



Strathdearn Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held in The Strathdearn, Tomatin, on 12th March 2024

Councillors Present:	Barbara MacAskill (BM) Chair Diane Buckle (DB) - Treasurer Margaret Menzies (MM) - Member	Susan Falconer (SF) – Secretary James Duncan (JD) – Member Mandy Ingram (MI) - Member
Also Attended by:	Highland Councillor Ken Gowans (KG) Highland Councillor Duncan MacPherson (DM) 30 members of the public in person plus 7 attending through MS Teams	

Item Ref	Details	Action By
1.	<u>Introductions</u> The Chair welcomed everyone There were no apologies received.	
2.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> None	
3.	<u>Presentation from Fred. Olsen Renewables</u> Julie Aitken (Senior Project Manager) and Kirtsy Leiper (Head of Communications) delivered an informative talk on the proposed Balnespick Wind Farm which is summarised below. Handouts were provided and the presentation will be shared on the Strathdearn Community website. - The company has 35 years' experience in building and operating windfarms with 9 in Scotland already - They highlighted their commitment to improving and enhancing local ecology and the environment with initiatives such as multi-use trails, wild flower seeding and Capercaillie management - The company can deliver benefit to local communities in different forms including construction and maintenance employment, as well as financial community benefit - Financial benefits can be delivered as grants to a local development company for identified projects grants to local trust funds, Local Energy Discount Scheme (LEDS) direct to local residents, energy efficiency scheme to help residents improve their properties - They are committed to working with the communities to identify their needs A 10 km radius around the windfarm defines the communities who will benefit. (Circa 900 properties) This radius has not yet been finalised for Balnespick, but includes areas such as Carrbridge and parts of Strathdearn. Strathdearn Community Council is defined as the host to this development. Questions received from the public included;- - What happens at the end of the wind farms operating period (35 years)? Fred.Olsen does not sell on their assets – decommissioning or further development / update of the wind farm may take place - What is the proposed grid connection? The application is in process but will include some overhead lines being installed due to topographical restrictions	BM

	Will the whole of Strathdearn be entitled to these benefits? – the geographical area may not include all properties – it is up to the communities to decide how to spread the benefit Throughout the presentation and question & answer session it was repeatedly stressed that Fred.Olsen will work with the communities involved to agree the way forward. Further public consultation is planned for later in 2024 which will take account of the feedback received at CC meetings etc. It was noted that Ken Gowans , Highland Councillor, did not take any part in these discussions.	
3.	<u>Accuracy of Minutes of the meeting of 9th January 2024</u> No corrections noted.	
	<u>Approval of Minutes</u> Minutes approved by MI and seconded by MM.	
4.	<u>Matters arising that are not considered elsewhere on the agenda</u> School Transport A letter from Fergus Ewing MSP to officials at The Highland Council concerning the withdrawal of school transport from Strathdearn, had been copied to the Community Council and was read out to the meeting. The letter supported the position of Community Council and urged the Highland Council to reconsider. BM had been in contact with HC regarding this and had been informed that a standard 20 working days response time to this matter would be expected. BM had not yet contacted Jane Manson or Cathy Matheson until a response to the above was received. KG stated that the Safer Routes to Schools criteria assumes children to be walking with an adult. There is precedent for restoration of school transport which had been withdrawn (Balloch). Also the Head Teacher will have a school Transport Plan and this could add weight to the Community Council's appeal. <u>Actions:-</u> - Awaiting a further response from Highland Council (HC) - Contact will be made with Jane Manson (the school secretary) and Cathy Matheson (who opened the school in November 2002) once a response has been received from THC. War memorial : An email has been sent to THC for an update on the trees/ fence/ path to the wall memorial. Only dead trees are to be removed, John C-M has advised that he has no objections to any path upgrade, and he is willing to allow access to the War Memorial from the gate to the right as you go into his drive, however he recommends using 4x4 transport for this. A response has been received on this from HC stating that as the fencing was not installed by THC it is not their responsibility. It was originally put up by Mike MacKay and funded by The Strathdearn Community Charitable Trust (SCCT). . Action : BM to apply for funding from SCCT to improve the fencing around the memorial	BM

