**STRATHGLASS COMMUNITY COUNCIL (SCC**)

**Minutes of the meeting held at Cannich Hall on Wednesday, 17th May 2023 at 7-30pm.**

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

**Apologies:** Humphrey Clarke, Cllr. David Fraser.

**In attendance:** Cllr. Chris Ballance, Tina Morrow and Kara Scott (Soirbheas), Alan McDonnel (Trees for Life) and seven members of the public.

**1. Welcome.**

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

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

Though Cllr. David Fraser’s presence was referenced within the text of the minutes of the 5-4-23 meeting, he was not listed as being in attendance. Subject to this revision, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5-4-23 were proposed for adoption and unanimously approved.

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

a) GUCC / SCC / Soirbheas joint meeting:

A Tuesday evening in May / June had been agreed as best suiting all parties. Chair to book the Cannich Hall meeting room.

b) Cannich GP surgeries:

We have been advised that NHS Highland representatives were scheduled to meet with both Beauly GP practices on 18-5-23.

c) Police reports:

A consolidated report had been received and distributed to members. Thanks were offered to members of the public who helped keep safe a gentleman with mental health problems until professional help was arranged.

d) Defibrillators:

Details of the £330 replacement pad cost have been forwarded by AH to Soirbheas for reimbursement.

**4. Beaver translocation update - Alan McDonnell, Trees for Life.**

a) A public beaver post-release monitoring plan workshop had been held on 25-4-23 and a draft plan would be circulated shortly prior to a similar follow-up workshop scheduled for 30-5-23.

b) As required by the Scotland Beaver Strategy 2022-2045, the release of beavers has to be licensed by NatureScot with due regard to the Beaver Management Framework which includes mitigation management requirements. The final TfL post-release monitoring plan (to include the employment of a local Beaver Monitoring Officer) will be in addition to the BMF requirements.

c) It is envisaged that FLS will apply for a licence to release beavers to Loch Beinn a Mhedahoin in Glen Affric in June/July 2023 with a decision expected by NatureScot in August/September. The earliest possible release will be in autumn 2023.

d) The SCC will be advised when a licence application is made by FLS and the Chair agreed to invite NatureScot to a future meeting.

e) Public representations regarding the licence application can be made to the NatureScot Beaver Team in Dingwall by emailing beavers@nature.scot.

**5) Soirbheas report.**

a) The Soirbheas AGM will be held on 29-6-23 at Balnain Hall. All members are welcome to attend.

b) As previously reported, Soirbheas are working with Highland Hospice to provide a local care-at-home service for Glenurquhart and Strathglass and care workers are currently being recruited. Refer Soirbheas website for further information.

c) This year’s Photo Competition has been launched. The categories are Spring, Garden Critters and Unwinding.

d) Tier 1 (<£1000) and Tier 2 (<£10000) grants are available and applications for Tier 1 grants can now be accepted from non-constituted groups submitted on their behalf by SACC.

e) Discussions are expected next month with Strathglass Heritage Association and Glenurquhart Heritage Group to develop local heritage trails.

**6. SCC matters.**

a) Windfarms and energy storage:

No new information since our last meeting.

(Addendum: a formal Section 36 application was made to the ECU for the Loch Liath WF and published on 18-5-23.)

b) SSEN Transmission proposals affecting Strathglass:

Further to a meeting of the Beauly SSEN CLG meeting (the minutes of which had been circulated previously), PS provided a summary of electricity infrastructure proposals for the Strathglass and wider area. In order to meet a target date of 2030, set by OFGEM, the UK and Scottish Governments, SSEN will need to substantially upgrade their transmission infrastructure in order to accommodate an additional 11-17gW of both on and offshore windfarm capacity. Principally, this will involve:

 i) the previously advised hydro sub-station replacements,

 ii) upgrading the Beauly-Denny overhead power line to handle two 400kV lines.

 iii) additional power lines to and from Beauly sub-station,

 iv) a substantial upgrade to Fasnakyle sub-station from the current site area of 1.5 hectares to 7-11 hectares. Geographical constraints will necessitate the consideration of alternative sites within a 10km radius. A public consultation event is likely in June or July 2023.

 v) noise concerns relating to the existing Beauly sub-station and Beauly – Denny line were explained to SSEN.

 vi) SSEN had invited representatives of the community councils (including SCC) to a meeting in Perth but members’ work commitments had made this impractical. Alternative arrangements are awaited.

c) Strathglass bus/public shelter:

We are still awaiting a heads-of-agreement licence to occupy from representatives of the landowner. The Chair and TM will chase.

**8. SACC matters.**

AH provided a summary of SACC activities:

a) Assistance is being provided to a group looking into the provision of community transport. Cllr. CB advised that if that included a school bus service, the HC would be likely to provide some funding.

b) Another group was investigating a growing initiative.

c) Assistance was being provided for a funding application to upgrade the play park in Cannich.

d) Assistance was also being provided to a group regarding local walking route developments.

e) Initial talks had taken place with Soirbheas regarding community action and local place plans.

**9. Treasurer’s report.**

AH had circulated a report prior to the meeting. The balance at 16-5-23 was £3686.95 of which £1589.41 was available after deduction of payments to be cleared and ring-fenced items.

**10. Planning.**

AH had circulated a list of planning application submissions and decisions prior to the meeting.

One application in period referred to a house extension to Postman’s Cottage, Cannich.

Two decisions in period referred to an extension to Cannich Stores and an agricultural shed erection at Kirkfield, Tomich, both of which were consented.

**11. Forestry.**

Further to a meeting between GACP and FLS, PS advised that substantial HGV movements (circa 2500) could be expected over the next few years (dependent upon both weather and timber price) as forestry coops Farmer’s Wood, Plodda, Fasnakyle and Cougie are harvested.

**12. Deer.**

Stakeholders, including SCC, are awaiting notification of the date of the next AKLMG meeting.

**13. Correspondence.**

A complete list of correspondence received had been circulated before the meeting. Items of note were:

a) A letter from Glenurquhart Men’s Shed seeking support for their purchase of the old FLS site and buildings at Balnain. Chair agreed to provide a letter of support.

b) An invitation to respond to a UK Government consultation regarding a proposed voluntary community benefit scheme for electricity transmission networks. Agreed that we should respond by 25-5-23, since extended to 15-6-23.

**14. Any other business.**

a) Members of the public raised the issue of dangerous potholes on the road leading into Tomich. Cllr. CB agreed to raise the issue with HC Roads.

b) Regarding National Parks, AH asked about the timescale for initial expressions of interest. PS to advise.

c) The Chair reminded the meeting that the AGM will take place on 21-6-23 at 7-30pm before our next scheduled meeting.

**15. Next meeting.**

There being no other business, the meeting closed at approx. 9.00pm. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday,

21st June 2023, after the AGM, commencing at approx. 7-45pm, at the Cannich Hall.

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