**STRATHGLASS COMMUNITY COUNCIL (SCC**)

**Minutes of the virtual meeting (via Teams) held on Wednesday, 17th February 2021 at 7-30 pm**

**Present:** Nigel Ellis (Chair), Paul Stirling, Georgina Parker, Humphrey Clarke, Leeson Carlyle, Alan Hood.

**Also attending:** Carol Masheter (Soirbheas), Willie Fraser and Linzi Seiviwright (AKDMG),

Alan McDonnell (Trees for Life), Ben Griffin (FLS) and Angus Hughes.

**Apologies:** Cllr. Margaret Davidson, Nikki MacLennan (Soirbheas)

**1. Welcome.**

The Chair noted that there was a quorum, welcomed all those in virtual attendance who then introduced themselves and declared the meeting open.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting.**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13th January 2021 were proposed for adoption and unanimously approved.

**3. Matters arising from the previous meeting.**

a) Bank signatories: AH has the matter in hand after HC agreed to be a third signatory.

b) Loch Liath Wind Farm: a response to a Scoping Opinion Request from the ECU has been sent, with a copy to tHC Planning.

c) Defibrillators: the pads on all three devices have been replaced. Expiry date is April 2023.

**4. Briefing by Willie Fraser (AKDMG) and Alan McDonnell (Trees for Life)**

 A summary of the East West Wild Scoping Report was provided. The full report is available to view on the TfL website. The report documents a viable, sustainable land management plan for an area of approx. 1900 sq. km covering Glens Cannich, Affric, Shiel and Moriston to provide an innovative, nature based alternative to traditional land usage that will provide local employment opportunities and a sustained improvement to the local economy. It is being promoted to other land owners, local communities and third sector organisations. Informal discussions have been held with tHC. Grant funding of £250k will be required over a two year period. SCC members recognised that some aspects of the report would be controversial and questioned the status of the Affric Land Use Group established some years ago.

 **5. Police report.**

There were no incidents of note with regard to road safety, public protection, drugs / alcohol misuse and crimes of dishonesty. For community information, Police Scotland advise that they have noted a significant trend whereby members of the public have been receiving convincing, unsolicited calls (via phone and email) purporting to come from HMRC, banks and other financial bodies asking for bank transfers and / or bank account details and security information. Genuine organisations will never ask for these details in this way. The public are asked to be vigilant and to report any suspicious activity.

 **6. Covid 19 and Resilience Planning.**

 Refer to the previously distributed Community Resilience Group Briefing and Soirbheas update and

 newsletter.

 7. **SACC projects and activities update.**

a) The interior of Cannich Hall has been repainted and a new PA system is to be installed. It has been offered as a local vaccination facility but there has been no response.

b) A Building Warrant has been issued for the former Nurses’ home project and the deeds have been transferred from NHS Highland. Works are expected to begin soon, subject to the resolution of ownership of the strip of crucial land belonging to SSE.

**8. SCC matters.**

a)Windfarms:

 i) It was agreed that an objection should be submitted regarding the proposed Fiodhag Wind Farm meteorological mast.

 ii) The Bhlaraidh Wind Farm extension details are available on-line and a virtual interactive public exhibition is scheduled for 24/26 February. Local residents will also be sent an explanatory leaflet. SSE Renewables have been advised of our concerns regarding the likely limited public engagement resulting from virtual exhibition.

b)Road gritting:

Reported that adequate supplies of grit were now available in Struy and Tomich.

c) IMFLDP2: The Main Issues Report is available to see on line. The Chair encouraged all to review the sections relevant Cannich, Tomich and Struy prior to discussion at the next meeting. Any comment to be provided by 1-4-21.

d) Broadleaf woodland creation: Scottish Woodland has advised of plans to create two areas of broadleaf woodland on the Struy Estate and has asked for comment. Chair to reply with a general note of support.

**9. Treasurer’s Report and financial matters.**

a) The annual liability insurance premium quote is £86. Agreed that this should be paid.

b) Available funds after deduction of liabilities and ring-fenced items are £2115.65.

**10. Planning.**

Refer to the previously distributed list. Seven applications have been made, mainly of a residential nature and for forest track creation. Two applications have been decided.

**11. Forestry matters.**

Ben Griffin (FLS) advised that the plan for the Strathglass area had now been approved and published on line. A summary was provided that detailed the felling of non-native species and diseased trees whilst infilling with the native species over the next circa 20 years. The approximate volume of felled timber to be removed will be approx. 30000 tons per annum. It was noted that whilst the draft LMP had included reference to the proposed wind farm at Upper Guisachan, the reference was not present in the final copy. BG advised that its removal was requested by the FLS Renewables Team.

**12. Deer management.**

Angus Hughes expressed his concern regarding the use by FLS of contractors to shoot deer out-of-season in an indiscriminate and, in some cases, illegal manner. A deer population of 1-3/100 hectares in Glen Affric would be unsustainable resulting in damage to the local economy caused by the loss of sport shooting and associated employment. Ideally, a deer population of approx. 12/100 hectares is required for a sustainable, healthy and non-inbred herd. He suggested that the SCC should object to out-of-season shooting. PS agreed to investigate with SNH and others the approval process for out-of-season shooting.

**13. Correspondence.**

The Chair provided a summary of correspondence received since the last meeting.

**14. Any other business.**

Cannich Bridge painting: AH asked for tHC contact details so that the postponed project could be restarted when conditions allow.

**15. Next meeting.**

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9-10 pm. The date of the next meeting (type to be advised) is Wednesday, 31st March 2021 commencing at 7-30 pm.

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