

Laggan Community Council

Ordinary Meeting No 13 Draft Minutes - 19th May 2025

1. Attendees Present

CC Members – K Thew (Chair) A Gallagher (Sec) A Armstrong, V Macpherson, A Todd

Community – R Woolston, T Harris, S & J Young, H& D Narro, J & C Ashworth, G Macpherson

Guests – J Fotheringham (SBRBACC) Ian Langly (SBRBACC), I Mattheson (SBRBACC), L Marchi (SSENT), Darrell Muldoon (SSENT), Marta Garicia Ibanez (SSENT)

Apologies - C Hamill (Treas LCC), M Khazaka (LCC), K Fletcher (LCC), R Jones (THC), K Deans (CNPA)

2. Approval of Minutes March 2024 – Meeting declared quorate 19:30, previous minutes approved AA and seconded AG

3. **SSEN-T Presentation** – The SSE presentation was delivered prior to the commencement of the official CC meeting and questions were invited from attendees. The same presentation will be given at the consultation event on Wednesday 28 May in the Village Hall. We were given information that the of the five locations under consideration the proposed site for the substation will be between Feagour and Strathmashie, it is already named Coire Mashie, the platform would be similar in size to Melgarve and will be 700m x 300m. **S Young** - This is 12 x the size of Melgarve and said that it is important for SSE to provide realistic figures, are they future proofing? Additionally traffic is a key issue. SSE responded that this is the worst case scenario. They also confirmed that they don't have a robust traffic assessment as yet. **A Todd** - BEAR have said there will be no upgrade necessary to any of the roads in the area, their argument being that there isn't the volume of traffic to warrant any upgrade. We need pressure from SSE in respect of the foreseeable loading which can be added to the Gilkes project. These two overlapping projects should be combined. **J Fotheringham** – Gilkes are a tiny company and need someone to buy the proposed development, they are merely putting forward the proposal. **SSE** – The actual connection will be paid for by the “developer” but as Gilkes have applied for a connection for the proposed project then SSE have to go through the planning process to provide a connection. **R Woolston** – There is no mention of the impact on nearby properties. Why consider options 1 and 2 where visual impact will be highest. Options 3, 4 and 5 (all on Ardverikie land) may have much less visual impact on any properties apart from perhaps Ardverikie holiday lets. Can SSE explain to us in more detail how the decision has been made? **SSE** – location 3 and 4 would sit on degraded peat land. **T Harris** - Cables will be underground as they pass through Ardverikie land as this has been requested. Will the remainder of the cables be underground? **A Todd** – Cost is always going to be a factor and we would hope that a degree of pressure will be brought by the developer. However, as we have seen with Cloiche, SSEN ignored our wishes for all undergrounded cables on the 17km stretch. Only 9 km will be undergrounded (all in a peatland area) the remaining 8km will be overground and based on economics. SSEN have not previously taken on board any comments, it is our hope that cost does not become the main concern. **J Fotheringham** – Will both options be offered? **SSE** – We will offer what we have been asked to offer. **D Narro** – We see this as “creeping development” You can not see it as one development, rather, it is one then another then another. This is not a consultation it is information spread. Consultation would indicate that we have a chance to change the outcome, we should have this opportunity. **S Young** – You can not consult on an exercise, you have to be able to quantify what you are telling us.

4. Actions /Updates from previous meeting

Update on list of issues on which the CC would like to have more information:

A Todd has collated a list of questions for Badenoch Broadband – future proofing!! BB recently received approval for a sum of £65,000 from the SSE Windfarm. This has raised a variety of questions including the scale of charges to customers after the upgrade, future proofing, how the funds will be apportioned for necessary upgrades and increase of speed to the current system. There is a legitimate interest from the community and it is proposed to ask BB to attend one of our forthcoming meetings to give a more in depth view into the business. A list of questions is to be supplied to BB prior to the meeting and further questions will be invited from attendees. Grantown, Kingussie, CNPA path building – A Todd has now been added to this group and advised the meeting that path maintenance is carried out by a volunteer network.

5. Matters Arising

- SSEN-T Substation proposal -Coire Mashie. See Point 3.
- Loch N Earba Pumped Hydro Scheme – Community Alliance update. AG has attended a meeting with Dalwhinnie CC and MSP Jamie Halcrow Johnston who has been made aware of the impact to our communities anticipated by the Earba project. He has suggested a round table meeting which should involve local CC's, other MSP's SSE, Gilkes and BEAR/Transport Scotland to discuss our concerns.
- Loch Fearna Pumped Hydro Scheme. Planning permission is being sought for a further significantly sized pumped hydro scheme at Loch Fearna, Invergarry. Similar in size to Earba, this will be yet another huge impact on the Highlands. Although it will not directly affect Laggan, our neighbouring communities will be further affected and support should be given to them.

