

# Draft Minutes

## Laggan CC – Ordinary Meeting No 11

**17th February 2025 - 18:30 Laggan Village Hall**

### 1. Attendees Present

A Armstrong, C Hamill, M Khazaka, V Macpherson, K Thew. THC R Jones

P Gallagher, D Narro, H Narro, M Sharp, A Watt.

Apologies – A Gallagher, K Fletcher, A Todd

### 2. Approval of Minutes December 2024

Approved MK, seconded CH

### 3. Actions /Updates from previous meeting

- A Gallagher has now met with the Community Benefits Officer at Highland Council re how to proceed with the community fund negotiations with Gilkes - update
- A Todd has started to draft a list of issues on which the CC would like to have more information – no further update
- Grantown, Kingussie, CNPA path building - AT to be added to their WhatsApp group to keep us informed of new initiatives and ideas – no further update
- Forest Trust have consulted with FLS re next 10-year Forestry Plan. See Addendum i.
- Creag Dubh mast. The LCC responded expressing its disappointment in this decision. We have had no reply to date. RJ added that the Senior Planning Officer at THC will be writing to the Reporter as it transpires that a similar decision was made by the reporter involving a different mast application was made by the Reporter and was based upon the fact that The CNPA had not “called it in”. In this circumstance then this should be noted as neutral. This has not been the case.

### 4. Matters Arising

- Angus Armstrong is proposing to make a path of hardcore from the hotel to the memorial. The estimated cost will be circa £5,000 and an application will be made to SSE for funding. LCC voted unanimously to back this initiative.
- Spey Catchment Initiative Meeting – results have been distributed to the community.
- Memorandum of Understanding for apprenticeships and student grants. We await an email from Carole Masheter. KT to follow up.

### 5. SSE Renewables – Community Benefit Update.

There was no feedback given from the recent panel meeting. KT to follow up with C Masheter.

### VABS

Karen Derrick and Ann Traill, representatives from VABS, were present for a meeting with the community which was held prior to this CC meeting. The set up of the proposed SCIO under the name of **Laggan Community Development Trust**. The setting up of the SCIO will allow our community to have more say in how Laggan funds are managed and/or invested. It will enable Laggan Community to manage and more easily access incoming funds from SSE, and allow us to apply for other grants and funding which are currently inaccessible. With the Lochan an Earba Hydro Scheme looking as if it will go ahead, it is imperative that we have a

vehicle in place to enable us to manage additional incoming funds. M Sharp commented that there have been many obstacles in applying and obtaining the funds and enquired how it would be any different. Ann advised that although some obstacles might not go away but there would be work arounds which other development trusts in the Strath have utilised. We can certainly build on their experience.

In order to initiate set up of a SCIO however, we do require 6-8 Trustees, all of whom must live within the Community's post code area. If you are interested in becoming a trustee, please contact Karen Thew [chairlcc@laggan.com](mailto:chairlcc@laggan.com) or Amanda Gallagher [seclcc@laggan.com](mailto:seclcc@laggan.com) for further information.

## 6. Financial Report

It recently came to light that post COVID, SSE have not been requesting Financial Reports from LCC regarding the small grants funds it holds. This council were thus unaware that these were required. LCC provide audited annual accounts to the Highland Council and believed these were the only reporting requirements we had. The previous chair of LCC, Colin Morgan, kindly agreed to go back and provide these reports up until the end of the previous council. During this process it was discovered that a sum of £224.06 had been paid towards the defib machines out of LCC funds which should have been deducted from SSE funds. A corrective payment was therefore made from SSE to LCC funds.

## 7. Treasurer's report - 17 February 2025

<i>Previous bank balance:</i>			£5056.07
	Previous sub-totals	+/- since previous meeting	
Council funds:	784.82		
- Hire of community hall Sept/Dec and Dec meeting on Glentruim road		50	734.82
Reconciliation for defibs. Monies erroneously paid from LCC account instead of SSE account		+£224.06	958.88
<i>Balance</i>			958.88
Ringfenced:			
SSE Micro Grant money	£4220.18		
- Mini Christmas trees		-£99.00	4121.18
- Mini Christmas tree decorations		-£17.44	4103.74
- Big Christmas tree lights		-£511.91	3591.83
- Children's club (hall hire November and December and Christmas party)		-£90.00	3501.83
- SSE fund meeting community hall hire		-£20	3481.83
Reconciliation for defibs. Monies erroneously paid from LCC account instead of SSE account		-£224.06	3257.77
<i>Balance</i>	£		3257.77
CNPA funds for environmental/litter projects	£51.07	£0	£51.07
Current bank balance as of 17 February 2025 (958.88+ 3257.77 + 51.07)			£4267.72

The LCC also approved expenses totalling £64.99 from Fiona Grant for solar lights for the second large Christmas tree and the purchase of a curling game to be used by the Children's Club. The treasurer noted that additional invoices would be submitted for replacing the old Christmas lights used on the flower boxes and for new batteries.

## **8. Statutory Items for Community Council to note and discuss**

### **a. Planning Applications Update**

24/03910/FUL Forestry roads - Garvamore – Application permitted 19/11/24

24/01732/S37 Melgarve - development and pylons -No decision yet

23/05579/S38 Culachy. Nothing further noted since Highland planning department objection

### **b. New Planning Applications**

**24/04548/FUL** Strathmashie Cottage. Change of use to short term let.

**24/05127/FUL** Construction of road for timber haulage, Sherramore Cottage. LCC to respond. Action KT

**The Schoolhouse, Laggan.** No notice via THC but paper notice on gate of the property. Change of use to holiday let.

## **9. Licencing Update**

Gaming/lottery licence received. This will cover larger raffles held during 2025. Expressly raffles which are not held and drawn at an event. If tickets are to be sold over a period of time and drawn on a different date then all protocols must be adhered to.

