

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28th JUNE 2011  
AT THE STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK**

Members present:

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

Mrs E. Merther (Secretary)  
Mr D. Forbes  
Mr F. Ross

Also present:

Councillor M. Davidson  
Mr Paul Owen (SSE)

Police Constable A. Mathieson  
Mr David O'Brien (Morgan Sindall-SSE)

Apologies received:

Mr P. Higham  
Mr N. Kirkland

Councillor D. Hendry

**1. Adoption of Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2011 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr D. Forbes                      Seconded: Mrs K. Grant

**2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

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

The Chairman and Secretary had attended a meeting with representatives of Albyn Housing and the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust regarding the land held by them at Gorthleck and Inverfarigaig. It had been agreed that in view of the extremely long delays with the development at Gorthleck, efforts should be made to take this forward first. In the present difficult economic climate it was felt that the first step should be to release some affordable plots for self-build projects and that, at a later stage, the income from these should help to fund building of other types of housing needed.

Cllr. Davidson advised that when plots become available, a mailing to all households in the area could be carried out, and that Highland Council would cover any costs. It was felt that information on the proposed schedule for provision of the different types of housing should be included. Cllr. Davidson also advised that people wishing to be considered for property in the Gorthleck scheme should be encouraged to get their names on the Housing Register. It was noted that a fairly recent housing needs survey has been carried out in the area.

**(b) Broadband Provision**

No new information has been received.

**(c) Care in Strathnairn**

Mrs Grant has been in contact with Paul Davies, the Co-ordinator, and a meeting is to be arranged. It was noted that some local volunteers will be needed. Cllr. Davidson advised that Highland Council may provide additional funding if the area covered by Care in Strathnairn is extended.

Mrs Grant reported that a senior citizens' Lunch Group is being set up in Gorthleck, and the Community Trust is providing funds to assist with the set up.

**(d) Bottle Banks - Whitebridge**

A possible site at the junction of the B862 and the Dalcrag road was suggested. Enquiries will be made with Mr Alan McKinnie at Highland Council as to whether this is a suitable position.

#### (e) Public Toilets - Foyers

Mr Charles Stephen had reported that enquiries are ongoing as to the best way to pass responsibility to the community. In the meantime temporary arrangements for Mr & Mrs Hargreaves of the Foyers Shop and Cafe to look after the toilets have been formalised. These arrangements are in place until 31st October 2011.

### **3. Foyers Falls Recovery Project**

Mr Paul Owen of SSE reported that the work is progressing well. After a slight delay the crossing of the Lower Foyers road is now under way and is expected to be completed in the two days (28th & 29th June). A diversion route past the power station is in place, and the Lower Foyers road is expected to re-open on 30th June.

Mr Dave O'Brien of contractors Morgan Sindall explained the plans and showed a diagram of the proposals for crossing the road to Upper Foyers. There will be no complete closure of the road. A diversion for the footpath and a single traffic lane will be created, and traffic-light control will be in place. It is hoped to carry out this section of the work in early August, but information will be provided when more detail on the timing is known. As much warning as possible will be given.

The Chairman enquired about the situation with firewood from the cleared areas. Mr Owen confirmed that this has been available for people approaching the Site Manager.

The question of the old right of way path behind the factory was raised. This is not the direct concern of the current contractors, and the CC understands that this should be raised with SSE Estates Department. The Chairman confirmed that this had definitely been a right of way. Mr Forbes offered to contact the Estates Department to show them the route of the old path.

### **4. Correspondence**

Highland Council Correspondence:

Notice of disruption to Kessock Bridge traffic from 19th June 2011 (circulated)

Notice of Ward Forums - Planning for Integration (circulated)

New Constitution duly signed by David Haas and returned

Notice of temporary road closure - road to Lower Foyers

Other Correspondence and Circulars received:

Confirmation of Renewal of Data Protection Registration

Highland Funding Information - Spring 2011 (from Cllr. Hendry)

Letter from CKD Galbraith - Permission for refurbishment work on old right of way between Migovie and Corriegarth

Forestry Commission - Notification of possible sale of part of National Forest Estate

SSE re Balmacaan wind farm proposal - change of contact details

Raigmore Hospital - Children's Ward appeal

Information on Community Payback by Offenders

### **5. Treasurer's Report**

Account balances were reported as follows:

Ordinary A/c - £744.85 (including £362 in grant money for Fraser Monument)

Project A/c - £19,749.48

### **6. Planning Matters**

(a) New applications:

Guest annexe - The Coach House, Foyers (Full)

Two house plots - Coillie Beag, Easter Drummond, Whitebridge (PIP)

Members were familiar with the proposed sites and studied the documentation relating to these applications. There were no objections.

**(b) Any Other Planning Matter**

The Chairman had received a report from Mr Kirkland about heavy construction traffic using Stratherrick for access to the Beauly - Denny power line site. It was agreed that accurate identification of the vehicles concerned is needed by taking note of registration numbers, and any names on the vehicles, to make sure these are not accessing the Glendoe site. Cllr. Davidson will enquire about the conditions in the access statement for the contract.

**7. Fire Brigade Report**

Mr Kirkland was not present but no new matters had been reported.

**8. Policing Matters**

Constable Mathieson reported that it looks increasingly likely that all Police control in Scotland will come under one force. Members agreed this is very unlikely to be beneficial to rural communities.

