

HELDON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2024
at Mosstowie School 7.30 pm

Chairman	Mr J Mountford – Dallas	
Treasurer	Mr S Williams - Roseisle	
Secretary		
	Mrs M Evans – Duffus	Ms S Hodder - Pluscarden
	Mr C Souter - Milntonduff	Mr W Duncan – Fogwatt & Birnie
	Mrs L Smailes - Pluscarden	Mr K Milne - Milntonduff
		Mr W Mustard – Fogwatt and Birnie
Attendees	Councillor Bridget Mustard	Mr W Booth – Dalgleish Associates Ltd
	Ms H Ospazuk – Birnie resident	Mr C Ortlepp – Leiths Scotland Ltd
	Ms J Johnson – Birnie resident	
	Mrs P Smith – Birnie resident	
Apologies	Mr A Lyons - Roseisle	Mrs D Kelly - Alves
	Ms J Kirby - Milntonduff	Councillor Neil Cameron
	Mr N Sutherland - Dallas	

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Mr A Lyons, Ms J Kirby, Mr Neil Sutherland and Councillor Cameron.

2. Presentation on behalf of Leiths re sand and gravel extraction re Dykeside Farm

Leiths Scotland and Dalgleish Associates gave an informative presentation on the proposed Sand and Gravel Quarry at Dykeside Farm, Birnie.

Several issues were raised and considered:

- Consultations - two Public Consultations will be held in Birnie Village Hall on 27 February and 19 March 15.00 – 20.00.
- Timescale – it is anticipated that there will be a six-month preparatory period followed by an annual extraction of 50,000 tonnes. Over a period of 22 years and 6 months it is expected that a total of 1.125 million tonnes will be extracted then this will be followed by a year-long restoration period.
- After restoration – it is expected that the land will be some six metres lower afterwards.
- Traffic – it was pointed out that this will be a major issue. It is anticipated that there will be 9 to 10 lorries in and out per day on average. A traffic assessment will be carried out.
- Noise and dust – legislation will have to be complied with. There will be a full assessment and these conditions will be applied by the planners. Weather and wind patterns will need to be taken into consideration.
- Bridges – it was pointed out that local bridges have weight limits.
- Planning – the time-frame for planning is estimated to be around 3 months.

- Archaeology – concern was expressed about the potential archaeology of the site. It was pointed out that there is evidence of an iron age settlement nearby which has been mapped. A report has been carried out and nothing of that magnitude has emerged for the site. They are happy with this so far but more work might need to be done.
- On one of the proposed routes the Cloddach Bridge is currently closed and HCC is trying to raise the funds necessary to have it reinstalled. The possibility of a contribution to the cost was put forward.

The chairman thanked the representatives for their very thorough and helpful presentation.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 09 January 2024 were approved.

Proposed: Mr W Duncan Seconded: Mr K Milne

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) Cloddach Bridge – the £120,000 for the business case has been paid and the work is ongoing. No progress has been made so far in raising the additional funding required for the new bridge. A number of points were made:

- Community funding – could this be accessed?
- Businesses who use the bridge from both sides should perhaps be asked to contribute.
- It has been suggested that if the bridge is dismantled and not replaced then the cost of restoring the area to its original condition would involve a sum of £800,000. The Cloddach Bridge Action Group should be contacted about this.
- Sustrans has not yet replied.
- SEN could be approached as a fund is being established re the new line but this is to be concentrated on areas most affected.
- There is a full Council meeting on 27 March for the purpose of discussing the Cloddach Bridge. There is still £1.5 million of capital funding after a bridge underspend last year. The deadline for funding information for this meeting is 26 March.
- Longevity and Health and Safety will be issues.
- Work has to go through Council providers.
- If the bridge is rebuilt it will be in its original position.
- The potential £1.5 million of funding from the Westminster Government is still in place but there is a deadline for this towards which we are working.

b) Signatures: our new Treasurer is now active but we are still waiting for the matter of signatories to be resolved.

c) Trees on the Kellas/Dallas road – nothing has been done on these so far.

d) Speed signs – the new speed signs and flashing lights on the A96 at Alves have had no effect on the speed at which cars/lorries travel through the village.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Most correspondence had been circulated to all members but some might need further action.

a) Kellas Drum Wind Farm – a planning application is due to be submitted in March. No more public consultations are proposed but the plans will be available. The plans are being submitted to Edinburgh, not to Moray Council.

b) Fred Olsen – the publicity officer has informed us that the AGM will take place on 25 March. The Chairman and the Treasurer will attend.

c) Road Safety Champions – it has been proposed that each Community Council should appoint a Road Safety Champion.

d) M-Connect – funding is going to this. Public consultations will be held with the first one taking place in Elgin Community Centre on 20 March 14.00 – 16.00.

e) Climate change – a request has been made for anyone willing to join this group.

f) SSEN – there will be a number of public consultations over the new line. Dallas is the most closely affected and a meeting will be held there on 30 March 10.00 – 16.00. All consultations will be advertised. SSEN are going to establish a Community Fund with most of this to go to the areas most affected. Pylons will be much higher and closer together than previous ones but the possibility of putting the lines underground is to be reviewed.

6. FINANCE REPORT

The £120,000 has been paid but so far no follow-up has been received. A request has recently been requested for Tractus. The proposed footpath Elgin – Pluscarden won't be built as the cost is so extreme. A feasibility study has been carried out.

Roths 1:	£ 2,228
Roths 2:	£13,700
Heldon CC:	£ 1,777
Total	£17,705

Roths 2 – October release available for applications: £37,927 – deadline agreed for the end of April 2024. A finance meeting will be held in May.

Debra has requested our expenses as part of her budgetary planning. We submit detailed accounts each year.

7. PLANNING ISSUES

All planning details had been circulated.

- Fogwatt processing plant – Nothing further has been heard but the application has been submitted.
- Wind mast on Galactic Hill – this is simply a weather mast.

8. A.O.C.B. to include area reports

- Viewmill bridge – no development as yet but Councillor Mustard will request an update.
- Four new containers have arrived at The Grove. No planning permission has been given for these.
- A941 – there was a request for the ditches to be cleared beyond Fogwatt as water is now running across the road.

- Millbuies – trees have been removed but there are plans to plant trees and reinstate the area.
- Mountain bikers in the Pluscarden area are parking in the passing places as there is now a charge for parking in the official car park. The vehicles tend to be big vans which protrude onto the road. This is very dangerous. No notices have been posted by the Forestry Commission. The police could be alerted and photos should be taken and submitted to Councillor Mustard.
- The sides of the road from Pluscarden Kirk to Dallas need clearing. At the moment the road is getting narrower and narrower.
- Concern had been expressed about the litter on the playing field and down the Gordonstoun Road as a result of the Pizza Van in the car park at Duffus. The owners of the van have now provided a large bin at the side and are clearing any litter after each session but the small round litter bins on the field are part of the problem as they are not suitable for large square pizza boxes. It was pointed out that larger bins can be requested from the Council.
- Viewmill bridge – no further development as yet. Councillor Mustard will ask for an update.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Date, time and venue of the next meeting:

Tuesday 02 April 2024 at 7.30 pm – venue to be arranged.