

Lairg Community Council

Minutes of meeting held in Lairg Community Centre on Wednesday 1st November 2017 at 7.30pm

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

Also present: Highland Councillor Linda Munro (LM), Magda MacDonald, LDCI Project Officer (MM)

Apologies: Eilidh Price (EP), Louise Skinner (LS)

Police Scotland: None present

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Item 1. Welcome/Apologies (as above)/Police report. Chair Jeff Norrie welcomed all present. With no police representatives present or report to hand the meeting moved to the next item.

Item 2. Adoption of Minutes of October meeting. The Minutes of the October meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Jackie Young; seconded: Sandy Allison.

Item 3. Matters arising. (1) Ferrycroft paths. The issue of horse dung on the footpaths was discussed. LM produced a poster from The British Horse Society which addresses the problem She has asked Matt Dent to laminate copies and have them displayed at Ferrycroft. Dog waste is becoming a problem again since the removal of the special bins. LM is arranging for a standard grey bin to be placed at the entrance to the footpaths. Another bin is required behind the police station near the children's play area. More signage regarding dog waste would also be helpful. **LM Action.** (2) **Forestry entrances.** The FCS policy of leaving cleared areas for five years to benefit the biodiversity of the ground is understood but the access areas for forest entrances are so unsightly as to be an embarrassment when visitors comment, particularly those from Germany which has a very tidy forest policy. Health and safety issues were raised with regard the odd single trees left, apparently randomly, in cleared areas. Donald Ross has offered to undertake a site visit with a CC member if required. CC will enquire if some action can be taken over these issues **MG Action.** FCS has replied that they have no plans for a picnic area at the cleared area opposite the filling station at Ord Place. LDCI is hoping to arrange a site visit with Steve Jack to take this idea forward. **MM Action.** (3) **Tennis courts.** SA is in discussion with Lairg Estate and THC to try to trace the source of the water problems. (4) **Lochies bump.** SA will discuss with John Clark, THC Roads Department. **SA Action.** (5) **Water damage at library.** No-one seems aware of the source of the last flood. A recent issue with waste water and sewage caused the school gate area to be closed until the flooding was cleared. All the drainage in this area appears to be linked and in need of careful examination by THC to find blockages. **SA Action.** (6) **Water at cemetery.** Awaiting further information from Cllr Morrison as to progress. The paths in the cemetery are not being maintained with the borders now indistinct due to overgrowing weeds/grass. LM will send appropriate email contact to MG to pass the issue to the correct person. **LM Action.** (7) **Toilets.** The poor condition of both the building and the door have been reported by LM with the request for an immediate repair to the door and estimated costs and timeline for upgrade. (8). **TECS representative.** SA agreed to continue as the TECS contact between the CC and THC.

Item 4. Suggestions re memorial for the late Hector MacLennan. JN continues in discussion with FS in hopes of achieving support for this plan. **JN Action.**

Item 5. LDCI update. Care and Well-Being Centre. Exciting progress being made with negotiations following support from the Scottish Land Fund for the purchase of the site. Acquisition is hoped for by the end of the year. The next twelve months should see a Project Officer in post gathering information on all aspects of the proposal including the public opinions. Full funding for that Officer post is being sought at present. The officer will liaise with all service providers including the NHS, Care commission, Housing Associations, THC, etc. There are many options as to the ancillary services which might be offered in the 'Hub' section of the development some of which will bring income to assist with the operation of the facility. LM stressed that over the coming years, care and health service provision will change out of recognition and that this facility could be at the forefront of such provisions, but the facility will have to be commercially viable and sustainable. In the Care Units overnight coverage is an essential element, key to the whole project's success. There is much to discuss but all ideas and suggestions are welcomed and considered. LDCI will meet with NHS later this month and a public consultation will be held thereafter. Other projects continue beside this main one including the proposed footpath to the station. Funding applications are in process and LDCI will meet with SNH and THC to walk the proposed route. LM indicated that it is hoped to pull funding out from the City Deal to assist projects in rural areas such as Sutherland. SSE's Regional Fund is also now open for applications.

Item 6. CALL. No update received.

Item 7. Financial report. Treasurer's account balance stands at £2,699.31 reflecting outgoing payments in the last month, including the purchase from the Lady Haig Poppy Fund for the wreath to be laid on Remembrance Sunday. The windfarm account has a balance of £622.41 showing the extra funding approved by Foundation Scotland and the developer due to the increased number of applications this year. Project account remains unchanged at £4.73.

Item 8. Planning applications. No relevant applications. The Weekly List is finally being sent to the CC Chair thanks to the efforts of LM.

Item 9. Community Council vacancy. JN has a possible recruit interested and hopes to bring him to the November meeting.

Item 11. Windfarms. Braemore. Scottish Government has given approval to this development, more than two years after the PLI. **Strathkirry.** This proposal appears to be going ahead.

Item 12. Poppy wreath for Remembrance Sunday. SA kindly agreed to lay the wreath once again on behalf of the CC at the service on 12th November. LDCI plans to conduct a clean-up day in Church Hill Wood the day before the service which will be much appreciated by the community.

Item 13. Correspondence. All relevant correspondence had been circulated by email. Reply received from Police Scotland regarding local opinion on the closure of the Police Station. MSP is also monitoring the situation. LDCI may become involved if an offer is made to effect an asset transfer of the building to the community. A backpacker/cyclist hostel is one suggestion for a change of use.

Item 13. Any other competent business. (1) Loch Shin Sailing Club. CC will ask the club for an update on its current position. Funds were provided for a feasibility study but the CC is unaware of any outcome. The boat did not appear to be used/ or available through the summer season. **MG Action.** (2) Street light at the bank is still not working. **LM Action.** (2) Lairg in Bloom enquired about the ground at the Masonic Lodge car park which is very scruffy and untidy, not an attractive sight in the centre of the village. AMK will make enquires as to who should be maintaining this. **AMK Action.** Compliments were passed to Lairg in Bloom for the excellent floral displays maintained from the spring to date. (3) Bus

shelter in village centre is in poor condition, old and worn. MM to establish if it is still weatherproof or not and discuss further with LM. **MM/LM Action.**

Item 15. Date and time of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6th December 2017 at 7.30pm in the Lairg Community Centre.

Item 16. Lairg Windfarm Ltd – Lairg Community Fund. In private session, an application by Lairg Small Bore Rifle Club was awarded £2,500 toward purchase of new equipment. Lairg Friendship Club was awarded £1, 650 towards costs of the Christmas party and the annual outing. The payments will be staggered with the second part paid in the spring once the next tranche of funding has been received. Lairg Lunch Club was awarded £150 towards the costs of the Christmas Lunch and Lairg Primary School received approval for £222.41 towards costs of transportation for pupils on organised school trips through the winter months. Foundation Scotland and applicants will be advised. **MG Action.**

Meetings closed 10pm.