

Laggan Community Council - Ordinary Meeting

Meeting 4 - 2020 – 18th May 2020

VIA ZOOM @ 1900

Minutes

1) Attendees present. Chair Colin Morgan (CM), Vice chair Mignonne Khazaka (MK), Treasurer Gordon Stirling (GS), Secretary Amanda Gallagher (AG), Liz MacFarlan (Minute secretary), Lauren Hendry(LH). In attendance: Cllr. Muriel Cockburn (MC), Cllr. Pippa Hadley (PH), Jonathan Hart – (JH) Jahama Highland Estates (JHE); Ian Stewart (IS) Bidwells
6 members of the public attended. Apologies – none. Meeting declared Quorate.
CM welcomed the 2 Highland Councillors, members of the public and the reps from JHE and Bidwells.

JH outlined the new JHE Corporate Vision – brochure circulated to Community Councillors - focusing on the pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030, to engage with local organisations and to take seriously responsibility for their own staff. They are investing considerably in land management, existing staff properties and looking to bring more properties “back on line”. JH highlighted ongoing participation with Kinlochleven’s working group as an example of good practice in liaising with a community and a Community Benefit Company has been established with JHE assistance, a Board of Trustees, clear governance and guidance on using monies from the renewable energy funds. JH posed the question how could JHE engage with Laggan Community Organisations for mutual benefit and suggested 2 possible areas, which linked to the 2019 Laggan Community Development (LCD) plan.

- The South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project has translocated eagles to the Moffat area from Glenshero. Educational and possible tourism opportunities exist to link Laggan with this. There is already engagement with major stakeholders e.g. SNH, but not CPNA yet.
- Outdoor activities. JHE could help with work on bike trails and improved access and wider links.

CM asked about other possible strands in the LCD plans e.g. Housing development – existing and new. JH noted that they are renovating existing buildings for staff but also engaging in plans to identify property and land within its estate for additional housing. There were, as yet, no specifics for Laggan on this. JH also agreed to look further at the LCD plan for opportunities on how the estate can engage with the community.

JH noted that Glenshero Windfarm planning application public inquiry has been delayed to November 2020

Forestry & Timber extraction plans from Glenshero. JH was reminded that this was a sensitive matter for the Community. JH noted that their original plans (Summer 2019) are delayed by C-19 and new timings are unknown. JH expects the following 3 activities and the detail was explained by IS from Bidwells.

- Access roads – as approved by Highland Council – April 2020
- Timber harvesting – as approved by Forestry Commission (2015) as part of a long-term forest plan.
- Transportation – extraction route to be determined.

IS noted that the Long Term Forest Plan for Glenshero Estate - as agreed with Forestry Commission (FC) was the result of a 2015 consultation. CM noted that this is a document which LCC has not seen and requested a link to it. The intention is to restructure the woodland in the long-term by introducing nature species broadleaf trees. IS said that approval had already been given to harvest (from FC), to construct access roads (from Highland Council) and to remove timber. The preferred extraction route is via the private estate road to Strathmashie (A86), but failing agreement to use this route, via Laggan Village would be used. IS said that the public road to Melgarve will remain open throughout, but there may be traffic management needed on it to ensure safety during extraction times. Passing places will be built west of Garva Bridge.

Concerns were again expressed about the suitability and safety of using the narrow, single-track road from Laggan Village to the Spey Bridge and further west for timber lorries, as well as the concrete bridge crossing the Spey.

CM asked IS for notification of the commencement of any construction, harvesting and extraction and for local businesses to be able to be involved in the tender process.

JHE were also asked about any repairs to the roads before and after and noted that JH expressed a willingness to discuss this. CM thanked JH and IS for their attendance and contributions.

2) Minutes of meeting 3 – 16th March 2020 approved. Proposed MK, Seconded AG without amendment.

3) Financial report – Treasurer

- Month-end (April 2020) a/c balance £3966.11, of which £2590.11 is SSE Grant money.
- GS reported that the approved accounts for 2019-20 had been submitted to Highland Council, but confirmation of the annual grant amount is still awaited.
- LCC is still waiting to receive £6000 from SSE as emergency Covid 19 funding – this money is part of the original year 1 Community Benefit received by Laggan from the Stornelaig WF fund.

4) Statutory Items for Community Council to note and discuss.

a) **Planning update** – new and O/S applications – CLOICHE Wind Farm to develop and submit response by 12th June 2020. There was disappointment that none of the requests made at our meeting with SSE on Feb 17 2020 for further investigation into baseline noise in Laggan and Strathmashie had been responded to. There are still concerns about noise. CM to circulate the original LCC response letter for the Glenshero WF and to send a note of our disappointment to SSE for comment, prior to sending our response.

b) **Licensing update** – none

c) **Roads update** – A86/A889 update – awaiting restart of operations post C19.

d) **Report from Public Sector Agencies** – NHS, Police, Fire.

The new hospital in Aviemore update was circulated on residents' email and website

e) Highland Council

1) Awaiting outcome of Laggan Public Toilet proposals – due to C19, nothing new to report from MC or PH. CM advised that the Church had signed off the Comfort Scheme for 2020 onwards. The matter of existing septic tank maintenance was not one for the Community Council to intervene.

2) COVID 19 resilience funds use – HC - MC reported that funding has been given to VABS and many local projects supported, including the Aviemore food hub, help for people who are shielded, and chrome books for secondary school pupils. For the Laggan SSE C-19 fund CM reported that 4 Laggan organisations had been contacted - Surgery, HH, Volunteer group, School - the school has still to respond and a local parent is to follow up. The groups advised that their own resources were adequate at present.

MC reported that HC employees had been repurposed/refocused to support C-19 activities, that funds are very stretched at present and that much of HC routine work is “on hold”. It was expected that the Granish recycling facilities will re-open in June, but with managed access and times to be published. An area committee meeting will be held in June, after which MC will provide an update.

MC noted told us about a Grantown ‘hardship fund’ established with Karen Derrick (KD) of VABS. It was suggested that this might be a possible programme to set up in Laggan for the SSE funds, but named a ‘Recovery Fund’. CM to contact KD.

Given the “re-purposing” of some employees’ roles, normal amenity provision is restricted. PH reported that there are new Litter-picking and grass-cutting guidelines for volunteers available on the HC website.

5) Community Development/Action Plan

C19 has forced delays to cycle paths consultation progress and other projects.

6) **Other Questions/contributions from the members of public present** – none.

7) Any other agenda items

- Laggan Christmas Lights cost £900+ and were a disappointment in terms of number and functionality. In Newtonmore, CM noted that most of the lamp standards were the responsibility of Bear but that the “Newtonmore Winter Association” volunteers install and maintain the winter lights themselves. Bear to be approached with respect to Laggan lights. All present lights in Laggan Village are on Highland Council lamps - 3 of which are not working.
- Laggan Communications. AG and LM to liaise on this.
- Laggan Gateway designs. CM to contact Bear to discuss acceptable design dimensions.
- SSE Large Grant Fund. There is 1 application being considered from Laggan Heritage for the refurbishment of 2 more local monuments. Decision pending.
- SSE Melgarve visit – awaiting proposed date
- Glenshero WF Public Enquiry event – now expected November 2020

8) Proposed Date and time of next meeting – next meeting scheduled for Monday 15th June at 1900 to include AGM and by ZOOM.

Date of draft minutes – 19th May 2020. Approved unamended at meeting of LCC on 15th June 2020.

Residents may intimate other topics for the Community Council to discuss by contacting chairlcc@laggan.com or secretarylcc@laggan.com