

Lairg Community Council

Minutes of meeting held in Lairg Community Centre on Wednesday 7th June 2017 at 7.30pm

Present: Jeff Norrie, Chair (JN), Andrew Mackay, Vice Chair/Treasurer (AMK), Jackie Young, Secretary (JY), John Sutherland (JS), Louise Skinner (LS), Sandy Allison (SA)

Apologies: Iain Mackay (IM)

Police Scotland: PC Angus Morrison

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Item 1. Welcome/Apologies (as above)/Police report. Chair Jeff Norrie welcomed the members of the Community Council; no general public present. PC Morrison did not have a report to hand but furnished it by email at the end of the meeting. It comprised one road traffic collision, one fraud, one theft and thirteen minor road traffic offences. There were also a few very minor calls but of little consequence. Discussion covered recent minor thefts which were opportunist in nature and the perpetrators are believed to have left the district. The date of the next meeting was confirmed to PC Morrison as 13th September.

Item 2. Adoption of Minutes of April meeting. The Minutes of the May meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Andrew Mackay; seconded: Louise Skinner.

Item 3 Matters arising. (1) Ferrycroft paths. It was noted that the condition of the new paths is already deteriorating with rain washing away the newly laid surfaces. A drainage trench has been dug across the path at one spot, once again making passage impossible for wheelchairs and buggies. JN will discuss with Steve Jack, FCS. **Agenda item/JN Action. (2) Bird Hide.** FCS has supplied two loads of scalplings as a goodwill gesture. CC will arrange to make appropriate improvements to the condition of the path/access. **JN/SA/AMK Action/Agenda item (3) Overgrown trees.** The owner of the trees has still not been identified. JN will liaise with the crofter who has issues with the overgrowing trees and arrange to cut them back. **Agenda item. (4) Tennis courts.** Lairg Estate maintains that this drainage issue is a matter for the CC as lease holders. SA and HMN will attempt to establish where the water is coming from and the condition of the drains. **SA/HMN Action. An invoice for the coming year's rent of the courts was passed for payment. MG Action. (5) Lochies bump.** SA will discuss with rep from Creich CC. **SA Action. (6) Caplich windfarm.** Scottish Government Reporter's office has no trace of previous submission by LCC. A further email will be sent indicating concerns regarding the health of the two rivers, Oykel and Cassley, which could be affected by detrimental run off from the development, also the impact on the jobs of the five local families and two local hotels which depend largely on the fishing. **MG Action.**

Item 4. Suggestions re memorial for the late Hector MacLennan. JN has talked with Carol Elliot, Foundation Scotland, regarding the idea put forward last month to fund a small annual award in Hector's name to a local young person seeking career or personal development. Carol has advised that the plan should be put in writing after which she can discuss it with the developer. **JN Action.**

Item 5. LDCI update. The report covered six main projects all ongoing at present. The main thrust is regarding the Lairg Care & Well-being Centre. Many meetings and discussions and much more research into possible models has been carried out since March all of which has moved the project on considerably. The output from the consultants' work will inform the Stage 2 application to the Scottish Land Fund. The Business Plan is nearing completion and the required quotes have been obtained. Local funding applications will also be made. Over 130 volunteer hours have been put in to the Church Hill Woodland project and these

community –minded folk are to be commended. If successful an application to Paths for All will allow for the planting of various native shrubs and trees around the area in autumn in addition to all the work already carried out to make this a very user-friendly and welcoming attraction. The Asteroid Exhibition opening was a great success with a very good turn out from local people and it attracted attention from wider afield. The exhibition will remain at Ferrycroft until 18th November after which it will move on loan to Rock Stop, the NWH Geopark visitor centre in Kylescu, also visiting Timespan in Helmsdale. A permanent home for the exhibition in Lairg is still being sought. LDCI is involved with the SSE Resilient Communities scheme, represented by Charlie Smith. Another meeting will be held later this month. A ‘Have a Go’ event was co-hosted with Lairg Learning Centre on 27th May which raised just over £80 for community projects.

