

~~Draft~~ Minutes of Garve & District Community Council meeting held 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2012  
in Garve Village Hall

Present: Kenny MacLean (Chairman), Jean Hollingdale (Secretary), Jean Bailey (Treasurer), Eliza Leslie Melville, Jennifer Haslam, Sue Tarr (Minute Sec), Bob Moir, Alex Mackenzie; Fiona Milligan (Infinergy), Fraser Nixon (HIFRS), Cllr Biz Campbell, 4 members of public.

Apologies: Jean Urquhart.

Declarations of Interest: Biz Campbell will make no comments during planning matters.

Chairman's Comments: The Chairman and five members of G&DCC had attended the Community Council training.

A permanent Police Officer has now been appointed in Lochcarron.

The Chairman had been unable to attend the Community Benefit Workshop but Jean Bailey and Jennifer Haslam had attended. They commented that G&DCC were a lot further ahead than most other communities when it came to dealing with community benefit. The "Pan Highland" community benefit has changed, with a complicated system now in place. None of that money goes directly to the Highland Council; it goes into a Trust Fund which applicants can apply to for money. There is now a dedicated HC community benefit negotiator who communities can ask for help from.

The Chairman attended the Commission on Rural Education on 19<sup>th</sup> March where issues included lack of teachers for certain subjects and lack of affordable housing in rural areas for families and teachers.

He also attended the Ross & Cromarty Access Forum where one of the items under discussion was the issue of access at Ledgowan.

He also attended Marybank, Strathconon & Scatwell CC along with Guy Madgwick and Zoisa Walton of Eneco as they are discussing how the funds from Lochluichart Windfarm will be dealt with.

Church update – on Sun 8<sup>th</sup> April there will be one service at 11am in Contin. There is a family weekend planned for November.

Strathgarve Primary School is collecting Tesco Vouchers.

G&DCC minutes and agendas are available at Garve Post Office (Achnasheen PQ is closing soon),

Garve village notice board, the new Achnasheen village notice board, online at

[www.achnasheenandgarve.com](http://www.achnasheenandgarve.com) from the CC Secretary's email [gdcc@fsmail.net](mailto:gdcc@fsmail.net) or telephone 21007

*or at each CC meeting*

Approval of the minutes from the meeting held 6<sup>th</sup> March 2012 was proposed by Eliza Leslie Melville and seconded by Alex Mackenzie.

Matters Arising:

HC Winter Roads Maintenance Review held 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb - The meeting heard a summary of the points made. The budget is £4.7m.

Rogie Falls Footbridge – the original estimate for replacing the bridge was £90,000 but this has risen to £123,000. Work started last week, there will be no access across the bridge until new bridge in place. Rogie has 65,000 visitors annually.

Olympic Flame – will be in Inverness on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 5pm at the Northern Meeting Park.

Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service (HIFRS) – The Chairman introduced Fraser Nixon, District Manager, Invergordon. His area covers from Invergordon to Achiltibuie and Applecross and his job includes running the stations, recruitment, training and attending incidents. In the last ten years all stations had been upgraded from voluntary/ auxiliary status to retained status. These included Achiltibuie, Aultbea, Gairloch, Kinlochewe, Torridon, Lochcarron, and Applecross. Upgrading means that these units receive training, equipment and appliances to bring them up to standard. However it has become clear that the service did not necessarily support all the new status units appropriately with the required training and recruitment. There is no intention of closing stations in foreseeable future although the District Manager does not sit on Fire Board where policy is decided.

The service is actively recruiting and has interviews for Gairloch, Torridon, Applecross and Lochcarron. HIFRS has a Peer Support Team which means they are receiving assistance from other Scottish Services to meet the training requirement HIFRS has to bring all retained officers to the appropriate level.

Q: How is HIFRS working with communities?

A: District Manager doesn't make strategic decisions but glad to accept CC assistance in recruiting. Recruits need to live within a reasonable distance of the Fire station.

Kinlochewe and Torridon CC Chairman and Retained Fireman Andy James outlined the Kinlochewe Fire Station statistics; however he quoted some examples where the method of recording the statistics did not give an

accurate picture of the performance of the unit and may as a result put the station under threat of closure. Kinlochewe & Torridon CC is hoping to include other CCs in support of Kinlochewe and Torridon Fire Stations and seek to discuss the report with HIFRS. He is concerned that there could be a threat of closure in the future, and that the Fire Service "best value" method of measuring performance was not adequate for rural stations. Fraser Nixon said that the responsibility for opening / closing stations was with the Fire Board. The Board take advice from HIFRS amongst other bodies.

The Kinlochewe Fire Station needs 4 more recruits to bring numbers up to 10, so please if you know anyone who might be suitable encourage them to apply (men/women). Contact number for Fraser Nixon, Invergordon Fire Station is 01349 852341 for recruitment or other issues. Kinlochewe training night is Thurs evenings and visitors are welcome.

Currently everyone in the service is undergoing a medical and if there are fitness issues HIFRS supports servicemen.

Cllr Biz Campbell sits on the Fire Board. Mistakes have been made at top level but the firemen on the ground are not to blame and should be applauded for the job they do.

