

**STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11th February 2014
AT STRATHERRICK PUBLIC HALL, GORTHLECK 7.30pm**

Present: Ian Bateman (IB) Iain Brown (IBR) Whitebridge,
Liam MacNally (LM) & Catriona Fraser (CF) Gorthleck
Morag Cameron (MC) & Sally McGuire (SM) Glenlia, Foyers
Martin Donnelly (MDO) Foyers

Apologies – Councillor Margaret Davidson (MDA)

Chair informed meeting that possible Minutes Secretary had yet to commit to the position. Chair to chase – Advertise post in BB.

Agenda

1. Adoption of minutes of 28th January

Chair circulated draft minutes with some further detail. Amended minutes adopted subject to Sally amalgamating & republishing.

Proposed: Morag Seconded: Martin

2. New councillor

Following on from Ros Rowell stepping down, Katie Ellam (who had stood for election in June) was approached and co-opted onto SFCC. Proposed Morag, seconded Sally. Chair is to inform Charles Stephen (Ward Manager).

3. Matters arising

Community Transport - RJ McLeod have offered to help with school transport to Fort Augustus during Loch Tarff road works (12 pupils currently make the journey)
Transport group may use this as part of a trial for a longer term solution across this and other routes. Iain and Margaret to pursue this.

Boleskine Bridge – to be re-tarred next week, delays of up to 20 minutes.

Trinloist Road reports of Forestry vehicles damaging verges, Chair to chase FCS

Dell road – there was a query over who is liable for repairs – THC or Dell. Chair is to chase TECS.

Corriegarth Road Improvements – under review due to complication of BT cables, Fibre optic to Gorthleck exchange on one side of road, old copper on other, both being used for services at moment. Laybys may shift to Estate side of road to BT cables (copper & fibre optic)

Open Reach are upgrading BT Green cabinet at Corriegarth, BT infinity is due soon. Open Reach to be invited to CC to review Broadband Services. Iain is in contact with SSE re Fibre Optic cable running along revamped pylon route to Foyers.

Allt Na Goire – boulder has rolled onto verge Chair to chase TECS

Dell Wind Farm – maps etc on Community website soon – further request for Community to respond with opinion, object or not?

Play Park (Gorthleck) – Insurance now on direct debit. Liam - wrecked shed to go.

Foyers Toilets – Martin updated on lease: proposed that CC 'temporarily' takes on lease (25 yrs, with 3 month exit provision). This will ensure Comfort Scheme support continues. Hot water may not be a necessity, & THC may help with water rates & insurance. Meanwhile pursue the rebuild plans with SSE. Iain will seek assurance from THC that support will be available, grace periods on rates etc. It was agreed to take on the lease with these assurances in place.

SSE application for toilet block funding is to be made immediately. Tourist Information Point could be included in Toilet/Car Park redevelopment.

Woodlands/Firewood - Iain advised on an 80 ha Forest block at Errogie which had potential for Community buyout & firewood use. Chair will research potential with FCS and National Forest Land Scheme to identify next steps to be taken.

Audibility - Liam to report

Dunmaglass - Windfarm Liaison. Ian Bateman reported no major issues & requested any concerns forwarded to him, meetings now 3 monthly.

Police – Brief discussion, CC to write with concerns over (lack of) manpower.

Foyers Slipway – awaiting outcome of SSE re land & fish farm sale. Chair is to raise this at meeting of "Development in the Great Glen" next month.

4. Treasurer's Report

Project A/C £2,086.94 - £200 transferred to O/C for Play Park Rent

Ordinary A/C £1,561.53 - +£ 200 Play Park Rent, + Restricted fund £1,200 Transport survey

5. Police Report

No officer present as this was a 'non-monthly' meeting. Request that in future Police Report comes straight after adoption of minutes. Agreed.

6. Planning Matters

a) Dunmaglass Hydro Scheme – 800kw scheme proposed. A large body of water is to be created. Nothing will be visible from roads, no new cabling. No objection.

b) Drummood Wood. The house site on collapsed porta-cabin location - No objection.

c) Whitebridge. House plot immediately below Hotel on small field. No objection.

d) Allt Na Goire – 2 housing plots – renewal of former permissions No objection.

e) Foyers – Street lighting. Request from 4 properties for 2 lights immediately behind them to be switched off, no effect to other properties. CC agreed lights should be switched off but lights retained, secretary to seek clarification on wording in letter from TECS on this matter.

6. Correspondence

a) A letter from BB to SFCT was received for SFCC information.

Please note any correspondence received by the CC will be treated as a public document for circulation – unless the sender specifically indicates otherwise.

b) Ros Rowell – A letter supporting the purchase of land at Foyers for allotments etc. grounds. Martin reported that Donald & Lyn Forbes have land available for allotments – get in contact with Lyn & Donald for further info.

c) Letter from SSE promoting apprenticeship programme – see www.ssejobs.co.uk or community website

d) SFCC emailing list has been set-up. Please contact the Secretary (Sally) if you would like CC minutes by email or posted to you.

e) Green Deal – conference in Glasgow 27th Feb

f) Access Group – note from Alex Sutherland. Chair explained Sally is to liaise with South Loch Ness Access Group to avoid duplication and will then call a meeting.

g) Neil McKenzie – Discussion over potential impact private water supplies and access to property's along the altered underground cable route to the Torness sub-station. Chair to request clarification of changed route & register concern/objections with; SSE, Highland Councillors and planning officer.

h) Notice from THC re Variation to Licence at Foyers House – notice period expired.

i) William Gilfinnan – Community Council pilot scheme. Meeting proposed 10th 12th or 18th March. Dependant on date two out of Martin, Sally, Iain & Ian to attend.

j) Plunkett Foundation – support for Community Owned Businesses

k) Bob How – Boleskine Community Care. Would CC support his enquiries into issues around home care provision and funding in within our area. CC fully endorsed the work & if required someone would attend meetings to show that support. Any written communication quoting CC support is to be run past SFCC (chair) prior to sending.

l) Email with attached letter from Chair of SFCT re actions of Sally in contacting SSE funders directly and the content of that communication.

