

**Dores and Essich Community Council  
Minutes of Meeting Held at Dores Hall on  
18th November 2024 at 7.30pm**

**1. Attendees**

John Martin (Chair), Colin McPherson (Minutes), John Mackenzie, Ella MacRae, Duncan Manson, Claire Stirling, Steve Feltham, Cllr. Chris Ballance  
Plus 7 members of the public.  
Apologies for absence received from Simon Pillatt.

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting of 15th July 2024 were proposed by CM and seconded by JMac.

**3. Co-option of New Members**

Steve Feltham confirmed his eligibility and willingness to stand as a CC member and was elected unanimously. JM welcome Steve to the CC. Notification to be sent to Highland Council. **(Action:CM)**

JM highlighted a number of potential work streams and projects in the CC and that more new members are sought. Fiona Cairns and Michael Stone indicated a willingness to join. Nomination forms to be sent. **(Action: JM/ CM)**

**4. Points Arising from Previous Meeting**

**4.1 Statkraft PSH Update/ Community Benefit:** Noted that site investigation works appear to be continuing without incident. Statkraft have advised that they have appointed a new project manager (Scott Gilbert). With regard to Community Benefit, action remains with CC to engage with DCDT to discuss/ agree governance measures, then to re-connect with Grantscape and then further negotiate implementation of terms agreed with ILI.

**4.2 Community Action Plan/ Local Place Plan**

The Community Action Plan is now complete and is available to view on the community website. An action for the CC now will be to review the recommendations of the Plan and agree which should be implemented. **(Action: DECC)**

The Local Place Plan in its final form is now submitted to Highland Council for registration. The final version (once registered) is to be posted on the community website. **(Action: Secretary)**

**4.3 Cemetery Extension**

CM reported that feedback had been received in October from Alan Yates at Highland Council to the effect that the roads contract enabling the cemetery extension was out to tender and that a contract award was imminent. On that basis a start on those works could be expected in January 2025. To be monitored. **(Action: DECC)**

**4.4 Affordable Housing**

CM advised that there had been no substantial change to the position reported in May 2024 to the effect that Highland Council was procuring an architect to develop proposals for c. 14 units for delivery during 2025/26. To be monitored. **(Action: DECC)**

#### **4.5 Visit Inverness Loch Ness Meeting**

CM reminded the meeting that the original offer to meet had come from VILN but leadership has since changed. It was agreed that a meeting should still be sought at some point to discuss issues affecting the community arising from over-tourism.

**(Action: DECC)**

#### **4.6 Torr Gardens Steps**

Discussion took place regarding damage during grass cutting to repaired steps. It was agreed that this should be re-notified to Highland Council via their portal. **(Action: CM)**

#### **4.7 SSEN Beauty to Peterhead HV Proposals**

JM read a news article regarding a proposed Scottish Power HV link running subsea between East Lothian and County Durham (referring also to another between Aberdeenshire and North Yorkshire) and stated that there was ample precedent for a subsea alternative to SSEN's overground proposals (for which the currently proposed route crosses our area north of Scaniport and south of Cullaird, contrary to comments made by interested parties in that area). It was agreed that letters should be drafted for submission to SSEN regarding the local routing and to MSP's requesting consideration of the subsea alternative. **(Action: JM/CM)**

#### **4.8 Community Library**

CS reported that Lottery funding of £3000 had been awarded for this project and that it was proposed to site it on public open space at the village centre. Quotations have been received for a sectional timber building of max. 10'x8' dimensions, to be sited on a base of paving slabs. It was agreed that CS should proceed with further preparations and the request for volunteer assistance was noted and acknowledged. **(Action: CS)**

### **5. Planning**

CM reported only one application currently registered (submission of details to satisfy planning conditions by Mr Mills at Torbreck) which raised no matters of concern for the CC.

