

**Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Council**  
**Draft Minutes of meeting held at the Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus**  
**on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

**Present:**



Deirdre MacKinnon - Chair (DM)

Jenny Findlay - Vice-Chair (JF)

Mike Anderson - Treasurer (MA)

Helen Clay - (HMC)

Clare Levings (CL)

Claire Pegrum - (CP)

Daniel Clark (DC)

James Prince (JP)

Cllr. Chris Ballance (CB)

**Apologies:**

Leanne Findlay (LF)

Cllr. David Fraser (DF)

**Glen Earrach Presentation** by Project Manager Peter MacDonald

A pumped hydro storage scheme is planned on the Balmacaan Estate and is expected to be sent to HC planning next month. This scheme was originally devised and shelved by SSE, but now reinstated by the estate owner. With access through Balnain, enabling works are projected to begin April/May 2026 with a temporary village of approximately 1000 workers at peak. (Decommissioned units may become available for community use.)

Questions were raised about impact mitigation and community benefit. Whilst the former would be a requirement of the planning process (with SSE separately responsible for the grid connections), the latter is currently under community consultation for how the fund should be structured and managed. There is a meeting in Drumnadrochit on 3 April and an online

survey until 18 April. The land owner/project developer expects 20 million per year for the life of the project to be available for distribution within the community benefit. Concentric circles from the scheme location, of subsidy toward electricity bills was favoured by discussion participants.

A general discussion took place about the cumulative effects of the planned pumped storage schemes for Loch Ness, including the 19% survival rates of salmon smolt and the Weir II scheme by Stratera. It was pointed out that there is no partnership between any of the developers, SEPA and Scottish Canal Trusts to consider the overall effects.

A resident asked if there was any support for community councils to help them handle and respond to the numerous project consultations. CB named Planning Aid Scotland, a volunteer organisation which provides training on the planning system in Scotland for community groups, elected members and public bodies.

#### Inch Bay Presentation by Chris Rose, resident

Chris (CR) provided a written document to the councillors and talked through his proposal to create a Community Interest Company to hold (or loan) the asset of Inch Bay, and to manage the moorings on behalf of the community. Directors would be a mix of FAGCC residents and marine enthusiasts, and marine experts (not necessarily resident) with the ratio yet to be determined. For accountability there could be at least one councillor as long as no conflict of interest arose.

MA clarified that in order to remove the liabilities from council office holders, the asset would be transferred and not loaned. It would include the pathway to Cherry Island, and that the council only controls access to the shoreline with no jurisdiction over the water.

DC mentioned that there were several boat owners with privately owned equipment in the bay, who had yet to be consulted. As the idea has only now reached the proposal stage, MA replied that there would be a period of consultation with stakeholders who currently access the land before any transfer took place.

A resident suggested that the opportunity to own the land be offered for tender.

To allow councillors to consider the proposal fully, HMC proposed that CR circulate the document by email for discussion outside of the meeting. DC seconded.

#### **Previous Minutes:**

A factual error was removed regarding a Renewable Energy item and CL requested that it be clear that matters raised by councillors in AOCB were on behalf of residents.

Proposed by DM, seconded by HMC

#### **Matters Arising:**

Redburn - DM received a further email from the resident who had spoken at the Glenmoriston Hall AGM, expressing their dissatisfaction with the bollard installation.

The Community Council refutes the accusations made. BEAR and Transport Scotland have full responsibility for the whole matter, and at no point has the Community Council sanctioned any of the design or installation. The success or otherwise of the bollards will be reviewed by BEAR after Easter as they have planned.

### **Flooding in Invermoriston:**

The excess water from Achnaconeran is also affecting the foundations of the war memorial.

### **Visitor Levy:**

A resident stated that upon reading the HC consultation, responses were not being accepted concerning motorhomes outwith a campsite. CB confirmed that this is because they are not covered by the legislation for the visitor levy introduced by the Scottish Government.

Councillors encouraged residents to respond.

### **Treasurer s Report:**

Current balance remains 6905.81 with 1500 ring-fenced from Community Company towards solicitor costs. Cheque not yet cleared for 79.20 issued to RBL for Scotland

Insurance renewal due 97.20

HC had erroneously paid for hall hire to the Community Council instead of Community Company. MA would arrange a transfer of funds.

