There will be further discussion on this.

(b) In the light of the diesel fuel thefts, Mr Bateman again raised the question of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, but it was felt that this is a very difficult thing to undertake. Constable Mathieson indicated that the Police Safety Unit may be able to help with some resource materials. He will make enquiries.

(c) Cllr. Hendry reported that Leader match funding will shortly be increased to 90% for suitable projects.

(d) Cllr. Hendry informed the CC of a scheme operating on Stagecoach buses which allows 16 and 17 year olds to purchase tickets at half price when they buy ten journey tickets.

(e) Work in Lower Foyers following the landslide is continuing. A new sub-station is due to be connected next week, allowing households affected to be taken off the generator, which has been in place since the incident.

**13. Dates of Future Meetings**

Dates for the next five meetings were agreed as follows:

23rd February 2010	Stratherrick Hall
23rd March 2010	Foyers Primary School
27th April 2010	Stratherrick Hall
25th May 2010	Foyers Primary School
22nd June 2010	Stratherrick Hall

Any changes will be notified.

The meeting was closed at 8.50 p.m.