

Dores & Essich Community Council

Minutes of the Meeting

Monday 15th May 2023 at 1930 hrs

1. Members Present: John Martin (Chair), Simon Pillatt (Secretary), Colin McPherson, Ella MacRae, John McKenzie, Claire Crosbie, Duncan Manson, Adrienne Dempster, Cllr David Fraser and Anne MacLaren (Minutes Secretary)

Plus: 16 members of the public

Apologies – Nikki Perrin, Jennifer Fraser, Holly Kingham, Steve Feltham, Alistair Thomson, Fiona Thomson and Chris Ballance. Nothing to declare.

2. Minutes from last CC meeting held on 20/3/23:- proposed by JMcK and seconded by EM.

3. Matters Arising –

3.1 Scottish Water – EM commented everyone now has water. It was a big job with many holes dug. Excellent workers. However, EM wrote a letter to the Council about the state of the roads and spoke to Cllr David Fraser.

3.2 Affordable Housing – JM spoke about the proportion of housing with HHA. John McHardy said that the majority is to be tenanted out by the Highland Council. He was concerned about not enough properties for children. Graham & Sibbald, Chartered Surveyors have put a value on the site beside the Hall but no proportion given by them. EM commented there is a need for mid-market rent with balance of Council rent. Seonaid Green had commented with her work experience it is difficult to get council housing. John McHardy and Helen Cameron to be invited to come along to next meeting.

3.3 Cemetery Extension – this is still ongoing. Details of the road are pending.

3.4 Village Parking – CM displayed the 2 options for car parking and the parking problem in the village needs to be addressed and where can the car parking go. Traffic calming in the village is on hold due to lack of funding and is not on the agenda. CM went over the illustrations at length. EM commented the parking gets worse every year and speeding issues also. Lengthy discussions were made trying to solve the problems (a note of which is appended to these minutes). JM commented on issue of displacement from street parking. Cllr David Fraser will put a paper in place regarding parking restrictions and IC's suggestion of a spur into a field. This proposal of bringing a paper will be in place for the next CC meeting. Shane Manning will be invited to come to the next CC meeting.

3.5 Scaniport Road Safety – CM commented the signs and road markings have now been ordered and work to be started soon.

3.6 ILI Pump Storage Scheme – CM commented there is no change. Funding will be tied up.

3.7 Dores Beach – the extra litter pickers have now been bought.

3.8 Path to School – Bear Scotland have put in the new bollards. JMCK had been in touch with them. EM commented that whins are coming on to the path again. CM suggested community pay back work may be implemented.

3.9 Public Toilet – as the Highland Council withdrew funding from the public toilet there was a proposal of £100 per month. Cllr David Fraser has now offered £200 per month from the Council. JM commented some contributions towards the cost from donation box. EM brought up the subject of cleaning the toilet and the floor needs power washed.

3.10 Buoys – JM spoke to Robin. Gavin Finlay says work will go ahead when weather improves.

4. SSEN proposal for line through Strathdores – JM commented there was a public meeting at the Kingsmills Hotel to discuss this. There is an edged corridor for these pylons north of Balmore Farm, Scaniport and run up to approximately 100m from Torbreck mast. Cllr David Fraser commented he was not part of this discussion.

Police Report – none received. Now a newsletter.

5. Planning – An email was received from Lorna MacLennan regarding the planning application for three plots at the Old Mill site. The CC have agreed to still support the application.. JM is to write a letter to Keith Gibson, Planning Officer and Cllr. David Fraser.

6. Treasurers Report – report sent from NP and JM read this out stating there is currently £9,636 in the Bank account with £8,561 unrestricted funds.

7. Visit Inverness Loch Ness – Chief Executive was invited to attend meeting. Difficult to get hold of them.

AOCB

Gavin Finlay commented that the discussion and his email was omitted from the Minutes from the meeting held on 16th January 2023. On behalf of the Dores Hall Committee he would like to thank the CC for the £500 donation from the Etape and also the £1,000 donation relating to the Scottish Water piping upgrade. The donations are being used to subsidise hall hire and remove the planned fuel surcharge.

Iain Cameron had spoken to Steve Feltham recently about the telescope at the beach. Work has been done on it and is in tip top condition with the coin mechanism. This cost £20 to post the telescope for work to be done.

IC commented about the access plan at Aldourie Estate and issues to be looked at. CC will ask Stewart Easthaugh, Access Officer about a risk assessment.

JM closed the meeting at 2120 hrs

Date of next meeting & AGM – 17th July 2023 at 1930 hrs

Dores and Essich Community Council

File Note re. Discussion of Car Parking Proposals at CC meeting on 15th May 2023

CAM gave presentation of current proposals, making the following points:

- Parking problem in Dores is long standing, particularly affecting those living on the souther section part of the village along the B852 Foyers road
- Problem exacerbated recently by closure of Dores Inn car park for public use
- CC has resolved to seek solutions
- Plan prepared by HC on behalf of CC for discussion purposes: not a definitive proposal, as includes more parking than needed and provision for coach and camper van parking. Also erroneous is treatment of embankment to south of site (necessary to take out change in level and provide screening)
- Acknowledged comments received for and against and opened up for discussion

Comments from meeting attendees as follows:

- Not demonstrated by a 'business case' that there is a problem and that CC appeared to 'fast forward' to this proposal. Needs to be justified.
- Can't we ask the landlord of the Dores Inn to relax on access?
- We are proposing to build a car park across the iconic view of Loch Ness across the Strath: not in favour. Why not provide parking at the existing hall or church sites? Extend the parking area at the new cemetery access road into the existing parking area beside the church?
- Local resident said that existing access into church car park is inadequate, with risk of damage to bridge to vehicles.
- Street parking restrictions need to be put in place along B852
- Shouldn't be a problem to provide some parking in the area proposed but scale of provision too big
- How far is the proposed car park from the beach?
- Two local residents said they would put up with parking problems outside their houses rather than see a further car park provided. Why are we pandering to the car? We need a better bus service. Great that we now have a better cycle route from Inverness.
- Others said that the issues of road safety, damage to vehicles, antisocial behaviour generated by inappropriate/ inconsiderate parking were real and that CC has been discussing for years: why not get on with it?
- Point was made by CC that purpose of this was to provide only for displacement of parking from the B852 and that this would necessarily involve enforceable parking restrictions.
- Signage to existing church car park should be more visible
- Pedestrian bridge could be provided from church car park at south end so as to reduce walk time to beach

Meeting resolved the following:

- Review justification for proposals having regard to discussion at meeting
- Ask Council to prepare paper re. parking restrictions along B852 for discussion at next meeting
- Check out feasibility of extending cemetery parking area
- Look at adequacy of existing signage and signposting of alternative parking locations