Item 6. CALL. SA stated that he understood that the latest SSE preferred route for the pylon line is even worse than the previous option. The straight forward route proposed again and again by CALL is still being ignored. SSE claim it would destroy sites of nesting birds but CALL say these could easily be avoided. There is a local feeling that if certain of the proposed windfarm developments do not go ahead then there will be no need for this pylon line.

Item 7. Falls of Shin update. The new centre is up and running very successfully. This will now been removed from the agenda. **MG Action.**

Item 8. Financial report. (MG) The balance in the Treasurer’s Account stands at £2,330.22 The Windfarm account balance is £322.41 with the Project Account unchanged at £4.73. A letter is now being sent directly to the Internet Banking Helpdesk of Bank of Scotland in yet another attempt to update the mailing addresses on the three bank accounts. **MG Action.**

Item 9. Planning applications. The weekly list is still not coming to JN. HMN will attempt yet again to reinstate the sending of the list to JN. **HMN Action.**

Item 10. Community Council vacancy. Eilidh Price, in attendance to tonight, has agreed to accept co-option to the CC, proposed by SA, seconded by JY and unanimously agreed by all. Eilidh will supply contact information which MG will send on to the Ward Manager. **EP/MG Action.**

Item 11. Windfarms. As stated in the minutes of the AGM a new submission will be made to Scottish Government regarding Caplich, which is at PLI this month. SA expressed concern regarding possible damage to the health of the two rivers, Oykel and Cassley, and the knock-on effect on jobs and the economy. See item 3.6 above.

Item 12. Correspondence. (1) Letter of support for the proposed Care Home project received from Scourie CC. This will be forwarded to LDCI and thanks sent to the Scourie Chair. (2) MSP Edward Mountain has written offering to attend a CC meeting but this will be politely refused meantime. (3) Mike Ruskill, MSP, is seeking support for his 20mph bill. A reply will be sent with Lairg CC’s view that this is acceptable in certain areas but not for a blanket speed limit, especially in small, rural communities. **MG Actions.**

Item 13. Any other competent business. (1) Cemetery maintenance/drainage/repairs. HMN will follow up on current state of affairs and advise CC at next meeting. **HMN Action.** (2) SA reported that several areas of the village and around are suffering from almost no mobile signal, or at best a very erratic one. Broadband connection is also very poor, especially via mobiles. HMN offered to try to find out the best route to take these complaints. **HMN Action.** (3) Disabled access at back door of Community Centre. At present an area immediately in front of the doorway has to be cordoned off to save it for disabled badge holders. HMN will try to have the space officially marked for disabled users. **HMN Action.** (4) EP advised that new Lairg leaflets, detailing places of interest, have been produced by the Lairg Historical Society and are currently being printed. These will be made available at Ferrycroft, local shops, etc. (5) JY thanked HMN for the grant to Lairg in Bloom from THC

Ward Discretionary Budget. (6) LS advised that the Playgroup will be parent run from August after the summer break. LCA is keen to help keep the Playgroup running and various funding raising activities are being undertaken along with applications to various funding sources.

Item 15. Date and time of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 13th September 2017 at 7.30pm in the Lairg Community Centre. This is a week later than usual due to holidays. MG will rearrange the booking of the room with LCA. **MG Action.**

Item 16. Lairg Windfarm Ltd – Lairg Community Fund. In private session an application by Sutherland Schools Pipe Band was awarded £600 towards equipment costs; LDCI was awarded £2,500 towards costs of a Project Officer salary for the new Care and Well-being Centre project, Lairg Community Centre was awarded £2078 to help with the purchase of cleaning machinery, Lairg Gala Week was awarded £2,500 towards the purchase of ground guards, Visit Lairg and Rogart was awarded £2,000 for initial marketing, establishing brand identity and website construction. Foundation Scotland will be advised.

Application to the Micro Grant by Lairg Community Association for funding for the purchase of new or replacement kitchen items was rejected.

Meeting closed 9.35pm