

HELDON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on 02 April 2024
at Roseisle Hall 7.30 pm

Chairman	Mr J Mountford – Dallas	
Treasurer	Mr S Williams – Roseisle	
Secretary		
	Mrs M Evans – Duffus	Mr W Duncan – Fogwatt & Birnie
	Mr C Souter - Miltonduff	Mr K Milne - Miltonduff
	Mr A Lyons - Roseisle	Mr N Sutherland - Dallas
	Ms Hilary Stewart - Roseisle	
Attendees	Councillor Kathleen Robertson	Ms H Ospazuk – Birnie resident
	Councillor Bridget Mustard	Ms J Johnson – Birnie resident
	Ms Debra Duke – Council CLO	Mrs P Smith – Birnie resident
		Mr R Gillespie – Birnie resident
		Mr M Gillespie – Birnie resident
		Mr C McCarthy – Birnie resident
		Mr A Munro – Birnie resident
		Ms C Munro – Birnie resident
		Ms B Allan – Birnie resident
		Mr A Wallis – Birnie resident
		Mr T Lee – Birnie resident
Apologies	Mr W Mustard – Fogwatt and Birnie	
	Ms S Hodder - Pluscarden	
	Ms J Kirby - Miltonduff	
		Councillor Neil Cameron
		Councillor Marc Macrae

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Mr W Mustard, Ms J Kirby, Ms S Hodder and Councillor Cameron.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 20 February 2024 were approved.

Proposed: Mr W Duncan Seconded: Mr K Milne

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) Cloddach Bridge: a meeting of Moray Council had been held to discuss this issue. It had been a good meeting and a decision was made, with a casting vote, for the funding to be provided to repair the bridge and release the £1.5 million match-funding from UK Government. Council Leader Kathleen Robertson addressed the meeting, saying that the whole operation had been an excellent example of a community coming together. Heldon Community Council had invested £120,000 of Wind Farm money to pay for the required Business Case and this report will now be sent to the

Westminster Government, after which the £1.5 million funding from the Central Government will hopefully be approved. Thanks were given to the Councillors.

It was pointed out that while the success of this was due to the Councillors there was still a political element. The UK Government has to follow the guidance of the Green Book and the project still needs to be approved.

We do need to keep our infrastructure sound and the Cloddach bridge will not only benefit the residents in the area but will also decrease the traffic on the A941 which will, in turn, benefit the Elgin area.

The plans for the new bridge show two-way traffic but the original plan had been to replace like with like so it was thought that the new plan could be narrowed, thus enabling a cost-saving.

It was agreed that we still need to try to raise funds ourselves. This would help the Council and also demonstrate that Heldon Community Council is still supporting the project.

It was pointed out that the Minister will be at the Cloddach Bridge on Friday at around 16.15 and all are welcome to come along and show support.

b) Signatures: Simon Williams is now a signatory for our bank account. It was agreed that given the difficulty with changing signatories that the previous Treasurer would remain as a signatory. This means that we have four names for the account.

c) Alves speeding: the representative for Alves was not able to be present at the meeting so no further information was available.

d) Fogwatt ditches: Councillor Mustard had sent information to the Head of Environmental & Commercial Services at Moray Council but is awaiting a reply. She will follow up.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Most correspondence had been circulated to all members but some might need further action.

1) Proposed Dykeside quarry: The Chairman had received eight letters from concerned Birnie residents while other letters had been sent to the company. It was pointed out that this proposal is still at the consultation stage and has not gone as far as a formal Planning Application. At its presentation to our previous meeting the company had suggested that the consultation process could take around three months before plans were submitted. It was stressed that we cannot make objections to a project that is not yet ongoing. When the project goes to the planning stage we can inspect it and respond to issues that are raised by local residents. Dust, noise, damage to the environment, flooding and proximity to the community are all likely concerns, along with many other items, but at this stage any dialogue must be between the residents and the company.