### **Planning:**

Planning Applications Validated 28/01/25 24/02/25

Ref: 24/05322/FUL

Location: Culnacarn Glenmoriston Inverness IV63 7YJ

Proposal: Alterations and extension of house; erection of garage; siting and conversion of containers to gym and 2 short term holiday letting units

Applicant: Stuart Murray

Note: FAGCC is to submit an objection on the grounds of unsafe access

Ref: 24/04756/FUL

Location: Land 125M SE Of 11 Caledonian Court Fort Augustus

Proposal: Formation of play area

Applicant: Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Company

Ref: 25/00280/SCRE

Location: Land 1.5KM NW Of Wildwood Auchterawe Fort Augustus

Proposal: Screening Opinion for opening of quarry for construction of service road Applicant: MacDonald Groundworks Ltd

Notes: For Skye Reinforcement Project. Re-opening of Caulfield Borrow Pit. Will be accessed from A82 via Blairconard, road to Jenkins Park and beyond on the old military

road within the forest. Extracted material will be transported on forest tracks to the construction site.

Ref: 25/00587/SCRE

Location: Land 350M North Of Newtown Invergarry

Proposal: Proposed temporary workers residential accommodation, including welfare facilities, associated infrastructure and other ancillary development.

Applicant: Balfour Beatty

Notes: Next stage of development for up to 360 workers.

Ref: 25/00519/TPNO

Location: Land At Glendoe, Stronelairg Wind Farm, Glendoe Estate, Fort Augustus

Proposal: Erection of 22.5m high telecoms tower, transmission dishes, antennae and cabinets with upgrade of existing track

Applicant: Hutchison 3G UK Ltd

Notes: Site of the mast is about 950m outside the FAGCC boundary, but the track which will be used to access it is mostly within our area.

### **Renewable Energy Projects:**

JP attended the Glen Earrach community benefit meeting.

### **Community Amenity Issues:**

Flag poles need replacing at FA car park.

Oversized vehicles using Ardachy Bridge which has a weight limit.

Reduction of speed limit from 40 mph to 30mph in Invermoriston

Car park in Invermoriston requires resurfacing.

Dates for skips will be published in Ness News.

Suggestion to remove the plastic walkway from the Invermoriston car park because it encourages crossing at the dangerous junction of A82 and A887.

A question was asked about when there might be tennis court improvements.

Signage: confusion about the timings of the A887 closure and incorrect diversion signs; flickering give way sign at Jenkins Park.

Screen Machine visit on 7 and 8 March

DM to write to the mini-bus and coach companies to request that they do not allow their passengers to urinate around the villages.

### **AOCB**

DM attended the Glengarry Community Council meeting to assist with their Local Place Plan.

HMC received the area police report and will circulate it to councillors.

DC advised that Inveroich pier is rotting.

A discussion took place about a change to Community Company housing policy which had occurred in an attempt to safeguard affordable housing. Although the points system is applied in the same way as HC, there were questions about eligibility for inclusion on the list when properties became available. Chris Nelson, a director of the Community Company confirmed that he had requested that the topic be an agenda item for their next board meeting.

HC is running a consultation until 9 April concerning the Community Council Scheme of Establishment. It covers all aspects of constitution and council business and all residents are encouraged to take part.

CB confirmed that the Local Place Plan would now be in a queue for ratification by HC. Local Place Plans submitted in the first quarter of 2025 are still likely to be able to be registered and taken into account in the preparation of the new Highland Local Development Plan.

CB reported that HC had decided that car park income would be added to ward discretionary funds. In total, this had been approximately 30K and for example Invermoriston would receive about 10% of the total. Any constituted community group can apply for grants from 1 April.

**Next meetings:**

**Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7.30pm.**

**Glenmoriston Millennium Hall, Invermoriston on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 7.30pm.**

**AGM - Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus on 28th May 2025 at 7.15pm**

**Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus on 25th June 2025 at 7.30pm**

**Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus on 27th August 2025 at 7.30pm**

**Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus on 24th September 2025 at 7.30pm**

**Glenmoriston Memorial Hall, Invermoriston on 29th October 2025 at 7.30 pm**

**Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus on 26th November 2025 at 7.30pm**