## **10. Roads**

(i) Following a meeting with residents to have the purpose of the road amended to a "quiet road" and noted as a shared space for pedestrians, cyclists, horses and vehicles with appropriate blue signage and 40 mph speed limit, the Glentruim/Catlodge road status change has now gone through the HC Legal Department and is going out to consultees. It is hoped that it will be in place by late spring/summer.

### **(ii) Transport Scotland proposed changes to Scotland's speed limits**

The proposals to reduce the national speed limit [for cars] on single-carriageway roads to 50mph and increase the speed limit for goods vehicles over 7.5 tonnes on single-carriageways to 50mph and dual-carriageways to 60mph has been rejected by the Highland Council but remains under consideration by Transport Scotland. As individuals are able to comment, LCC will send out the link to the consultation via email.

## **11. Public Sector Agencies**

Nothing received.

## **12. Highland Council**

Reports were given by R Jones of THC on the following issues:

### **Roads**

See report in above section 9.

## **Bus Shelter**

THC are happy to provide Laggan with a bus shelter and this could be done within the next 5 weeks. THC have looked at options for siting a shelter and are checking ownership of potential sites. (MK/RJ re Ben Alder) RJ to ask whether the proposed shelter for Strathmashie can also be dealt with by THC in the same timeframe.

## **Lochan N Earba Pumped Hydro Scheme.**

The Lochan N Earba project was on the agenda at last week's South Area Planning Committee. The meeting was broadcast live and a recording of it can be viewed via THC website. THC are just consultees but the item went through the committee and was debated for around 3 hours. It was recommended for approval by planning officer. The committee have asked that conditions be imposed should approval be given. It should be noted that if the HC Planning Committee had refused planning consent, then they would have had no way of imposing any conditions such as those detailed below. ScotGov will give final consent in this matter.

Transport Scotland did not ask for any improvements on A 889 or A86. The first condition from the committee was that both roads, from the A9 junction in Dalwhinnie to the proposed site entrance on the A86, be brought up to modern trunk road standard. Unfortunately, this will not carry as much weight as it would have had Transport Scotland also asked for this.

Also proposed as a condition was that some of housing which would be provided for workforce could be handed over to the community and RJ asked that discussions be had with Gilkes in respect of housing being built by them for the Laggan Community. THC are in discussion with Gilkes and this is now a condition of the planning. RJ cannot guarantee how enforceable this might be.

RJ also brought up a third condition which had been written in by Gilkes which relates to using a local workforce wherever possible during the construction, at a time when they would be employing up to 500 people. RJ asked that a further condition be set that when operational they will use local workforce and that they will liaise with Kingussie High School in respect of apprenticeships and other career opportunities. The original claim by Gilkes was that, when operations commence, they will provide work for 46 people. Further discussions with Gilkes representatives gave a split on this figure of 30 on site and 16 in service jobs locally in other businesses that this project will provide when operational. RJ advises that this is very difficult to quantify but that THC will keep applying pressure to provide local employment.

The financial incentives previously detailed by Gilkes are simply not good enough and we will be asking them to sign up to the Social Values Charter which has been now running for 6 months

### **13. Laggan Community Action Plan - Active Travel/Connecting Laggan, CNPA (Cairngorms 2030), Christmas Lights, Village Amenity Group, Public Toilet)**

- Youth club -
- Christmas Lights 2025. The small trees which were purchased will remain in the planters in readiness for Christmas this year. Summer flowers can be planted around them.
- CNPA – No attendee present to give a report. CH will attend the CNPA Development Planning Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> Feb and report back to LCC.
- FLS Future Plan Feedback - See Addendum (i)

#### **14. AOB**

- Representatives from LCC will host a meeting with representatives from Dalwhinnie and Spean Bridge Community Councils to discuss the Lochan N' Earba project and how we may best serve our communities during the progress of this project. The meeting will be attended by Cllr R Jones and Cllr M Cockburn. G Ward, Community Benefits Officer THC will also be invited to attend as community benefit negotiations should now be started.
- Public Toilet – Set to close 31 March as funds will run out for its upkeep. KT to email RJ regarding current comfort scheme payments. Also to email P Moore and S Slimon for information on Church Partnership involvement. A Mcpherson to be cc'd.
- The food share shed is currently closed due to inappropriate items having been left inside. It will re-open soon.

#### **15. Date of next meeting**

17 March 2025 18:30 Laggan Wolftrax

### **Addendum (i)**

LFT met with FLS recently and their Forest Management proposals for the Strathmashie Forest are with their regulator - Scottish Forestry - to approve before starting any felling activity. FLS advised that they would expect this approval by the spring of 2025 and will be planning felling activity in Feagour from October 2025. This will also include some "civils" roadworks to improve access to other potential coupes later in the 10-year cycle. LFT will continue discussions with "circular paths" in the Feagour area when contractors are in doing road construction. A second felling coupe - scheduled for 2026/27 - is shown for a fell to the south of the Spey Dam. LFT noted that the haul route would likely be out through the private road towards the A86 by Strathmashie Houses. LFT also advised FLS of the likelihood of other construction traffic using this private road for the new Distillery - something which FLS indicated that they were unaware. Detailed maps of the plans are held in the Laggan Forest Trust office for anyone to access.

### **FLS future forest plan feedback.**

See above. Additionally, LFT also recently contacted FLS/CNPA for remedial work and improvements required for the Wolfrax "green route" path/cycle track following construction activity to provide power to the new Emergency phone mast. LFT has requested that any such activity be undertaken prior to Easter. In addition - and having undertaking a health and safety audit for the car park, we expect FLS to be making some improvements and changes to the Laggan Wolfrax car park - the timescale for this is unknown.