

Nethy Bridge & Vicinity Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on the 5th Sept 2013

Present: S. McCook (Chairman), H. Tucker (Secretary), D. Carrott (Treasurer), E. Ibbertson, S. George, A. Young.

In Attendance: Cllr B. Lobban, W. McKenna, CNPA, A. Streeter-Smith, CNPA, A. Norval, Seafield Estate, K. Duncan, SNH, J. Roberts RSPB and 21 members of the public.

Apologies: A. Thom, D. Black, M. McCafferty CNPA.

Minutes of the last meeting: Proposed by: A. Young Seconded by E. Ibbertson

Matters Arising: There have again been sightings of the rogue capercaillie in the vicinity of Tulloch Road. King's Road path is not yet completed, still work outstanding. Dog warden is soon to be based in Aviemore. Dog fouling situation has improved in the village but there are still some problems. Gullies still need to be cleared. There was a request that the Local Plan should be written in plain English.

Tulloch Moor Road: Concerns had been raised by some residents of Tulloch about the state of the Tulloch Moor road. Highland Council has erected private road signs at the Community Council's request and this had reduced the amount of vehicular traffic. Mr McCook invited Mr Pott to outline the concerns raised over the past few months. Mr Pott stated that the road had been used for a very long time and the water level had risen making the road dangerous to use for walkers, cyclists and local users. A number of theories had been discussed, to make it up to a fully adoptable standard, core path, status quo, and for there to be provision made for locals to use the road safely.

Keith Duncan of SNH stated that the road would have to be raised to solve the water problem but the south side was a designated area, the north side was not. Any work done would have to ensure that habitat and hydrology were not affected.

The point was made that this was not a vehicular right of way it was historically a track to get to Kincardine church and to reach common grazing land. Ownership of the piece of land where the pot hole is situated has still not been established and no repairs could be undertaken until the ownership has been established, which was proving very difficult. The option of becoming fully adopted would increase the usage, especially if An Camas Mor came into being. There was comment that this option was no longer desirable.

Jeremy Roberts explained that there was a need for RSPB and local crofters to improve the state of the moor and to do this; more animals would have to be grazed on the moor. Therefore an increase in traffic was not to be encouraged. Comment was made that this was a private road where access rights did not extend to public vehicular traffic. Mr Norval stated that the estate did not own the area with the pot hole and supported the crofters' fears over an increase in use and would not look favourably on the road being adopted.

There was much discussion about keeping this area wild and peaceful and that this was not the only route for people wishing to travel to Coylumbridge or Glenmore, especially in the winter as there would be no possibility of this route being cleared of snow or gritted.

The criteria for it to be adopted as a public right of way were outlined by Mr Streeter-Smith but any decision could be tested through the courts, at considerable cost and ultimately didn't mean that any improvements would be made.

Comment was made that someone had been putting road dross into the hole which could be causing pollution, the Community Council made it plain that it would not and could not condone this action and a request was made to stop doing this. Also there had been an increase in forest fires recently and house burglaries, improving the road might increase the instances of both.

After further discussions the decision was made to investigate the possibility of putting a duckboard path over the moorland on the side where ownership was known. This could be done without affecting the hydrology of the area. This would allow cyclists and walkers to pass safely. The possibility of putting gates up to stop unauthorised vehicles could also be considered with crofters and residents having a key if required. The need for parking for visitors was also considered. Gates could not be installed without the Landowners' permission. Mr McCook agreed to look into taking the boardwalk idea forward but funding would have to be found for the project. There was no desire to take the matter of right of way any further. It was agreed that Mr McCook would proceed with consultations with relevant parties and identifying possible sources of funding, to take the boardwalk project further.

Mr Roberts then mentioned that the intention was to remove some trees and shrubs from the moor but not the established birch. There would be more burning and grazing.

RSPB Report: Mr Roberts thanked the community for their help in spotting and helping to fight two local forest fires. He mentioned that the Ramblers association had complained about the proposed forest expansion. Bob Moncrieff would be undertaking timber extraction from Sleimore and Craigmore.

Members of the Public: None

Treasurer's Report: Balance £3,449.03 at present. Account details would be circulated monthly.

Councillor Lobban's Report: Cllr Lobban stated that Highland Council would be creating 20mph speed limits in all towns and villages. The budget of £50,000 per annum meant that the project would take time to reach all areas and that accident black spots would be first. There would be an Area Committee meeting in Nairn on the 10th September at 11am. There would be a boundary review and due to the population increase, Badenoch and Strathspey might be split. The matter of poor grass cutting recently was raised and Cllr Lobban said that he would provide the cutting schedule so that we would know when it was due but he would investigate. He was also told that the cutters had been seen damaging a post on the playing field. The matter of trees obscuring street lighting was again raised and he agreed to speak to the lighting dept.

Police Report: The Police have arrested suspects for the recent spate of burglaries.

NBTA Report: None

CNPA Report: M. McCafferty still not able to attend meetings, Mr McKenna will ask her if she wishes him to attend in her place for the present. He was asked why CNPA were not taking note that the B970 would become so much busier if An Camas Mor was built, could the planning gain not be used for road improvements. Mr McKenna stated that planning gain had already been allocated

but suggested that a request be made for a traffic counter to be installed to establish present traffic use. This would allow for comparisons in the future.

Planning Applications: Over the summer, objections had been lodged over the application to remove the section 75 on land at the Ranch. Also to the planning application for another property at Croftronan.

Application for new two storeys house on the site of River Cottage, Station road was discussed. There was unanimous opposition to the plans on the grounds of over development and it being out of character for the site and in relation to other properties.

AOCB: There had been comments from the Baby and Toddler Group that the upgraded play area at the playing field had no equipment that was suitable for the under 5's. Cllr. Lobban would look in to the matter.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 3rd October at 7:30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:30pm.