6. SSE Renewables – Community Benefit Update.

The current fund stands at £472k. Ring fenced for micro grants, student grants and apprenticeships is an amount of £54,500 £5000 of this will be allocated per year for student grants to be allocated as £500 per person per year (for every year they are in higher education) . This leaves an amount of £418k for other projects. There is no inflationary uplift in the fund which is in year 9 of a 20 year project. A recent award to Badenoch Broadband is going ahead as is an award towards improving paths around Laggan. Further funding applications for schemes which will benefit the community are encouraged. The next panel meeting will be in September.

7. Financial Report

18 March 2025 –30 April 2025 - Accounts prepared by C Hamill

<i>Previous bank balance :</i>			£3746.01
	Previous sub-totals	+/- since previous meeting	
Council funds:	<i>£741.68</i>		
- Hire of community hall. Feb 25 LCC Vabs meeting and Councils Eorba meeting		-45	696.68
- VABS Annual accounts audit		-35	661.68
- Hostworld		-45	616.68
<i>Balance</i>			616.68
Ringfenced:			
SSE Micro Grant money	<i>£2953.26</i>		
- Youth club hall hire		-82.50	2870.76
<i>Balance</i>			2870.76
CNPA funds for environmental/litter projects	<i>£51.07</i>	£0	£51.07

Current bank balance (616.68 + 2870.76 + 51.07)			£ 3538.51
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8. Statutory Items for Community Council to note and discuss

a. Planning Applications Update

No updates to report

b. New Planning Applications

25/00937/PNO Land 9.5km NE of Gergask Ave, Laggan Prior Notification of Peatland Restoration - noted

25/00712/FUL Erection of agricultural shed Land 120mNE of Blaragie Farm Laggan - noted

9. Licencing Update – nothing to report

10. Roads – See attached following minutes re planned works in our area. We will continue to press BEAR for necessary improvements to be made to our roads. If anyone would like to see the email we received from BEAR please contact us.

11. Public Sector Agencies - nothing to report

12. Highland Council - Although no representative from THC was in attendance we can report that the bus shelters for Laggan and Strathmashie have been given approval and funding from THC and works will commence on the shelters on Monday 26 May. We requested a more aesthetically pleasing shelter for Laggan and as such we will have the first shelter in the Highland region to have a sedum roof. We would like to thank THC for their consideration in this matter and for their assistance in helping our community to acquire the shelters.

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

Laggan Community Development Trust. Our letters have been prepared and will be issued shortly. We are a further step forward to setting up our CDT.

Laggan Paths Project – The Laggan Forest Trust has been asked by LCC to lead a project to assess and improve the paths around Laggan. A steering group has been formed which has completed a first approach as to which paths in the area the Community would like to see improved. A series of paths have been identified with a couple of priority projects selected. There is an Active Travel meeting scheduled for 5 June 4-7pm in Laggan Village Hall. The CNPA Access team will provide an update on the Core Paths Plan Review and members of the community are invited to attend and give feedback. We have been granted funding of £10,500 for consultation on paths in Balgowan woods and Laggan playpark. This grant can be increased following consultation to incorporate required works. AG expressed thanks to KT for ongoing park maintenance. We were very happy to receive help from a group Kingussie High School students and have been advised that this can be a regular occurrence. Our thanks go to KHS teachers and students.

14. AOB We have received an invitation to the Community Council Convention on the impact on Communities of major energy infrastructure in the Highland Council area. Saturday 14 June In Beaulieu – AG and AT will attend.

Wildcat release in our area has taken place. There was an information day held at the Laggan Coffee Bothy. Information attached as addendum (i) We will write to the wildcat release group and advise them of the proposals for the Coire Mashie substation.

15. Date of next meeting. AGM and CC meeting 16 June. 18:30 Laggan Village Hall.

BEAR Scotland Road Maintenance schedule 2025

Structural Maintenance (green icons) refers to all projects relating to carriageway resurfacing.

- Routine Maintenance (blue icons) refers to projects relating to ancillary assets such as footways (FW), vehicle restraint systems (VRS), drainage improvements (DR) and road marking and studding upgrades (RMS).
- Bridge Maintenance (orange icons) refers to all projects to maintain our major and network bridges.
- Active Travel (yellow icons) refers to projects which install or improve links for non-motorised users, such as footpaths and cycle paths, and related works.
- Strategic Road Safety (purple icons) refers to projects to prevent and reduce the occurrence and severity of collisions.
- Minor improvements (pink icons), landscaping (dark green icons) and electrical (purple icons) are also shown.

