

Lairg Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on Zoom on Wednesday 7th October 2020 at 8pm

Present: Andrew Mackay, Chair/Treasurer (AMK), Jamie Dick, Vice Chair (JD), Jackie Young, Secretary (JY), Sandy Allison (SA), Louise Skinner (LS), Brian Martin (BM)

Apologies: Iain Thomson (IT), John Sutherland (JS)

Also attending: Highland Councillor Linda Munro (LM)

Police Scotland: None present, no report available

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Item 1. Welcome/apologies (as above)/Police report. AMK welcomed everyone. This meeting directly followed the AGM.

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

Item 3. Matters arising from Minutes. (1) Planet Sutherland. It was noted that in future plastic wrapping of silage may be clear as this is recyclable unlike the black plastic currently in use. (2) Foot/cycle path at new sub-station. SSE has indicated that any new path would have to be 2m wide for the full distance incurring substantial costs. LM will check measurements with THC which installed a similar path in Inverness within the last couple of years. It is understood that a large amount of rock on the sub-station site now needs to be blasted. If this could be used for path building it would reduce costs considerably. AMK will liaise with Dr Marshall who is a leading campaigner for the foot path plan. **LM/AMK**

Action. Ms Marchi-Grey to be invited to next CC meeting. **MG Action.**

Item 4. LDCI update. Nothing from LDCI. JY congratulated LDCI on the excellent clean-up work carried out by volunteers at Lairg cemetery. A good number of people turned out to assist and an incredible amount was achieved. SA indicated that there is still a lot to do but that it now should be left until the spring. The paths in the older section of the cemetery are in very poor condition. SA will follow up on this. **SA Action.** AMK congratulated LDCI for the excellent magazine produced during the Covid situation. It has been much appreciated locally. JY asked if any progress is being made regarding starting work on the new Care/Wellbeing Centre.

Item 5. Financial report. (MG) Treasurer's account balance stands at £3,810.95. Incoming payments since March: £617.27 from Foundation Scotland for Admin fee and £521.66 being the Highland Council Annual Admin Grant. Also £800 from Lairg in Bloom, as yet untouched. Outgoing payments since March: three to Faclan Word Service for secretarial/treasurer services including a three month retainer and £40 Data Protection Registration fee, totalling £390.95; Zurich Insurance CC annual premium £86; LCA room hire (March) £14; Lairg Estate £100 (tennis courts); Ashley Poole Auditor £50. The windfarm account has an overall balance £3,668.10 which includes the SSE Resilience Funding. Project account as yet not closed, balance of £4.73.

Item 6. Planning applications. Nil of note.

Item 7. Bird hide. All plans for volunteer work party were cancelled due to Covid-19. Discuss again in the spring. **Agenda item March 2021.**

Item 8. Windfarms. (1) Sallachy. There was a meeting last week to sign off the MOU agreement regarding the local community buy-in. It is understood that all local CCs have agreed the terms. (2) Strathtirry. Due to hold meeting next week. (3) Garvary. Thirty-six or thirty-eight turbines could bring in £1m per year to local communities.

Item 9. Highland Councillor's report. (1) LM stated THC has been hard pressed working through the pandemic crisis attempting to make the best decisions possible. Virus case numbers are rising and expected to jump in October/November. (2) Cllr Munro advised that come the next local elections in 2022 she will not be standing. She pointed out that new technologies, e.g. Zoom, etc, will make the work of a rural councillor much easier, less expensive and therefore perhaps more attractive. (3) Asked if it can be expected that the recycling centres will remain open as they are essential to the community, LM felt that things should remain as they are until THC budget is reset in February and depending on any virus restriction changes. (4) LM reported there is hope from the Director of Public Health that a new Covid vaccine could be available early next year.

Item 10. Correspondence. All email correspondence had been circulated. (1) Email from the new owners of Lairg Caravan Park was well received. Best wishes noted for the new venture which once opened in the spring should be a boost for the area.

Item 11. Any other competent business. (1) TECS. (i) Two or three deep potholes at the layby on the new stretch of road at the new sub-station just as the road becomes single track. Dangerous for any vehicle. (ii) Cllr Munro to check regarding the clearing of unlicensed/uninsured operating of boats at the jetty on the loch and also the removal of a camera which had been installed. (iii) At the derelict house beside Costcutter the trees and bushes are overgrowing onto the pavement, necessitating pedestrians to walk on the road putting themselves at risk. There is access through the fencing where children could get into the now dangerous building. Litter, rubbish and waste is gathering and becoming a health hazard. **LM Action all points.**

Item 12. Date and time of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 9th December 2020 at 7.30pm on Zoom. Members of the public with points to raise should do so with any CC member prior to the meeting at which issues will be discussed. There will be no meeting in January.

Item 14. Lairg Windfarm Ltd – Lairg Community Fund. Two applications received and approved by email during lockdown were ratified. Lairg Learning Centre received an award of £2,500 towards the salary of an administrator for one year; \ldci received £2,888 to provide a community magazine during the Covid-19 period. AMK completed the grant decision forms and submitted them to FS.

Meeting closed 9pm.