

Contin Community Council Ordinary Meeting

19:30 Tuesday 8 April 2025

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Present: Norma Ross (NR), John Heathcote (JH, Secretary), James Ruggles-Brise (JRB), Phil Baarda (PB), Frances Welton (FW). In these minutes, THC is The Highland Council.

Apologies: Simon Bates (SB, Treasurer), Liz Kraft (LK).

One member of the public was present.

2. Declaration of interests

No interests were declared.

3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted, proposed RG seconded JRB.

See updated action list for progress.

Triangle – still one tree to sort. A price of £750 has been obtained to tidy up, remove waste and leave logs for collection. Around £400 will be needed for planting. Application to be made to the Glen Wyvis environmental fund. RG/PG progressing.

A835 speed limit. Reply received from BEAR Scotland – the accident frequency does not justify reducing the speed limit. However, there has been a consultation on reducing the national speed limit to 50 mph.

Although blocked drains on the A834 turn have been reported twice, THC has not yet taken any action. **Action 2504-01 JH** to pursue THC again.

Other actions are covered below.

4. Finance update

Key points of interest, since last update, are:

- Micro-grants have been given to resident members of 1st Strathpeffer Girl Guides, Contin Book Club, Contin Trust Easter Party.
- Application for the EDF micro-grant pot has now been approved.
- £580 has been spent on providing a path to the war memorial.

At the end of the financial year, unrestricted funds are £12,013 and restricted funds are £10,093.

5. Police report

The customised police report from our Community Officer has been replaced by a more general report for Ward 5 issued centrally. This was regarded as less satisfactory. Although a link is provided to the National Database, this currently extends only as far as December 2024. We no longer have oversight of incidents within our CC area. NR will feed back to Police Scotland that the report is unsatisfactory..

6. Plans update

No feedback has yet been received from THC on our LPP. PB will investigate putting the LPP on the village web-site. **Action 2504-02** PB to investigate putting the LPP on the village web-site.

The evidence database for the Highland-Wide Local Plan is now open for comment, closing May.

7. Spending plan update

Attempts to find a meeting date for all relevant parties have failed so far. The meeting is still needed.

Action 2502-02 JH to organise meeting.

8. Flooding update

When contractor time allows, BEAR will be progressing investigation of the road drainage network between the village hall and the shop. Design work for improving the low curbs that lead to spillage of water from the A835 has been completed and the work is scheduled for this financial year.

A meeting of Coul Road residents was held to discuss possible ways forward. Various ideas were mooted and JH needs to discuss these with affected landowners before the report is circulated widely. Evidence points to the continued existence of a drain once used by the Coul septic system and this may prove to be very helpful, but it will be necessary to find out more about its condition and destination before using it to manage road water.

9. Community Council admin

NR supplies our CC minutes to the Chair of Garve and District CC, who then distributes a collated set of all CC minutes. It was decided that the full CC does not need to see this collation, but NR should identify any salient points to the CC.

13. Correspondence received, noted here for the record

- a) Police report, see above
- b) Scottish Water sent a satisfaction survey. Scottish Water have attended to correspondence about flooding promptly, but have provided no solution, in line with their established responsibilities. JH identified concerns about the adequacy of Contin's sewage treatment system, and unabated discharges to the river.
- c) SEPA have notified us of updated flood-risk maps and this will be carried forward to the Resilience Plan.
- d) Community Wealth Fund, proposed by Scottish Community Alliance. This would provide a mechanism for managing income from windfarms etc. Decided not to respond.

14. Update on pylons and wind farms

- a) A meeting has been held with representatives of KRE, attended by Tarvie Community Alliance, Contin, Strathpeffer and MSS CCs, apologies from Garve and Maryburgh. The principal objection is to turbines within 2 km of residential properties, not in line with existing THC guidelines or established practice from other wind farms in the area. KRE countered that further separation is not possible within the available site. The addition of a BES was THC's suggestion. KRE's preferred access route is from the Achilty side. A further meeting will be held in July. KRE have a confirmed connection date in 2031 and construction would start ~ 2 years before this. KRE expect to hold exhibitions presenting EIA results at the end of the year, a design-freeze exhibition March 2026, and an application submission June 2026.
- b) SSEN's near-final design, subject to ground investigation results, is now published. Construction will cause extensive disturbance in Contin Forest and we wait to see how SSEN

intend to mitigate this. Map showing proposed access to be placed on the web-site. BCR has considered how to manage planned objection. CCs need to ask for more time once the application is submitted, and to plan how to notify residents to respond. **Action 2504-03** JH to place map of line access on the web-site.

- c) We also need to watch out for the Carn Fearna application.
- d) There was discussion over the route of the Beaully-Arnish HVDC connection, and possible changes forced by ground conditions. Subsequent to the meeting, I have checked the project web-site – the route is shown at <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-planned-areas/?projectId={97bd183e-2d7f-4f05-8e87-d05c6ea29031}> .
- e) Cllr Crawford's motion. This work is going ahead and a result should be available soon.
- f) It is possible that electricity developments will happen and need community action on a timescale that does not fit in with the publication schedule of The Contin Post, in which case we may need to produce a 'special issue' to ensure that all residents are aware.

15. Comments from the public

None.

16. Any other competent business

It would be useful to have an A3 printer, both for posters and for more general use, most obviously hosted by the Trust. Cost £140 + ink subscription. **Action 2504-04** NR to raise with Trust – CC to purchase, Trust to host.

17. Dates of next meetings

Wednesday 11 June AGM followed by Ordinary Meeting

End of meeting

The meeting closed 21:00.

Summary of actions

Action	By whom	What	Status
2304-03	LK	Organise a site meeting about Coul Road drainage	Ongoing
2408-05	PB	Request meeting with THC over works and maintenance at the triangle	Superseded
2408-06	RG	Make application for funding for triangle works	In progress
2502-01	JH	Write to BEAR/Maree Todd about 50 mph speed limit Contin to Garve	Complete
2502-02	JH	Organise meeting with Trust and CJT about spending plans	Ongoing
2502-03	NR JH, SB	Meet to draft response to benefits consultation	Complete, response sent
2502-04	JH	JH to respond to CC consultation	Complete, response sent
2502-05	JH	Remind THC of blocked gullies on A834 slip road.	Complete
2502-06	NR	Advise DS of SSE contact for trees	Complete
2504-01	JH	Remind TCH of blocked gullies on A834 slip road.	New
2504-02	PB	Investigate putting LPP on the web-site.	New
2504-03	JH	Place map of SLBB access on the web-site	New
2504-04	NR	Discuss with Trust purchase of an A3 printer	New