

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24th MAY 2011
AT THE FOYERS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Members present:

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

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

Also present:

Councillor M. Davidson
Mr N. Kirkland

Mr C. Stephen (Ward Manager)
Police Constable A. Mathieson

1. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2011 were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Mrs K. Grant Seconded: Mr J. Sharp

2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Key Worker/Affordable Housing

Cllr. Davidson had arranged a meeting with Albyn Housing and the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust in Inverness on 1st June to discuss the best way forward with the housing projects at Gorthleck and Inverfarigaig. The Chairman and Secretary will attend.

(b) Broadband Provision

A copy of the 'Community Broadband Toolkit' was passed to Mr Paul Higham, who had agreed to look into this matter. Mr Stephen mentioned the Tooway Direct satellite broadband system. The Secretary reported that she has this system and finds it very reliable. While not superfast, it is certainly faster than the very poor landline service she was getting previously. Cllr. Davidson reported that Graeme Ambrose of Destination Loch Ness is in contact with HIE regarding provision of better broadband provision around Loch Ness.

(c) Care in Strathnairn

Mrs Grant has a meeting arranged with Paul Davies, the Co-ordinator, on Friday. Cllr. Davidson advised that some extra funds may be available if needed to extend the scheme to this area.

(d) Bottle Banks - Whitebridge

No further information has been received. Another enquiry will be made.

(e) Drumtemple Cemetery Gate

Mr Sharp reported that there is some damage to the gate, but it is not known if this predates the work which has been done. However, the gate will now open and close properly and will latch.

(f) Public Toilets - Foyers

Mr Stephen attended the meeting to report on this matter. He said that a Committee decision had been taken to close the toilets, partly because they are sub-standard. However, in view of the large number of visitors to the area, and lack of other suitable facilities, a special dispensation had been obtained to keep the toilets open, initially for this season. The only other toilet available is in the Foyers Cafe, and this is not adequate for the number of visitors. Mr Hargreaves of the shop and cafe is looking after the toilets meantime, and it was noted that they are now spotlessly clean.

There was some discussion on the possibility of some sort of community take-over. Cllr. Davidson warned that there are potential difficulties in the CC taking ownership,

so the various options will be investigated. The Chairman reported that he had received agreement from the Scottish Communities Foundation that Community Trust money could be used for this project. Cllr. Davidson indicated that the Ward Budget might help towards the cost of installing hot water.

In the meantime the CC will register an interest in a community buy-out, and in the HC Comfort Scheme, and Mr Stephen will start the necessary paperwork. The Chairman thanked Mr Stephen for coming along to advise us on this matter.

(g) Bottle Banks - Foyers

Cllr. Davidson had spoken to Mr KcKinnie about this and he will arrange for the area to be cleaned up.

3. Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence

Notices - City Forum 14th May & Rural Ward Forum 7th June 2011 (circulated)

Offer of discussion on new Local Plan

Other Correspondence & Circulars received

Notice re NHS Highland Newsletter (circulated)

Notice of SLN Heritage Group meeting 19th May 2011 (circulated)

Information on Energysshare Fund

SSE Renewables - Feedback from exhibitions on Balmcaan and Stronelairg windfarm proposals

Further notice on application to open Pharmacy at Great Glen Trading Centre

HSCHT Meeting - Housing & People - the future of rural communities. 9th and 10th June 2011 (circulated)

Information on Associations of Community Councils (circulated)

Inverness Area CC Forum - Committee paper (circulated)

Renewal notice - Data Protection Registration

Invoice from Boleskine Bulletin

Notice of a meeting on solar electricity at Gorthleck Hall on 4th June 2011

4. Treasurer's Report

Account balances were reported as follows:

Ordinary A/c - £1594.85 (including £362 in grant money for Fraser Monument)

Cheques for £250.00 for the Boleskine Bulletin and £35.00 for Data Protection Registration renewal were written at the meeting.

Project A/c - £13094.48.

Cheques totalling £8255.00 had been written since the last meeting to: Linda Cameron for rent; Fettes sawmill; Highland Industrial Supplies; Project Manager.

5. Planning Matters

(a) New applications:

Forestry access points and loading bays by Abersky, Torness (Mr MacPherson declared an interest)

Replacement porch rear of Farraline, Errogie (Mr Fraser declared an interest)

Two semi-detached bungalows - Smithy Cottage, Errogie (Cllr. Davidson declared an interest in view of her connection with the Highland Housing Alliance. The Chairman and Mr Houston both declared an interest as sponsors of this project on behalf of the Community Trust.)

