

STRATHGLASS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Strathglass Community Council held on
Thursday, 15th October 2009 at 7:00 pm in the Bog Cotton Café, Cannich

PRESENT:

Molly Doyle^E (Chair) June Dunn^E Paul McKinley^E (Sec) Edward Redmond^E Robin Sproull^{Co}
Joyce Stirling^{Co} Annette Sutherland^E (Vice-Chair) Cllr Margaret Davidson
Alastair Smyth (FCS) plus 12 members of the public

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES for absence:

Apologies: Donald Fraser^E, Stuart Templeton^A (Treasurer), Cllr Drew Hendry, Cllr Helen Carmichael, Louise McCaul (Ward Manager), Jack MacKay (FCS), Jim Price (Former local PC – now CID)

2. LOCAL POLICE REPORT: by Jim Price. Due to work commitments Jim could not come, but supplied us later with a report as well as a personal note which is attached to the foot of these minutes. Molly will ensure Jim receives the £50 Gardening Vouchers from SCC we had hoped to present to him tonight, to thank him for his contribution to Strathglass over the years before moving to CID.

3. MINUTES of PREVIOUS MEETING (Thursday, 3rd September 2009)

These were proposed for approval by Joyce Stirling and seconded by Annette Sutherland: duly accepted.

Note: Minutes of Strathglass CC meetings are now posted on the local www.glenaffric.org web site home page, with thanks to Jim McAuley who hosts that.

4. MATTERS ARISING from Previous Meeting

Note: In these minutes **ASCC** is Association of Scottish Community Councils; **(S)CC** is (Strathglass) Community Council, **FCS** is Forestry Commission Scotland and **HC** is Highland Council; superscripts against SCC names (above) of ^E, ^{Co} and ^A indicate 'Elected', 'Co-opted' and 'Associate', respectively.

4.2 Police: There are unconfirmed rumours that the post for Jim Price's replacement remains un-advertised, following Chief Inspector MacLean's assurance that it would be advertised by 17th September.

4.4a FCS Activity: Alastair Smyth (FCS) confirmed that the draft Plodda Bridge plan we have seen is progressing. Clearing growth around the car parks at River Affric, Benevean and Dog Falls is to be complete by Easter 2010. During time for questions, Alastair answered that more logging is expected in the next month or two, and hopes to indicate dates if possible. Also, although many timber lorries are driven with the care for which local residents and visitors have hoped, a significant minority of drivers are still seen driving dangerously. One person was concerned at Alastair's confirmation that the drivers have an incentive scheme: could that be a factor? Also some are on the roads too early – at even 4 / 4:30 am. Alastair has already formally raised these issues with the contractors, and will pass on all of our comments made tonight. He also restated the advice FCS always offer when making complaints: that offending vehicles' details need to be supplied, with the location / day / time, if possible. **Bench:** The picnic bench kit donated by FCS is yet to be installed, awaiting a decision by SCC on where it is to be located.

4.4b Strathglass Roads: John Taylor's (HC TEC Services) progress report was read out for comment, with the exception of issues expired or complete. Points evoking no coherent comment for further action (and therefore not listed below) were: Damage to Cannich – Crunaglack road & passing-places signage, Glen Affric direction sign, Fasnakyle cemetery parking area repair (complete). Four remaining issues are:

A Fasnakyle Bridge, by Tomich turn-off: (Vegetation here still to be trimmed): **Comment:** Please can HC ensure that the visibility assessment, prior to work being done, is based on the level of a car (driver)?

B Repairs to bus turning area in Tomich: (completed by HC): **Comment:** Since the repair, some posts have since been knocked down, and other (wheel) damage has been done by large vehicles: Any advice?

C Speed control through Struy: (Technical team ... will be discussing the issue and bringing forward speed analysis info at the next joint police meeting): **Comments:** a) Can HC confirm that the *whole package* of possible measures discussed is still being looked at (eg extra signage perhaps on the bridge itself, for example: 'SLOW' .. etc? and b) What is the date for this next, joint police meeting?

D Damage to buses arising from Struy trees between church and bridge: (Have been advised by the foreman today that there are no branches [there] which could damage a vehicle of this type): **Comment:** We apologise, we perhaps incorrectly relayed the original message .. we think it was debris of previously trimmed branches, not cleared away properly, which was flying up and causing damage to vehicles.

