

Laggan Community Council - Ordinary Meeting

Meeting 19 – 21st February 2022

Laggan Community Hall @ 1900

Approved Minutes

1. Attendees present: Chair Colin Morgan (CM), Secretary Amanda Gallagher (AG), Jill Warner (JW) Valerie MacPherson (VM), Lauren Hendry (LH), Minute Secretary Karen Thew (KT)

Apologies - Mignonne Khazaka, Highland Councilors - Pippa Hadley & Muriel Cockburn,

Also Present - SSEN contingent: Louise Anderson (Community Liaison Mgr), Karen Fox (Regional Project Mgr, Gareth Cameron (Cluster Project Mgr) and 10 members of the community.

CM welcomed SSEN executives and thanked them for attending. SSEN advised that Laggan was the only community who had requested direct engagement and discussion of their plans.

2. SSEN Melgarve

This part of the meeting was open to members of the community to receive feedback from recent consultation proposals and to ask questions in an open forum. Handouts were provided to all in attendance. These detailed the revised scope of the works involving the proposed extension to the Melgarve Substation and the proposed Overhead and/or Underground cable connections required for the wind farms, along with proposed timescales. These documents are now available online in the “events” section of the www.laggan.com website.

Following planning application submissions/approvals, construction is proposed to commence in October 2023 for a period of approximately 20 months. The meeting was advised however, that connection date requests indicated a potentially postponement for project completion to the summer of 2026.

Most discussion centred on the need for the additional transformer capacity and why overhead cabling (with pylons) was necessary, when 2 other developers had specified underground cable connections. SSEN agreed to 1) a further community consultation – likely by end of April and 2) the formation of a community liaison group to discuss impact of transport disruption during any construction phase.

The agenda for the formal Community Council meeting continued after SSEN executives left the meeting at 2000. The CC meeting was declared quorate

3. Approval of LCC meeting December 2021

Proposed: JW Seconded: AG. Approved unanimously. CM will sign and post to website and notice board.

Matters arising:

- a. Village Notice Board – it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.
- b. Bus Routes - The tender for the existing public service bus routes is up for renewal in Jan 2023. CM has written to request an extension to Laggan for service 32 beyond Newtonmore and/or an extension to the school route 40. Local Highland Councilors have voiced their support. A follow up letter is to be written-CM.
- c. The new pharmacy in Newtonmore is now open and was welcomed by all.

4. Financial report – Treasurer

The current balance on the account is £14,465.71 of which £13002 is ring-fenced for specific projects. Since the meeting in December we have received two payments – both on behalf of Laggans Helping Hands - one from SSE for £6250 for the purchase of Defibrillators and £500 from Highland Council for their installation and purchase of AED signage.

Four payments have been made from the Account: £62.64 for the purchase of batteries for the Christmas Lights; £30.00 for Minute Taking Services; £17.50 to Laggan Village Hall for the rental of the Hall for the December meeting; £86.00 to Zurich Municipal for the annual Insurance Premium.

Ring-fenced funds are as follows: £1090.11 to the SSE Micro Grants; £5000 for SSE Covid Funding; £6750 for Laggan Helping Hands; £161.89 for litter amenity project – funds from CNPA.

Available funds for CC projects and meetings is therefore £1,463.71

Jill Warner agreed to become a new signatory on the Community Council Bank account. GS to action. GS intimated his intention to step down as Treasurer at the next AGM.

5. Statutory Items for Community Council to note and discuss.

a. Planning updates

- East Feagour. Decision remains outstanding. Noted Transport Scotland issues.
- Glentruim Estate - Eco House - Planning in Principal approved with 8 conditions.
- Laggan Glamping – Caravan Site Plan requiring permanent planning permission to replace temporary permissions previously granted by Highland Council.

b. Licensing – no update.

c. Roads update – There are 3 sets of road works planned for A86 between Gorstean and Loch Laggan in March. This will involve night-time works and hourly amnesties on the sections affected. UPDATE after meeting - only 2 sections now being done with the Gorstean section not going ahead. The present revised schedule for works adjacent to Creag Dhu indicates May 2022. Upgrading of Glentruim Road is noted with in the Highland Council Regional 22/23 capital budget. This was welcomed but road was noted to be in a dreadful state now. The most appropriate approach to resolve this issue is to send a formal complaint via the Highland Council Roads website by residents. A question was also raised about the inconsistent safety signage for this road with a number of cars in ditches reported. Sat Nav guidance presently brings traffic off the A9 and A889 inappropriately. A request for “beware” safety signage for the wild goats roaming along the A86 has been made and requires an assessment by Transport Scotland.

d. Public Sector Agencies – Police - Nothing to report. UPDATE – Report received after the start of the meeting in response to excessive speeding issues reported on A86. A new police contact has been advised. To be followed up.

e. Highland Council – Safer Routes – no progress for over a year: Short Term Let Proposals. Nothing to report as no councilors present, although there was some discussion and mixed feelings expressed on the STLP proposals and whether it was appropriate for Laggan. Consensus was “probably not”. This matter will be raised at the next meeting when councilors may be available for comment.

6. Community Development/Action Plan - Updates on priority projects.

The 4 new defibrillators – for Village Hall, Laggan Hotel, Wolftrax Centre and Caoldair Coffee Shop are to be installed when received. An offer to install them free of charge has been welcomed.

Village Amenity: The LCC Facebook received a disappointing message that litter – including broken glass – had been inappropriately left in the picnic site. Request for local residents to clear have been made using CNPA provided materials.

7. Other Questions/contributions from the members of public present.

There were multiple questions posed during the SSEN section of the meeting.

8. Any other Business

- Emergency Resilience Plan: There is currently no such plan in place. With the recent power outages impacting power, broadband and water supplies in the community, no capability or facility presently exists in the area for impacted residents to go. It was agreed that the Village Hall was an appropriate facility to consider as an emergency facility. It was noted that Carol Butler, in conjunction with VABS, is available to assist to develop such plans. The SSEN Community Resilience fund has just opened for appropriate funding applications, for example, to install back up generators. The present SSE CB fund could also be accessed. CM will liaise with C Butler and arrange a date for a meeting to discuss with all relevant community groups. The Hall Committee will be essential to participate in this activity.
- It was noted that the SSE CB fund administrators have been asked their views on the use of outstanding CB funds, if appropriate, given enquiries received about future challenges on energy costs and fuel poverty. SSE have agreed to provide a response.

9) Proposed Date and time of next meeting – Monday 28th March at 1900. Venue Laggan Village Hall. NOTE CHANGE OF DATE but to be confirmed.

The meeting was formally closed 21:00 and all attendees thanked by the chairman

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

Date of Draft Minutes – 23 Feb 2022 Approved at CC meeting of 28th March 2022.