

Lairg Community Council

Minutes of meeting held in Lairg Community Centre on Wednesday 7th February 2018 at 7.30pm

Present: Jeff Norrie, Chair (JN), John Sutherland (JS), Sandy Allison (SA), Eilidh Price (EP), Jamie Dick (JD), Jackie Young (JY)

Also present: Highland Councillor Linda Munro (LM), John MacKenzie (JM) and Gary Lockhart (GL)

Apologies: Louise Skinner (LS), Andrew Mackay, Vice Chair/Treasurer (AMK), Project Officer LDCI (MM)

Police Scotland: PCs Ian Forbes (IF) and Angus Morrison (AM)

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Item 1. Welcome/Apologies (as above)/Police report. Chair Jeff Norrie welcomed all present thanking the police officers for attending. IF stated the report showed twenty-five reported incidents highlighting only three of road traffic, one civil matter, one theft and two frauds. He confirmed that the Inverness Control Room has now closed with all matters now handled in Dundee. With no other points raised, the officers left at 7.35pm

Item 2. Adoption of Minutes of December meeting. The Minutes of the December meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Sandy Allison; seconded: Eilidh Price.

Item 3. Matters arising. (1) Horse posters. It is understood that these have been displayed at Ferrycroft. JY will check. **JY Action.** **(2) Lochies Bump.** SA confirmed that John Clark, THC Roads Dept has stated there is no money available to deal with this issue, nor any to repair the numerous potholes throughout the area. Agenda item for April after new THC budget in place. **April agenda item. MG Action.** **(3) Road/pavement issue in Main Street.** John Clark advised SA that this matter is out of his hands having been passed to Joanne Sutherland in Roads Dept. There is a problem verifying the positions of the appropriate drains. Secretary will write to Ms Sutherland for update. **MG Action.** **(4) Bus shelter.** LDCI has applied to Achany Panel for funding to improve condition of the shelter, involving local school children with decoration. Approval in principal of funding pending outstanding reports from THC. **(5) Waste ground by Masonic Hall.** Nothing further in AMK's absence; discuss next month. **AMK Action.** **(6) Drainage at cemetery.** Email received from Cllr Morrison with update indicates some work will be carried out by THC as soon as possible. Local knowledge suggests there is a culvert on the west side of the cemetery wall which could be utilised. The suggestion to place inside graves, a bilge pump which could run during interment, was strongly rejected as totally unacceptable. Secretary will advise Cllr Morrison asking that he take the matter forward. **MG Action.** **(7) Oil club.** The email from Citizens Advice Bureau was passed to LDCI. No further action by CC.

Non-agenda item. Water issues at Lochside. JM and GL attended to seek help from the CC with a long-standing problem of water running from the field above Lochside through the properties below, onto the main highway and eventually into the loch. In 2014 THC's engineer Simon Young identified that the water course had been redirected from the croft causing the issues below as the water finds it way downhill. All residents have problems as a result, made worse in winter weather when the road and pavement become treacherous due to ice. THC workers have been delivering extra grit to the iced areas, but this then creates an environmental problem as that material finds its way into the loch. Major concerns arose during the recent cold spell with elderly residents unable to get out due to the ice, and fears of vehicles or bikes sliding onto the main road. All the gardens are subject to copious amounts of water passing through which could lead to land slippage. Even in the hottest weather the

water continues to flow. Cllr Munro took full note of the problem and the comments made and will take this further with Joanne Sutherland, THC Roads Dept, where the matter appears to rest at the moment. JM and GL thanked the CC and LM for their attention and proposed actions. **LM Action.**

Item 4. Suggestions re memorial for the late Hector MacLennan. JN still awaiting opportunity to discuss further with Foundation Scotland. **JN Action.**

Item 5. LDCI update. Email report received from Project Officer. (1) Care and Well-Being Centre project is progressing. Purchase transaction is complete with the site now in community ownership. Next stages are in discussion with meetings planned over the next two months with all relevant bodies. (2) Police station. Seeking funding for a feasibility study with a view to converting the building to a community hostel. (3) Bus shelter. As mentioned in Item 3. (4) Ord Place carvings and sitting area. LDCI hopes to complete this project in the spring. Further information on all projects is available directly from LDCI. (4) AGM held recently; CC will request updated information regarding the current make up of the board.

MG Action.

Item 6. CALL. Emma Armstrong continues to update the CC. She will be asked as to when CALL wishes the CC to make formal submission to Planning Department. **MG Action.**

Item 7. Financial report. Treasurer's account balance stands at £2,316.20 reflecting outgoing payments in the last month. The windfarm account has a balance of £250 unchanged since last meeting. Project account also remains unchanged at £4.73.

Item 8. Planning applications. Road access changes at Altnaharra windfarm. No objection at this time. Monitor regarding possible road issues. LM will enquire and report to CC. **LM Action.**

Item 9. Windfarms. Lengthy discussion regarding the developments currently under proposal, community benefit payments and the best way forward for the community to benefit from them. Further talks are needed if common ground is to be found to enable all three local CCs to agree to share equally in all future development payouts. If agreement is reached, a legally binding document would be drawn up with full support from each of the CCs. Such a move could lead to many more important projects reaching fruition with everyone concerned working to the greater benefit of the wider area. Professional advice is available if thought appropriate. LM will gather more information for the CC. **LM Action.**

Item 10. Correspondence. All relevant correspondence had been circulated by email. Secretary will write to Garry Cameron, outgoing (Temporary) Ward Manager to thank him for his work and support on behalf of the CC and wish him well in his new post. **MG Action.**

Item 11. Any other competent business. (1) Archive storage. Following the work done on the files held by the Secretary, JN and others will deal with the filing cabinet at LCA, removing it from the hall and editing the files as required. Anything relevant can be passed to MG to add to the archive she holds. SA will do the same with documents in his possession.

Action as appropriate. (2) LCA AGM. SA reported that due to the bad weather the AGM was not well attended but that new committee members were appointed. **(3) Lochside**

parking/snow plough difficulties. JY stated that during the recent bad weather the ploughs experienced difficulty at the bend on Lochside due to parked cars reducing the road width.

This matter has been discussed often in the past with the feeling that parking at this point causes obstruction at a potentially dangerous location. LM will follow up. **LM Action. (4)**

THC Budget. LM advised that the budget is due 2nd week in February with major cuts expected; CC grants and the Ward Discretionary Budget will be hard hit. Public toilets may be closed or offered for community ownership. Further discussion at next CC meeting.

Item 12. Date and time of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th March at **8PM** in the Lairg Community Centre. This will follow a private meeting with Foundation Scotland for the annual review of the Lairg Windfarm business.

Minutes approved 7/3/2018

Item 13. Lairg Windfarm Ltd – Lairg Community Fund. In private session, an award of £250 was approved to Lairg Community Association to help with costs of a new laptop and printer. This award closes the Micro Grant Fund meantime. CC will request a further draw down of funding ahead of the next annual tranche payment.

Meetings closed 10pm..