### **6. Police Report**

As for the previous period, no report had been received nor is there any evidence online of any current 'Community Beats' briefing for our area. After discussion, it was agreed that the CC will write to Police Scotland asking to be included in circulation of information and for confirmation of contact details/ locations for community policing personnel. **(Action: Secretary)**

### **7. Treasurer's Report**

JMac reported that cash in the bank stood at £10,577.20 (inclusive of £3000 Lottery funding) with all bills paid up to date. Discussions are ongoing with Aldourie Estate re. the public toilet provision. A query was raised regarding 'playing field funds' of £1000 which had been ring fenced but it was agreed that these could be spent on improvements to the Torr Gardens play area: Michael Stone to assess and report back. **(Action: MS)**. It was confirmed that community firework funds had been spent. A further query was raised re. Etape monies and whether these were to be shared with the Hall Committee: this had been agreed previously and the status is to be checked. **(Action: JMac)**

## 8. Correspondence

No report. Simon Pillatt to be asked to confirm. **(Action: SP)**. JM noted that the role of secretary was currently vacant and that a volunteer was being sought to replace Simon: handover of records, database, website and social media to be arranged. **(Action: JM/CM)**.

## 9. Any Other Business

### 9.1 HC Year End Submission

It was agreed that receipt of year end accounts to Highland Council will be confirmed. was complete **(Action: JMac)** It has also been confirmed by HC that, until office bearer positions are refilled, it will be appropriate to run the CC with a rotating Chair (to be agreed prior to each meeting). **(Note)**

### 9.2 Sale of Dores Inn

JM has contacted Aldourie Estate regarding public toilets, defibrillator, firefighting backpack and short term pub opening and has been advised that interim provisions are being made. Toilet maintenance is in progress and the bar is expected to re-open for a brief period around Christmas. Following discussion, it was hoped that the sale would give the opportunity for a dialogue with the new owners on matters affecting the community and this was viewed positively.

### 9.3 Loch Kemp PSH Proposals

CM reported that the period for comments on the planning application had closed on 31st October and that there were currently 39 objections and 7 in support. A further application is to be made by the same applicant for a replacement weir at Loch Dochfour for which a pre-application consultation takes place on 19th November.

### 9.4 Election of Office Bearers

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

### 9.5 Dates for 2025 Meetings

The following dates were proposed for 2025: 27th January, 24th March, 19th May, 28th July (inc. AGM), 29th September, 24th November. DM requested that meetings start at 7.00pm, to which there was no dissent **(Note)**. CM agreed to write to Hall Committee requesting hall bookings for these dates. **(Action: CM)**.

### 9.6 Hedges

Discussion took place regarding overgrown hedges encroaching on footpaths in Dores and thereby creating a hazard for pedestrians. It was agreed that, whilst it is the responsibility of property owners to maintain hedges, the CC would write to Highland Council requesting assistance (copy to Cllr. Ballance). **(Action: CM)**

### 9.7 Bike Repair Workshop

Michael Stone advised of his intention to run a bike repair workshop in the Hall at some point, which was welcomed.

### **9.8 Speed Control Signs Does**

It was noted that Highland Council have not yet taken steps to alter the dot matrix sign at the Does entrance to reflect the 20mph limit. Comment was also made that more 20mph signs were needed on the Foyers road entrance to the village. Cllr Ballance took note and will make enquiries. **(Action: CB)**

### **9.9 Road Markings at Ballindarroch**

It was noted during recent road repair works that highway edge marking bollards were overgrown, particularly on the corner between Ballindarroch road end and Scaniport. This location had previously been the site of a fatal accident and so it was agreed to draw to the attention of Highland Council (per John Taylor).**(Action: CM)**

### **9.10 Roadside Fencing at Church**

It had been noted that the fencing beside the footpath along the B862 beside the Church was broken. It was agreed to notify Highland Council (per John Taylor). **(Action: CM)**

### **9.11 Christmas Tree**

It was agreed that a cut tree will be sited in the village (per DM) as in previous years but (unlike this year) will be removed sooner!

## **10. Next Meeting**

To be held on Monday 27th January 2025 at 7.00pm in Does Village Hall