	Dalarossie Church cemetery wall repairs: The cemetery wall now has three areas of collapse and has been looked at by Bodo Clausson, Subcontractor to Landoch Masonry for quotation. This works will be £2000.00, and Philip Mackenzie is offering to pay the whole amount upfront from the Dalarossie Project funds on condition that the Community Council refund half the cost having claimed the amount from the Strathdearn Community Charitable Trust (who will hopefully agree to approve your application!) There is a precedent. SCCT paid £30,000 (half the cost) of the flood prevention work done on the river in 2018 to safeguard the church and churchyard from flooding in future storms. The other half was paid by Highland Council. Action: BM to work with SCCT and Philip MacKenzie to determine how funding for this can be secured. Clune Road sink hole: No further update Action: Continue to Follow up with HC Potholes at start of the 2&1, works have been done at this site two weeks ago. Potholes down Ruthven Road. An email sent to HC – No update yet. Raigbeg Bridge also included in email to HC.	BM BM
5.	<u>Financial Report</u> The bank account currently stands at £164.61 The application for top up funding is being completed and will be sent to HC shortly. <u>Actions :-</u> • Send the application for “top-up” funding.to the HC	DB
6.	<u>Law and Order</u> A Community Beats report for February has not been received. SF to email regarding this omission. Action: SF to contact Community Beats	SF
7.	<u>Road Safety</u> The pot holes on the Glen Road near Easter Auchintoul have been included in the email to THC. Station Road – awaiting a quote from Andrew and Jason for the works on Station Road. This is needed before any application to the Trust is made. 20mph speed restrictions - The Questionnaire went live on 7th March and to date there have been 25 responses – 16 not in agreement and 8 yes agreements with 1 response from Moy asking why Moy was not included. However there have been no new 20mph sign in Moy. The chair suggested keeping this open for at least another week and encouraging responses from Moy residents. KG advised that the outcomes from the questionnaire should be submitted soon as it was useful feedback. Lamp post – open wiring - also included in HC email Action- questionnaire outcomes to be submitted to HC	BM
9.	<u>Applications to the Trust</u> There were 4 applications considered: • The Strathdearn Baby & Toddler Group – day trip to Dalmore Farm - approved • Tomatin Childrens Entertainment Committee – day trip to Loch Insh - approved • Angela McDonnell – support to undertake a post graduate qualification in Nursing – referred to the SCCT for final approval	

	Snow Clearing in Strathdearn - approved	
10.	<u>Planning Matters</u> Duncan Bryden (DB) kindly presented an overview of planning matters in the area: A new application for domestic housing has been noted at Raigbeg behind the Old Schoolhouse. DB advised that comment from residents or the CC would be useful regarding volume of traffic on the old wooden Findhorn Bridge etc.	
11.	<u>Windfarms</u> DB advised that there are now 9 windfarm applications affecting the Strathdearn area. Lochindorb, - 3 applications in this area - no impact on Strathdearn Clune - - in scoping phase, across from Dalarossie, includes battery storage, Public exhibition due to be held in Strathdearn this weekend Balnespick – as previously detailed in these minutes Extension to Tom Na Clach- not yet consented Cprrie Garth 2 – north of Coignafearn extension to Corriegarth ! – consented but no benefit here Highland Windfarms – just west of Clune behind Dalmigivie Lynemore – uphill from Lynebeg – application to be submitted end of 2024 (Dalmagarry estate) DB highlighted these developments surrounding Strathdearn on the Local Access map. JD questioned the impact of these developments on RAF movements in the area – apparently aviation has been taken into account in the local impact report. It was concluded that the Community Council needs to gather opinion on these developments and voice any concerns at the appropriate time. However it was noted that objections can only be made on planning grounds.	
12.	<u>Update from SCD</u> A short update from SCD was read out to the meeting. Of note – an EGM is to be held shortly to discuss the option to purchase Dalarossie Church and the Hazelbank woodlands.	
13	<u>Correspondence</u> - An email had been received from David Kelly regarding poor mobile phone signal in the area. This has also been raised on the Community FB page by various residents recently. A member of the public also highlighted poor fibre connectivity in his property. DM commented that 2 of the 3 O2 masts have been out of service over the last 6 months and residents should apply for compensation. Action:- A questionnaire is to be shared on the Strathdearn Community web site and residents asked to provide feedback on their experience of mobile phone signal problems - An email had been received from Dan Mason at Inverness Airport describing proposed improvements to the runway lighting	BM
14.	<u>Any other business</u> JD advised that he had attended the launch of the A9 upgrades by Transport Scotland in Inverness and had spoken to Fiona Hislop. The Transport Minister Tenders are being received over the next 2 months and 2-3 months thereafter work will start on the Tomatin to Moy section. DB also advised that at the above event it was stated that community benefit was being sought from contractors bidding for the work and that approaches to the Community Council might be made on this subject. . A member of the public reported poor drainage on the main footpath through the village - this will be reported to HC along with other ongoing roads issues	BM
15.	Date of future meeting – 9th April 2024 Meeting closed 9.30 pm	