**9. Roads and Signage**

**(a) Outstanding matters**

Roadside tree clearance - On-site meetings took place on 20th and 27th June with all the agencies involved in the Inverfarigaig pass contract. The first was attended by Mr Houston and the second by the Chairman. It was agreed that the community has been badly let down by the handling of this contract. The original planned four week closure of the road finally stretched out to 13 weeks, causing problems for local residents, patients attending the Medical Centre, and potentially serious problems for the local Fire Brigade. Contractors are now talking about a further closure in the Autumn. Cllr. Davidson felt that a very poor job has been done on this contract, and that no-one was keeping control of the contractors. A further site meeting is planned for late July, and a member of the CC will attend.

There are plans for further clearance along the Glenlia road. It was agreed that much more stringent controls are required in any future contract.

Bus shelter Lower Foyers - Mr Neil Young has confirmed that a new shelter will definitely be installed in late July/early August this year.

Bridge parapets - Boleskine and Inverfarigaig pass. The Chairman reported that the parapets on the pass road have been repaired. TEC Services has informed that the Secretary that Boleskine bridge parapet and road is being monitored. At present the repair work is planned for the Autumn.

Damage to Trinloist road by timber lorries - Cllr. Davidson informed the meeting that a report is being prepared on the work required.

Pot-holes on Garthbeg road - The Secretary has been told that TEC Services are aware of this problem and that repairs will be done.

**(b) Other Roads Items**

The Chairman noted that road narrowing warnings have been provided at the Torness side on the road by Loch Ceoglais, but warnings are needed at the other end of this stretch of road. A request will be sent.

It was noted that the traffic priorities at the Calanour junction have still not been reconfigured. It was minuted in September 2009 that this would be carried out, at the latest, in Spring 2010. Cllr. Davidson will enquire about this.

Mr Houston reported that the Torness road damaged a Chisholm's lorry early this

year has still not been properly repaired. Some tar and chips were put into the damaged area today, but this is not sufficient. A report will be sent.

The Secretary reported that road drains in Lower Foyers between the old bridge and Riverside were completely blocked, causing water to flood down to the bailey bridge, eroding a deep gully beside the road. She had reported this, and the drains have now been cleared.

#### **10. Water and Sewerage**

There were no new matters to report.

#### **11. Community Project - Gorthleck**

It was noted that some play equipment is now on site. There is further work to be done and volunteers will be needed. Mrs Grant and Mr Houston are due to meet with the Project Manager to take things forward. The question of public liability insurance will need to be checked.

#### **12. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit**

The Chairman reported that the Trust is on the verge of an agreement with regard to the Dunmaglass scheme. An improved capital sum has been offered.

#### **13. Any Other Competent Business**

The Chairman reported that the Forestry Commission are intending to develop two small scale hydro-electric projects in the area. It was noted that communities may have a share in such projects, and we have already registered an interest.

Mr & Mrs Hargreaves had mentioned to the Secretary that they suffer a major loss of trade during the week-end of Rock Ness. She had passed this information to Mrs MacRae in Dores, who is in contact with the organisers, and raised the possibility of some sort of compensation for next year. It was noted that this will need to be raised again in time for next year's festival. There had also been some reports of marshalls turning traffic away from the Foyers road at Dores, and marshalls should be better briefed next year to prevent any misunderstandings.

The Secretary had received a report that changes are to be made to local arrangements for the home carer service, and considerable concern had been expressed about what the arrangements are to be in future. Cllr. Davidson will provide the contact details of the person in charge and the Secretary will write for clarification.

Mr Forbes had noticed that once again bottle banks at Foyers were full and that bottles had been left around the banks. He wondered about a notice asking people not to leave bottles if the banks were full. The possibility of more frequent emptying is also being pursued.

Mr Forbes also noted the very poor state of the second stretch of the cemetery road in Lower Foyers. The first section as far as the gate has had some surfacing work and is not too bad, but the section beyond the gate has deep, muddy ruts, and is very unpleasant for people walking to the cemetery. Cllr. Davidson will raise this matter.

Mr Ross raised the matter of damage to the fence around the children's play area in Upper Foyers. Cllr. Davidson reported that the Glenlia Residents Association have a bid in for funding for new fencing, so this should be dealt with before too long.

Mr Houston requested that the firework display this year should be organised under the auspices of the CC, so that it is covered by their public liability insurance. He has covered this himself in the past, but is now finding the cost to himself as an individual prohibitive. Cllr. Davidson believes that CC insurance may cover an event of this type,

but the Secretary will make enquiries.

Mrs Grant reported that Stratherrick School has lost a full-time teacher, who now has a job in Inverness. Again travelling problems have been an issue. There was some discussion on local housing issues. It was noted that the Foyers Schoolhouse is empty. Cllr. Davidson will enquire about this, and also about the likely length of time before a new teacher can be appointed.

Mrs Ellam was present at the meeting and enquired which newspaper had been used to advertise the public presentation of paperwork in relation to the planning application for the camping and caravan site in Lower Foyers. She was advised that advertising had been done locally, as there was not time to place newspaper advertisements.

Mrs MacDougall was present at the meeting and expressed concern about speeding traffic on the Foyers road. A notice has already been put in the Boleskine Bulletin. There was discussion on possible ways of dealing with this, and Constable Mathieson noted that the worst offenders in these situations are often local drivers. If people report registration numbers of offenders to the Police, they can be visited and given a warning. This can be done anonymously.

#### **14. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 23rd August 2011 at the Primary School in Foyers.

The meeting was closed at 8.50 p.m.