Temporary siting of static caravan - Druim-an-Ault, Inverfarigaig

Forestry Consultation - South Loch Ness, Erchite

Members studied the documentation for these applications and there were no

objections.

6. Fire Brigade Report

Mr Kirkland had no new matters to report.

7. Policing Matters

PC Mathieson reported that there had been a number of break-ins in Fort Augustus. Police are hopeful of solving this shortly.

He also reported that successful enforcement action had been taken in relation to a problem reported in Gorthleck.

8. Roads and Signage

(a) Outstanding Matters

Roadside tree clearance - It was reported that the gales over the past 24 hours had left a number of trees 'hanging' dangerously along the Foyers to Dores road. Cllr. Davidson will request that these are dealt with.

The Chairman reported that work on the Inverfarigaig pass road had still not been completed, despite the six week closure. A further four week closure had been agreed, and it was felt that this should be ample time for the necessary work to be done. The Chairman reported that ditches are choked and need clearing; there is still debris on slopes which is likely to fall into the road and needs removing; the damage to bridge parapets is still to be repaired, and ideally arrangements should be made for this to be done while the road is closed. Cllr. Davidson will arrange a site meeting to review the situation.

Bus shelter Lower Foyers - The Secretary reported that the CC had been advised of yet another delay until possibly July/August for this installation. A new bus shelter had been ordered, although we were advised that a suitable shelter was available in the TECS yard. The Secretary will contact Neil Young to express our disappointment and find out why it has been necessary to wait for a new shelter.

Run-offs on Torness brae - Mr MacPherson reported that these have been cleared.

Pot-holes Ardochy road - PC Mathieson was recently along this road and thinks they have been repaired.

Timber lorries on Trinloist road - Mrs Grant reported that the road had been quieter, but the severe damage to some areas of the road was still an issue.

Bridge parapet at Boleskine - Enquiries will be made as to when this work will be done.

(b) Other Roads Matters

Cllr. Davidson reported that there is some money in the Capital Programme for minor roads, and there is a bid in for South Loch Ness. She had been told that the wind farm money for roads will not be available until 2013, and not all areas will qualify. She thought there might be a Ward Forum meeting in this area on road improvements, and this would include people involved in negotiating remedial work on roads following timber extraction which, it was agreed, had been a major problem over many years. Cllr. Davidson also reported that a lot of timber is due to be taken out of a number of areas due to the spread of a disease in the trees.

9. Water and Sewerage

There were no new matters to report.

10, Community Project - Gorthleck

Equipment is currently being purchased. The Project Manager has posted notices requesting volunteers to help with setting up the project.

11. Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

Cllr. Davidson reported that she had been very disappointed with the offer made by RES and had advised them of this. RES now wish to have a further meeting, and Charles Stephen is arranging a further meeting with representatives of the three Community Trusts to negotiate further.

It was noted that various benefits had been arranged through the Glendoe scheme, such as a bursary scheme for young engineers. There is also a Ranger who monitors wildlife. PC Mathieson, who is the local wildlife protection officer, was keen to meet with the Ranger, and Cllr. Davidson will forward contact details.

12. Members' Resignations

The resignations of Mr Steve Hunt and Mrs Julie Hunt were noted.

It was agreed that Mr Houston should now be co-opted as a full, voting member, and also that Mr Paul Higham be co-opted as a full member, bringing the CC to full membership.

Proposed: Mr A. Sutherland Seconded: Mr D. Forbes

13. Adoption of New Constitution, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct

The new models provided by Highland Council, having previously been circulated to members, were formally adopted by the CC.

Proposed: Mr A. Sutherland Seconded: Mrs E. Merther

14. Any Other Competent Business

Mr Forbes reported that there is an ongoing problem with water lying on the road at Ness-side due to leaf litter blocking the drainage. Cllr. Davidson will pass this on to one of the Councillors responsible for that area.

Mrs Grant had received enquiries about the availability of firewood from the clearance being done by SSE, and also whether some might be delivered to pensioners. Enquiries will be made.

Mr Houston expressed concern about the hazard posed by cars parked at the junction of the Foyers road in Dores during busy times. PC Mathieson will investigate this problem.

Mr Sharp reported a number of large pot-holes on the Garthbeg road. A report will be sent.

Mrs Ellam of Easter Boleskine was present at the meeting and again expressed dissatisfaction at the way the CC had handled the planning application for a caravan/camping site in Lower Foyers. Once again the Chairman explained the CC role within the planning process, that the CC had behaved correctly throughout, and that the CC had gone far beyond what is required of it to provide information to the community and obtain feedback.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 28th June 2011 at the Stratherrick Hall in Gorthleck.

The meeting was closed at 8.35 p.m.