The Chairman thanked Fraser and Andy for attending.

Community Council Training – the Chairman highlighted some points from this session.

Ledgowan Access – the Chairman had attended the HC Access forum which provides advice on access issues when requested to do so. The HC Access Officer Phil Waite received 3 complaints about access at Ledgowan at the previous Forum in Sept; he has now received a further 5 complaints. The old road continues to be obstructed. The HC are in discussions with Ledgowan Estate to resolve these issues. The pile of building material has been removed from the old road. Regarding the issue of locked gates on the estate, this had been to prevent sheep rustling and disturbance to livestock by dogs. Phil Waite has suggested a meeting with the Estate to take place before Easter. Discussions ongoing.

Stromeferry Bypass – traffic is now using the rail track for restricted hours. There is a weight restriction of 7.5t. Work is progressing well on stabilising the rock face; no date for re-opening road at present.

Road repairs – TECS has devised a formula for dividing £2 million for potholes amongst the wards according to the mileage of roads within each ward. Surface dressing is marked out between Garve and Achnasheen.

Eneco update – Jones Bros, contractors building the Lochluichart Windfarm, will be attending G&DCC meetings from next month to give updates on the construction work.

E-On update – discussions re community benefit ongoing.

Infinergy – consideration of the Lochluichart Windfarm Extension planning application by HC has been put back to the June meeting due to workload of the Planning Dept. Scottish Govt. are waiting for HC Planning Committee to make their decision before making final decision.

Community Benefit for Dosmucheran Hydro scheme – ongoing.

Deer fence at Grudie – SSE owns the land and has confirmed that it is their responsibility. In hand and being dealt with.

Achnasheen Shelter - another bit of wood fell off, the Chairman has removed all loose bits to make it safe and he has put up a notice board here.

WRA update – The feasibility study report on the Biosphere Project is expected in May.

Public Entertainment License – Highland Council has apologised for the confusion created. A License is not required for free events but events which charge an entry fee do need a license.

Red Light at Garve Level Crossing – still waiting for the hood.

Station Road Wall - Biz still chasing, to contact TECS.

Grudie Layby Tree Clearing – in hand.

Schoolbus turning at Church Layby – Biz to chase up D&E Coaches.

Corrieshalloch Bridge – Access to south side of the bridge has been closed off as people were ignoring danger signs. Will remain closed until bridge is repaired.

HC Elections – Ward 6 has seven candidates for four places.

Diamond Jubilee – there is a meeting in Garve Hall on Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> April 7pm to discuss arrangements.

There has been a very good response from local businesses and £800 has been donated towards commemorative items for the children, and trees. Jean Bailey has researched items available. CC members were in favour of the Royal Mint £5 Presentation Coin at a cost of £12.99 each. Number of coins required to be confirmed but estimated to be 50. All agreed Treasurer should place order. Local businesses have all been thanked for their contributions.

Treasurer's Report: Balance forward £2938.25; Senior Citizens (no change) £1105.71; War Memorial £100.86 (increased by £25 – cancelled cheque); Treasurer's Account balance forward £1457.28 less Sec, Minute Sec &

Auditors' Fees and Hall Rental £510.00, new balance £947.28; Diamond Jubilee fund increase of £400 now £800; Total new balance £2953.85.

Correspondence: By Email, Forestry Commission - Deer Fence at Grudie; SSE - Achnasheen Shelter; TRAC - Strome Bypass Update; Association of Scottish Community Councils - date of meeting in Perth; TECS - recycling in Gairloch; Highlands and Islands Fire Service - info on changes; HC update on Rogie Falls bridge; SSE - Grudie Deer Fence; Highland and Islands Fire Service - representative attending April meeting; Lochcarron CC mins; Marybank, Strathconon & Scatwell CC mins; Strathpeffer CC mins; Eneco - Jones Bros attending G&DCC meetings; Robbie Bain - Funding for Coastal Communities; Tel call from Cathel Macaskill, TranServ - repairs to loose concrete at Silver Bridge during April. The footpaths under the bridge will be closed one side at a time while this work is carried out.

AOB (members) - Jennifer Haslam highlighted that a very large lorry had got lost looking for Lochluichart Windfarm and had ended up at Grudie. Sec to contact Eneco suggesting site signs be put up at Gorstan Junction.

The poor road surface at Lochview has been replaced.

AOB (public) - none.

Scoping reports and Consultations - none.

Building Warrant - The Chairman noted a building warrant for Conservatory at Tigh-na-srutha.

Planning Applications - One application has been granted (2 houses at Chuillin and demolition of outbuildings).

One notice of Screening Study for Strathbran Hydro Scheme. CC members had no comments.

Licensing - none.

Date of next meeting:

Tues 1<sup>st</sup> May 7pm in Achnasheen Village Hall

Wed 6<sup>th</sup> June 7pm AGM followed by Ordinary Meeting in Garve Village Hall. Tea will be served.

Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> July 7pm in Achnasheen Village Hall

Tues 7<sup>th</sup> Aug 7pm in Garve Village Hall.

All are welcome to attend.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10pm.