

# NETHY BRIDGE & VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2020

**Present:** S McCook (Chairman), A.Young, E.Ibbertson, D.Black, H.Tucker

**In Attendance:** Cllr. B. Lobban, U.Stoneman RSPB, P. Crane CNPA, A. McNaught  
360 Architecture, T.Hamilton Cairngorm Connect, J.Kirk CNPA

**Apologies:** D.Carrot

**Welcome:** S. McCook welcomed everyone to the meeting

**Minutes of previous meeting:** Approved: A. Young. Seconded: E. Ibbertson

### **Matters Arising:**

Community Council met with Uwe Stoneman from RSPB about community engagement on future plan. Decision taken that leaflets through doors would not be the best option. A public meeting led jointly by CC and RSPB will be held in the Community Centre on Thursday 5th May at 7:30pm. This would be in place of the normal CC monthly meeting.

£500 has been received from the Highland Council Discretionary Fund.

Council may consider giving passes to dispose of larger items at recycling centres in an attempt to cut fly tipping.

### **Members of Public:**

Pete Crane CNPA explained that The Speyside Way section from Aviemore to Newtonmore is now open, with only a short section on public roads. This section had cost £1.4 million with CNPA contributing £100,000. The official opening will be in the Autumn. Newtonmore are commissioning a sculpture and seating area. Signage is still required and new leaflets will be updated with local sections displayed on notice boards rather than the whole route. Improved signage was required and there were opportunities for the Cairngorm Business Partnership and Moray Business Group to work together to promote the route. The section NE of Cromdale needed to be improved and discussions with local farmers about the number of gates on the section between Nethy Bridge and Grantown-on-Spey. The hope was to encourage visitors to walk or cycle around the Park once they had arrived here. Interest had been generated by the unmanned Explore Abernethy room, with other areas impressed by the numbers visiting the room. The latest 5 year visitor survey had highlighted the perceived lack of public toilet provision. In fact there were 17 within the park and these will be marked on the website and shown on maps when they are updated.

### **Cairngorm Estate Consultation:**

Adrian McNaught from 360 Architects came to discuss the public consultation concerning the future of Cairngorm Estate. He explained that initially HIE had stated that only Aviemore CC needed to be consulted. Sandy had made it clear that several communities within the area had people working on Cairngorm and for businesses in the area.

Discussions were ongoing about the 25 year plan for the estate with input from economic and ecological consultants. The online questionnaire closes on Sunday 8th March. This information will be collated and strategies put together. Sandy asked if it was able to know whether respondents were local residents. Mr McNaught said that local is taken into account. Hopefully there would be a plan available by mid June.

The future of the funicular was a popular topic, with requests that it be repaired and properly funded in the future. Also the importance of educational opportunities of this unique habitat.

Sandy asked if the CC could receive some feedback at the June meeting.

### **Cairngorm Connect:**

Tors Hamilton Communication & Involvement Officer for Cairngorm Connect came to introduce herself and explain the aims of the project. This involved RSPB, Forestry & Land Scotland, SNH & Wildland Ltd. working together to manage cohesively for the benefit of wildlife and woodland.

The project had received funding of \$5 million over the next five years to accelerate progress. They have 9 full time staff including stalkers to manage deer numbers to allow tree regeneration. Working on plans to involve local communities. There is to be a 200 year plan, when asked to explain this time frame, Uwe explained this was the time taken for trees to regenerate to their natural tree line. They are working with 4 Land Managers covering 60,000 hectares. They will be monitoring the impact on local communities and are undertaking a habitat restoration questionnaire at present. These had a poor return rate and may try again and data showed local of the respondent. Tors agreed to return to discuss community involvement further.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

This had been circulated. David had stated that he would do the end of year accounts and then stand down as Treasurer.

### **Councillor's Report:**

Cllr. Lobban reported that the budget for Highland Council had been agreed and that there would be a 4.8% increase in the council tax. £20 million would be spent on roads under council responsibility. There was an urgent need to ascertain areas for repair.

There was no immediate plan to close public toilets and there was a slight increase in budget.

Comment was made about damage caused by SSE work. Cllr. Lobban said that SSE were obligated to reinstate roads to the condition they were before work started and that the work would be checked for longevity.

**Planning:**

Application made by Castlegate Properties (Aberdeen) Ltd. for 20 houses, including 7 affordable on ground at Craigmore Road, beyond Dirdhu Court. The plans had been called in by CNPA. The Community Council thought that if done sympathetically the plans could be beneficial and this would be passed on to Highland Council Planning and CNPA. The company had suggested planting trees on ground NE of Nethy Bridge Hotel with open areas and seating for community use. Also gifting land south and adjacent to the school.

A request for retrospective permission for tracks at Croft Maquien was discussed. Three letters of objection had been received at present. Sandy agreed to write stating that the Community Council were not happy with the situation.

**AOCB:** None

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

**Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 2nd April at 7:30pm in the Community Centre.**