

Lairg Community Council

Minutes of meeting held in Lairg Community Centre on Wednesday 5th June 2019 at 7.30pm

Present: Andrew Mackay, Chair/Treasurer (AMK), Jamie Dick, Vice Chair (JD), Jackie Young, Secretary (JY), John Sutherland (JS), Iain Thomson (IT), Louise Skinner (LS)

Apologies: Sandy Allison (SA)

Also attending: Highland Councillor Hugh Morrison (HMN), Kayr Hurrion (KH) and Robert Johnstone (RJ) LDCI

Police Scotland: None present – report received by email

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Item 1. Welcome/Apologies (as above) /Police report. Chair Andrew Mackay opened this meeting, following immediately after the closure of the AGM. The Police report, by email, indicated 9 incidents in total for the last month. One drink driver, one warrant, two animal calls, three road traffic matters, one public nuisance, and one external Force enquiry. The Police also brought attention to a scam relating to CCs whereby calls have been received at other CCs. The caller claims to be from the Law Enforcement Agency for National Insurance threatening to bring a lawsuit against the person who picked up the phone. This should be highlighted to all local CCs to be aware of the scam.

Item 2. Adoption of Minutes of May meeting. The Minutes of the May meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record; proposed: Jackie Young; seconded: Jamie Dick.

Item 3. Matters arising. (1) IT has nothing further so far regarding the Strategic Timber Transport Fund. (2) Owing to the recent illness of SA, to whom good wishes for his recovery were sent, nothing further has been done regarding the ordering of chips for the various pathways within the cemetery and elsewhere. Time will be allowed for use of the Ward Discretionary Budget award; Cllr Morrison is aware of the situation.

Item 4. LDCI update. KH addressed the CC with regard to the proposal by LDCI to change the parameters of the funding received for the Development Officer's post. Owing to the move to Orkney of the present post holder she has continued to work remotely for 15 hours per week to ensure continuity of projects. Further funding was applied for from Rosehall and Achany which secured funds for one year, not the two applied for. This has raised difficulties as it leaves LDCI having to tap into that funding thus reducing the amount available to offer to a new post holder. Efforts to appoint a new person have proved unsuccessful so far. LDCI sought support from the CC to change the job description from a salaried post to that of a self employed consultancy which, it is hoped, will bring more applicants. Private discussion covered the length of time that the next stage of recruitment would take, the tender process, lack of information reaching LDCI members and greater involvement of the process. LDCI was initially set up by Lairg CC to be its business arm therefore present CC members should become more involved. Support for the change in job description was given. LDCI would undertake to guarantee a minimum of quarterly updates to its members. These conditions are aimed at helping LDCI to work through this difficult time and on into the future. KH agreed the conditions asking that the discussion be kept private until after the next LDCI Board meeting on 10th June.

Item 5. Bird Hide- volunteer work day. AMK and JD will make a site visit, having recruited some volunteers, to clear and tidy as much as possible.

Item 6. Financial report. Treasurer's account balance stands at £2,133.56. The annual accounts having been adopted at the AGM will now be submitted to THC to trigger payment of the annual administration grant. Outgoing payments in the past month were to Faclan

Word Service and LCA. The windfarm account is unchanged at £770.19 and the Project Account balance remains at £4.73. Grateful thanks were recorded to Ashley Poole for her work in auditing and preparing the accounts for submission to THC. **MG Action.**

Item 7. Planning applications. Nothing relevant.

Item 8. Windfarms. Sallachy. IT provided a nine point update which is shown below:

WKN are currently in the process of securing the appropriate EIA consultants ahead of a formal application, which is anticipated in late 2019.

They are currently in discussions with an investment partner in order to secure a route to market for Sallachy.

WKN are intending to reconsult with the North, West and Central Sutherland communities on the application in Autumn 2019.

WKN intend to hold a Community Liaison Forum (CLF) in Quarter 3 to update all six community councils, including Lairg Community Council, on the working group outcomes. This will include presenting a final Community Benefit Fund MoU to be signed and discussing options identified by the working group with regards to Community Ownership. WKN have offered the six communities to collectively own up to 10% of the equity in wind farm.

The Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (KoSDT) have successfully secured a CARES (Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme) grant on behalf of all community partners, including Lairg Community Council.

The working group community partners are currently obtaining financial and legal advice to support with any investment decisions taken.

WKN have met with the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) to discuss potential involvement in the EIA.

WKN are also beginning to look at options with regards to a local procurement initiative that would benefit businesses in the North Highlands. We are still at the very early stages of this.

Item 9. Highland Councillor's report. (HMN) TECS Collapsed BT drain cover near the dam – repairs in hand. HMN will also check if the repairs have been carried out at the collapsed culvert near Collabol Farm. Water rising on Main Street, Lairg, opposite the hairdresser's. Wall damaged during recent road works on Main Street at the old paper shop premises. **HMN action.** HMN confirmed that roads with black top tarred surfaces will be chipped in the coming months.

Item 10. Correspondence. All email correspondence had been circulated. Request received from Anna Patfield to attend a CC meeting to inform members of the formation of a local group, Planet Sutherland, which aims to increase awareness and actions regarding climate change. Ms Patfield will invited to the next meeting with a 15 minutes slot allocated. (September). **MG Action.**

Item 11. Any other competent business. Nothing further raised.

Item 12. Date and time of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th September at 7.30pm in the Lairg Community Centre.

Item 15. Lairg Windfarm Ltd – Lairg Community Fund. Main grant. Light up Lairg applied for £2,000 towards the repair and re-design of the group's fault older-style lights. Lairg Community Association applied for £2,500 towards the cost of replacing the lighting in the hall with LED lighting. Both grants were awarded in full. Micro grant. Lairg Gala Week was awarded £250 towards the costs of purchasing twelve new, stronger tables. Foundation Scotland and all applicants will be advised. **MG Action.**

Meetings closed 9.10pm.