Chair asked Sally questions to establish facts. Sally advised her letter contained a list of concerns she had with the running of the Trust which in line with the SFCT directors job description, she had tried to raise/challenge her fellow directors several times, however she would be shouted down and even sworn at. As a result of this behaviour she felt she had no option as a director responsible in law to only act in the overall interest of the company but to advise SSE, the sole benefactor to SFCT, of her concerns on the basis that SSE would be best placed to help the board address these issues because it would continue to withhold funds as it has done in the past with Glen Doe monies.

The chair summarised that Sally's actions were that of a SCFT Director not a Community Councillor and in line with her duty under Companies act 2006 to act in the best interests of the company.

Clearly the Trust will have to be acting appropriately in the future to receive funds, It was agreed with the impending AGM we should move on & focus on what we hope will be a new SFCT.

m) Anonymous correspondence. Following THC guidelines ("if it is anonymous it does not exist"), anonymous correspondence will not receive a response.

Note – misunderstanding over SFCC & SFCT interaction and matters has, does & will arise. The Community are encouraged to write to and remind SFCT that they are concerned that they be kept fully informed on SFCT business.

7. Boleskine Community Care

Open day was well attended & good feedback. Data analysis from survey is to appear in BB. Some funding may be forthcoming from RJ McLeod for on-going meal events.

8. Foyers Land Purchase

Martin gave a review of a meeting held at Foyers school earlier in the evening held by Margaret Davidson. A petition was circulated for signatures in support of the Community Purchase of the 2.2 ha field behind Riverside, Foyers for community purposes.

9. Trust

a) Frank Ellam (benefit negotiator) reported that British Wind Power (Corriegarth) were offering £2000 per installed MW to the Community and that he had secured Index Linking of this to keep the benefit constant in real terms over the 20 years payments will be received. CC noted its thanks for securing this and following his recommendation, SFCC agreed to accept this offer. Proposed Ian, seconded Martin

The chair explained the correct procedure regarding Community Benefit;

1. community negotiator secures as good an offer as they believe is possible,
2. CC decide if they wish to accept this offer,
3. CC to write to the Developer advising them of acceptance
4. CC to subsequently decide which mechanism they wish to utilise for the administration of the funds when they start to be received.

The chair then advised that he had been advised by the Developer that he had received a letter from Alex Sutherland that was contrary to this procedure, expressing concern and advising he would seek clarification from him as to what authority he had written this letter under. The chair then rebuked Mr Sutherland advising him that correct procedure must be followed in the future.

b) Directors' update: Morag reported that a solicitor will be present at the forthcoming SFCT AGM (Weds Feb 26th 7.30pm Stratherrick Hall), and encouraged all from the Community to become members.

c) Appointment of SFCC member proxy vote – Chair to attend and vote at AGM – proposed Katie seconded Martin.

Adoption of proposed Articles: After discussion in which it was indicated that the proposed articles still does not reflect the majority of comments in the Trusts survey for meeting to be held in public and be more accountable, in the interest of moving forwards, new board of directors may choose to operate differently in the future. Chair moved for a vote to accept or otherwise the Proposed articles, seconded Martin – For 6, Against 2 (Chair-Iain Brown and Secretary – Sally McGuire)

CC to write politely advising that votes at the SFCT AGM should be counted by persons entirely independent of the SFCT E.g. Solicitor, Charles Stephen.

10 Renewables

a) Iain indicated that Falck (Dell Wind farm) were offering £5000 Community Benefit per installed MW but further discussions needed if scheme is consented.

Also major energy companies had considered reduced electric bills for affected communities as part of Community benefit, due to competition legislation it could only be done through a third party such as a Community Energy Company using an element of the Community Benefit Funds to bulk buy electricity / oil etc.

b) Green Highland Renewables (Knockie Hydro) to attend February SFCC

11. AOCB

Foyers School Car Park/Playground – some discussion on this

Recent Power cuts – provision of emergency generator for a key location(s) such as village hall or similar & emergency planning to ensure vulnerable are looked after.

Bob Main – Thank you to Bob and David for removing the fallen Oak Tree from the Boleskine graveyard, CC to contact THC re damaged headstones and a Larch tree that has fallen across the Fraser monument, Lower Foyers.

Liam – several instances of inside walls of tyres ripped by damaged verge near Farraline, Chair to report to TECS

Jane O'Donovan – lack of sand piles on Suidhe, Chair to report to TECS

Foyers main road – Potholes in unofficial laybys need attention.

Meeting closed 11pm

Next meeting Tuesday 25th Feb Stratherrick Hall 7.30pm