

Lairg Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on Zoom on Wednesday 3rd February 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Andrew Mackay, Chair/Treasurer (AMK), Jackie Young, Secretary (JY), Sandy Allison (SA), Iain Thomson (IT)

Apologies: John Sutherland (JS), Louise Skinner (LS)

Also attending: Highland Councillor Linda Munro (LM),; Kaye Hurrion, LDCI Chair

Police Scotland: Report by email

Minutes Secretary: Mary Goulder (MG)

Item 1. Welcome/apologies (as above)/Police report. The start of the meeting was delayed due to technical issues with Zoom but got underway at just before 8pm. IT was able to contribute to the meeting by typing 'chat' but could not be seen or heard. The emailed police report noted six assistance/advice calls, one sudden death, one false alarm activation, and a dog v dog incident which was passed to the Dog Warden who was dealing with it. Nothing reported to pass back to the police.

Item 2. Adoption of Minutes of December meeting. The Minutes of the December meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record; proposed: Andrew Mackay; seconded: Sandy Allison.

Item 3. Matters arising from Minutes. No information is available regarding the status of the Strathy Ward, Migdale Hospital.

Item 4. LDCI update. (KH). KH read through her report updating on seven current projects. Care & Wellbeing . The Board has accepted in principle the Albyn Housing proposal whereby Albyn will build and own all eight houses with the community retaining the right of the selection process for four. The community will be responsible for landscaping and maintaining the other areas of the site. Concern was expressed for the future of this, and other projects, should new people fail to come forward to join the LDCI board. Plans for the station path have stalled as Sustrans has changed the criteria it uses to decide on which path proposals it will support. It is estimated that the costs would be around £400,000. LDCI will continue to pursue the idea as it is still felt the path would be of significant benefit to the community. It is also a safety issue as there is no footpath at present. LM advised that the SSE Regional Fund will re-open between September 2021 and January 2022. KH will contact Fiona Morrison at SSE as this would be a transformational project which could meet the criteria required. THC Ward Discretionary Budget might be another source of some funding. The Helping Hands fund has been boosted by funding from the Robertson Trust widening the scope of assistance the HHF can give. The magazine started during the first lockdown has proved extremely popular, currently being delivered to one hundred and forty-five households, and a decision is awaited on a bid for further funding. LDCI has given Light up Lairg permission to store the Christmas lights in the old Coach House in return for maintenance work in and around the building. LDCI still awaits a decision from THC regarding the possible purchase by the community of the Sutherland Transport car park. If successful it will seek funding for a feasibility study for the possible establishment of an aires point on the site. Other sites are also underconsideration. LDCI will be signing with KsSDT to renew the contract for a further year to provide a Development Officer.

Item 5. Financial report. (MG)The balance in the Treasurer's account stands at £3,407.66 with only one outgoing payment since the December meeting. The windfarm account is unchanged at £3,478.10.

Item 6. Planning applications. Nil of note.

Item 7. Windfarms. (1) An online exhibition will be conducted from 1st to 15th February regarding the Lairg 2 extension. Local households are being advised by post card mail drop. (2) Strath Tirry. Negotiations continue with neighbouring residents. Submission for four turbines is expected later in the year

Item 8. Highland Councillor's report. (LM) (1) Efforts are in place to speed up the vaccination roll out in NHS Highland. The Covid rate is gradually decreasing. (2) JY asked who is responsible for Ferrycroft which has recently sustained water damage due, it is believed, to a burst pipe. Highlife Highland operates the centre but it is owned by THC. Concerns that the damage is repaired to ensure the future of the centre. LM will investigate and report back. (3) Some instances of residents with household waste have been turned away from the THC Recycling Centre and advised they must take it to the commercial dump in Brora and pay the appropriate fee. LM advised that the definition of what can be accepted in Lairg is clearly stated on THC website. She also intimated that the fee for the bulky uplift service is increasing. Full details are available on THC website.

Item 9. Correspondence. All email correspondence had been circulated. (1) The Bradbury Centre in Bonar Bridge has requested a letter of support for its plan to keep its old bus, after acquiring a new one, which can be rented to local groups. CC approved the letter with the proviso that the bus would be available to local groups and its use should not impinge on any local transportation businesses. **MG Action.**

Item 10. Any other competent business. (1) Proposed cycle path to new substation. CCs taking part in the Community Liaison Group (CLG) with SSEN have been advised that SSEN is refusing to fund the project stating that the community must find the funding. SSEN appears to be willing to fund smaller projects, rather than contribute to or fund the whole path. This is very disappointing for locals who could perhaps help sway the issue if enough letters of support for the project were received. The next CLG meeting will be at the end of March. (2) SA reported the increase in the numbers of vehicles failing to reduce speed to 30mph on entering the restricted zone from the south of the village. With the junction at the bridge this is a matter of serious concern. CC will write to the Ward Manager requesting information as to the possibility of erecting a speed indicator sign. **MG Action.** (3) TECS. KH reported that a recent incident when a lorry overturned has demolished the Give Way sign at the top of the Falls of Shin road (B864). The junction at the crest of the hill is dangerous without due warning. (4) LDCI has had several calls/emails regarding the removal of the red dog waste bins, particularly at the bottom of Church Hill Wood and at Ferrycroft by the football pitch. There have also been instances of dog waste left outside the school entrance. LM advised that the red bins have been discontinued but that regular grey bins should be put in their place with notices indicating they are also for dog waste. CC requested that new bins are placed at these sites and also that signs indicating the applicable fines should be erected or made available to be put up in the village. KH will investigate costs for signs. (5) Without hope for any action Chair and others noted the serious deteriorating in road surfaces throughout the area with potholes everywhere, many of the deep and potentially dangerous. **LM Action.**

Item 12. Date and time of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 3rd March (tbc) on Zoom and will incorporate the private meeting with Foundation Scotland for the annual review. . 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. **MG Action.**

Item 14. Lairg Windfarm Ltd – Lairg Community Fund. In private discussion application by Lairg Community Centre for funding for the Part-time administrator post was

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rejected at this time. AMK will submit the Decision Form to Foundation Scotland. **AMK
Action.**

Meeting closed 9.10pm.