4.5a Award: Since our Sep 3rd meeting, when we decided to give Geoff an award to thank him for what he does, a pewter tankard has been engraved "Geoff Sweetman 2009 You help keep Cannich Tidy!". It is

to be presented at Raymond Fraser's 40th in Cannich Hall, on 14th November .. as a surprise. (And it is for that reason that the details of this are supplied as an addendum not issued till 15th November).

4.5b Sylvia Fraser – HC Quality Award: SCC's nomination of Sylvia for HC Employee of the Year was read out; having submitted it 9th October. Thanks to SCC members who contributed to this. The winner of this category will be announced at the Town House, Inverness, on Tuesday 17th November.

4.5c Sylvia Fraser's Retirement: Molly presented £50 gardening vouchers from SCC on the occasion.

4.5d Scottish Ambulance Service (consultation): Thanks to those SCC members who participated at such short notice. For your information, the wide range of SCC responses is available tonight to read.

4.5e Local Transport Issues: Louise McCaul (Ward Manager, Aird & Loch Ness) has called for feedback on any difficulties known. Cllr Margaret Davidson, who attends regular meetings with Louise and Stagecoach, will collate these. Margaret will also forward any complaints about Stagecoach's operation (including information / timetables) to David Summers, who is Senior Public Transport officer with HC and deals with Stagecoach. Joyce reported the unpopularity of no 17's changed departure point in Inverness, and Margaret confirmed this has been in discussion for a while, and the matter is not closed. Should the new departure point by Farm Foods be permanently adopted, the provision of a shelter will be given priority. To follow up, contact Councillor Margaret Davidson: **Tel: 01463 861 424**.

5. Cannich Nurse's House: Molly said nothing to report, and Garry Coutts' letter is still awaited.

6. Strathglass & Affric Community [Hall] Co (S&ACC): Kate McKinley (Chair) said things are moving quickly now. Charity status was awarded two weeks ago, and the bank account is due to open next week. Directors' training is under way and an application to the Big Lottery aims to fund the forthcoming feasibility study for a new or refurbished hall in future. A launch event to notify public bodies is planned in January to interest them in the possibility of not necessarily just a hall but a community facility. The first fund-raiser will be 28th November at Cannich Hall, and the Hall can host talks after that. A local business will provide graphic design for the logo. Until issuing Company Meetings' minutes becomes a practical possibility, short, easily-read progress bulletins will be published on notice-boards.

7. Soirbheas [Community Wind Farm]: Note: Cllr Margaret Davidson absented herself from any planning-related issues mentioned here. Edward Redmond (SCC representative) said that the application for planning permission is now in hand and close, subject to the agreements between the Corrimony Energy Co. & Soirbheas being finalised. Funding applications have been delayed by OSCR (the Scottish charities regulator) requiring more specific definitions of eventual community benefits. Soirbheas is pursuing ways to engage the communities to identify these, perhaps by having smaller, more local meetings. Soirbheas has approached both the Glen Urquhart and now Strathglass communities to help their resultant cash-flow limits with current development costs. Since the Glen Urquhart community is aiming to provide a total of £200 it was suggested that Strathglass CC give £200 as well. This was agreed.

8. CORRESPONDENCE included:

8.1 CCs Review: Paul explained that the national CC's consultation in which SCC have participated since June 2008 is now being reviewed by HC for locally applicable features. The first stage of this local process involves CCs evaluating the existing CC boundaries. SCC's sole query to date has been whether the SCC boundary, which excludes Monar Lodge from Strathglass, might be a mistake which needs correction. So those responsible for Monar Lodge will be consulted first, since it is they who might be affected. Then the anomaly will only be only raised by SCC if those responsible wish us to do so. Paul will contact them.

8.2 NHS Highland: Team Update, Sep '09 issue, is in Cannich surgery waiting room (by Nurse's house).

8.3 SNH: Scottish Ministers have decided to classify West Inverness-shire Lochs (including Lochs Affric, Cluanie, Loyne and Garry) as an SPA (Special Protection Area) for black-throated diver and common scoter. Details of this have been provided to SCC, and it took effect from 8 October 2009.

8.4 Community Councillor magazine: The ASCC's Autumn '09 issue is here: help yourself for a read.

8.5 Highland Environmental Network (HEN): .. lists Wildlife Watching dates (as **8.4**: help yourself).

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS: Robin reported that there have been none since our last meeting.