It was pointed out that the Community Council raises concerns and objections brought forward by and on behalf of the residents so we have to be told of specific issues. It was stressed that we are supportive of the residents.

The question was raised as to the timing of any Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) that would be carried out. It was explained that the scope has to be agreed with the Council but has to be representative of the conditions.

It was requested that two Birnie residents could be co-opted to the Community Council to represent the area. After reference to our Community Council Liaison Officer, it was agreed that up to two members from Birnie could be co-opted on receipt of an application.

Birnie residents had expressed concerns about the project at the meeting, including the fact that they did not feel that their questions had been satisfactorily answered at the recent public consultation in Birnie.

2) Planning appeals division: this was a suggestion from our Community Council Liaison Officer that training in planning matters could be arranged.

3) Meeting with Fred Olsen Team: the Chairman and Treasurer had attended this meeting. The Wind Farm is attempting to set up a situation where the funding is given direct to HCC. They would still need to approve each application but it would speed things up as we wouldn't have to wait for the money to come through once approval had been given. It was agreed that it would be best to have a separate account for this money.

The Rothes 3 money was going to be Moray-wide but the Chairman had made the point that some communities are more directly affected. It is possible, therefore, that we might be given a percentage first but could still apply to the main funding as well.

4) Kellas Drum Wind Farm: plans have now been submitted to Edinburgh and are now available to view on the Council website, at the Library and in Dallas. These plans run to five volumes. It also includes battery storage. No negative comments have been received so far.

5) SSEN – update: the almost-final route for the line has been published. It will now run some two miles from Dallas so is not as bad as at first thought. At the moment SSEN is still negotiating a way through the Kellas Wind farm.

SSEN - Consumer vulnerability scheme – anyone who would be vulnerable during a power cut can register with SSEN.

6) Scottish Rural Network: members were strongly advised to have a look at this information when it is circulated as many funding sources are available.

7) tsiMoray website: changes have been established and members were encouraged to have a look at this.

8) SEPA review of flood risk: in view of climate change SEPA are reviewing their register of places at risk.

9) Forres Schools: it had been stated that school closures were not an issue but the recent meeting was, in fact, about proposed closures. Two of the primary schools being considered for closure, Alves and Dallas, are within the Heldon area. Councillor Robertson explained that the Council has to rationalise the schools estate with 53 schools in the County. At the moment only the Forres ASG area is being considered but the Buckie area will follow and the discussions will gradually be rolled out across the county. Discussion about the site of the new Forres Academy is being encouraged – see <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M3YG2BJ>. This is about engaging, not protesting.

10) M-Connect: a meeting had been held in Elgin. M-Connect representatives are happy to attend community events.

6. FINANCE REPORT

The Treasurer presented his report.

Roths 1:	£ 17,781
Roths 2:	£ 13,700
Heldon CC:	£ 1,777
Total	£ 33,258

£ 4,446 has been paid out since the last meeting. It was established that we do not hold any assets other than a 12-year-old laptop.

The closing date for the next round of applications for the Roth's Wind Farm money is 30 April 2024. £37,000 is available. Members were encouraged to advertise the availability of this money within their communities.

7. PLANNING ISSUES

All planning details had been circulated.

- It was thought that the Biomass project at Fogwatt had been shelved.

8. A.O.C.B. to include area reports

- Fogwatt – a Give Way sign has been knocked over but this has been reported and will be re-established.
- Roseisle – a meeting will be held on 12 April about the traffic issues. The strips have been placed on the wrong section of the road.
- The question was raised about the fact that some communities fund their own speed signs but it was explained that they still need planning permission and also funding for electricity and maintenance.
- Concern was expressed about the area around the new roundabout at east end of Elgin which signposts to Elginhill, locally known as the belts. As you go along that road at the first corner the river is eating into the bank and will soon be at the tarmac.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Date, time and venue of the next meeting:

HCC meeting – Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 7.30 pm at Mosstowie School.

Finance meeting – Tuesday 21 May 2024 at 7.30 pm At Mosstowie School.