**STRATHGLASS COMMUNITY COUNCIL (SCC**)

**Minutes of the meeting held at Cannich Hall on Wednesday, 5th April 2023 at 7-30pm.**

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

**Apologies:** Cllr. Chris Ballance, Leeson Carlyle, Georgina Parker.

**In attendance:** Simon Cameron and John Dyce (SFRS), Steve Micklewright and Sarah Kent (TfL), Heather Lafferty and

Peter Kane (Statkraft), Tina Morrow and Kara Scott (Soirbheas) and ten 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. Cannich Fire Station.**

Before the meeting agenda items were followed there was an appeal by local SFRS firefighters for retained volunteers for Cannich Fire Station. There are currently just three firefighters and a minimum establishment of four is required for a safe system of work. The team are happy to provide advice and support for anyone interested in joining them, emphasise that age and gender are not barriers to recruitment and that there is some flexibility in contracts of employment. The local team are available for fire safety visits and are currently seeking temporary arrangements with other local stations to enable there participation in emergency calls.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting.**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22-2-23 were proposed for adoption and unanimously approved.

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

a) Police Scotland Beat reports:

As requested, the Chair replied to Cllr. CB on 24-2-23 suggesting that periodic reports (covering Ward 12) of local crime trends and public safety issues may be useful to all community councils.

b) Cannich GP surgeries:

Both Cllr. DF and AH had raised the matter with representatives of NHS Highland who will contact both Beauly GP practices.

c) Joint SCC / GUCC / Soirbheas meeting.

The Chair had been in contact with both the other parties and will suggest dates in May and June.

**5. Loch Liath Windfarm.**

a) Heather Lafferty and Peter Kaneof Statkraftintroduced themselves and explained that scoping for this windfarm on Balmacaan Estate had begun in 2020. The original plan was for 26 x 6.6 MW turbines but after consultation, and taking on board visibility issues, the project is now reduced to 13 turbines for which a 35-year planning application will be made. The maximum turbine tip height will be 200 m but three will be reduced to 180 m.

b) The installed capacity will be 86 MW and the developer has made initial contact with Soirbheas and GURCA to discuss index linked community benefit and ideas suggested at public consultation events.

c) The site will be accessed from the A887 via the existing Bhlaraidh WF road. The Environmental Impact Assessments that are required prior to a planning application will include possible impacts, and mitigation measures, for items including deep peat disturbance, forestry and amenity.

d) A formal, section 36 planning application to the ECU is anticipated in 4/6 weeks. A response will probably take 18 months after which, if consented, there will be a lead time of 2/3 years before construction commences.

e) Statkraft will be hosting “Meet the Buyer” events for local businesses and are happy to provide further information for local communities.

**6. Trees for Life.**

a) Steve Micklewright, the Chief Executive of Tfl introduced himself and explained a 30-year plan for “rewilding” the Affric area. The intention is to help nature to restore the landscape to something closer to what it had been like 200 years ago whilst retaining the current population and businesses.

b) The plan includes expanding the amount of native woodland and reducing deer numbers so that less fencing is required. He accepts that some estates in the area depend on deer stalking for their income and he envisages that stalking will continue as there are no natural predators of deer remaining in the Highlands.

c) Queries regarding beaver translocation to the area were raised by members of the public but the Chair requested that they be deferred until the next meeting, where it will be an agenda item, after the planned “Beaver Monitoring and Mitigation” consultation event to be held on 25/4 at Cannich Hall.

d) SM emphasised that the intention was not to impose the rewilding vision on the community, but it was hoped that it would catalyse a change to a better way of relating to and working the land.

e) The plan would involve considerable expense but funding could be achieved by selling carbon offset allowances, something the TfL estate has already initiated.

**7. SCC matters.**

a) Electricity generation, storage and distribution:

i) Loch Liath WF: see item 5.

ii) Other windfarms: no new information.

iii) Fasnakyle Energy Storage: no new information - an EIA will not be required.

iv) Kerrow Farm Energy Storage: a screening request for a facility off the C1110 had been submitted to HC who had determined that an EIA was not required.

v) Fasnakyle sub-station: SSEN has advised that a substantial upgrade covering circa 7-11 hectares will be required but the exact location has yet to be determined.

vi) Further to the foregoing and other SSEN Transmission plans, including sub-station replacements at Aigas, Culligran and Kilmorack, the SCC has been invited to send two representatives to attend the Beauly CLG meeting on 11/4. PS and HC agreed to attend and report at our next meeting.

b) Struy bus shelter / cabin:

Additional funding of £1000 has been granted from the Ward 12 Discretionary Fund so sufficient funds for the project to go ahead are available if a five year, renewable licence can be obtained from Erchless Estate. Chair to chase with the Estate Manager whilst DF agreed to investigate if a typical template was available on file at HC.

c) Defibrillators:

New pad sets have been fitted to the Tomich, Struy and Cannich Stores equipment. A claim for the £330 cost will be submitted to Soirbheas by AH.

d) 20 mph speed limits:

Tomich and Struy had been overlooked in the original Transport Scotland Highland trial area plan. PS had ascertained that Tomich residents were in favour of a 20 mph limit. As the existing limit is 40 mph through Struy, Cllr. DF suggested a proportionate reduction to 30 mph and agreed to present both proposals.

**8. SACC matters.**

a) The hall’s income is still lower than in previous years whilst energy costs are much higher.

b) Cannich Hall requires more trustees and a plan to increase hall usage, thereby raising income.

c) SACC are assisting with two new community projects; to upgrade and improve the Cannich Children’s Play Park, and a project aimed at providing community transport with a shared minibus.

d) The community houses have now been occupied for a year and project is considered a success. AH will shortly have energy use data that may be of general interest.

**9. Treasurer’s report.**

An invoice for £588.00 has been received from HC. Though the current bank balance is £2772.95, the balance available after deducting designated funds and liabilities are £1675.41.

**10. Planning.**

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

**11. Forestry.**

Nothing new to report.

**12. Deer.**

Thevenison event at Cannich Hall had gone well and was attended by approx. 50 people.

**13. Correspondence.**

The Chair provided a summary of correspondence received since the last meeting. Of particular interest were:

a) Remedial work to a number of A831 (Cannich – Drumnadrochit) bridges throughout 2023 may result in delays.

b) Beaver Monitoring consultations and workshops will be held at Cannich Hall on 25-4-23.

c) The Highland Council Local Transport Strategy is open for consultation and comment until 29-5-23.

**14. Any other business.**

a) PS advised that the Land Use Group is to meet to consider operational changes and input into the Community Action Plan.

b) AH raised the issue of Cannich Bridge painting by community volunteers (a test panel was re-painted a few years ago). Cllr. DF agreed to follow up with the appropriate HC personnel regarding the provision of tools and materials.

**15. Next meeting.**

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

17th May 2023, commencing at 7-30 pm, at the Cannich Hall.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Chair