10. AOB

10.1 SCC Treasurers report: Since our 03/09/09 meeting the following transactions have occurred:

Outgoings (no Income, apart from interest)

03/09/09	£120	Strathglass Youth Club for water distiller
15/09/09	£25	Engraved trophy soon to be presented (see item 4.5a , above)
15/09/09	£100	gift vouchers for retirement gifts etc (see 2.0 , & 4.5c , above)
09/10/09	£2,000	S&ACC (see 6.0) - funds held on its behalf until it opens its own bank account.

Funds Available:

Money in bank: £4,376.79
Minus cheques issued but not yet cashed: £2,128.65
Total funds available: £2,248.14

10.2 “Affric to Africa” Charity Appeal: Paul Stirling described a 5-week charity motorbike journey to Africa which he and Angus Hughes will make to raise funds mainly for Highland Hospice. They depart 25th March and all money raised will go to charity. Soon the glenaffric.org website will publish details.

10.3 Home Fire Safety Visits: Angus Hughes encouraged any folk who would like a home safety visit to contact the fire brigade as soon as possible. Local posters and leaflets will soon be placed in Cannich Stores.

10.4 Community Energy Audit: The Energy Savings Trust (EST) seeks a local liaison contact to support grant-assisted homes insulation improvements in Strathglass. No response from those present tonight.

10.5 Christmas Bus: A free pre-Christmas shopping bus trip (for all ages) will be arranged by Molly.

10.6 Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner: This year’s dinner in Cannich Hall will be on Weds 16th Dec. If £250 proves to be insufficient, it was agreed that SCC funds should supply the shortfall if Molly requires it.

10.7 Wheelie-Bin for Litter Collection at Cannich entrance: June regretted that HC’s eventual, (and apparently immovable) installation of the new bin looks unsightly where it is.

10.8 Donald Fraser: Molly has written a get well card on behalf of SCC, to be delivered tomorrow.

10.9 Strathglass CC Resignations: In a closed CC session immediately following the meeting, Molly notified SCC members that Annette handed in her resignation from the CC this evening (with immediate effect) because of other commitments. She added that consequently Paul will also resign for similar reasons by the end of November [now confirmed to be 15th Nov]. Annette and Paul were thanked by their colleagues for their work over recent years. Note: Strathglass CC’s constitution shows that once Paul’s resignation takes effect, SCC can only continue if a re-election takes place, since the number of *elected* members will become four – but must be a minimum of five. Molly will discuss with HC officials ASAP.

11. DATE of NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 26th November 2009 at 7.00pm, in Cannich Village Hall. Agenda to be decided.

Police Report for Strathglass 1st July 2008 to 10th October 2009 [by Jim Price]

In total there were 197 logs for this area, although almost half relate to administration for the likes of firearms licensing, liquor & hotelier licensing and court procedures.

Of incidents of crime:

Theft (minor):	4	Drug Searches:	4	Damage:	1
Assault:	2	Internet Fraud:	2	Domestic Incidents:	2

Of Road Traffic matters:

Speeding:	6	Disqualified Driver:	1	Road Accidents:	14
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Of other incidents:

Suspicious Persons / Vehicles	Concern for Persons:	7	Annoyance:	1	
and Bogus Callers:	3	Mountain Rescue:	5		

Given the large area which is covered and the number of visitors we have over the whole year the incidents of crime recorded is very low compared to our neighbouring communities of Beaully and Drumnadrochit. However, please keep up your vigilance – a lot of recorded crime usually relates to visitors and information from the community cannot be underestimated.

The monitoring of traffic on our roads remains a high priority and the local officers are assisted by the Road Traffic Unit, based at Dingwall, who have responded by regular patrol through this area. The technology at present is such that a vehicle registration plate now provides all details in respect of any vehicle within a very short time frame i.e. insurance, road licence and MOT. In respect of the continued concern of the speed of traffic through Struy, I would hope that a speed restriction is put in place. However, this is a dialogue which has been ongoing for some time and only pressure from the community can develop this situation, as with any other.

On a personal note, I would like to deeply thank this community for welcoming my family and I to the area. To be able to serve in an area so idyllic with a community so friendly, honest and helpful is humbling. I have thoroughly enjoyed my last six years and was more than a bit hesitant in moving to a new post. **Jim Price**