

**Strathard Community Council
Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on July 5th 2007
in Aberfoyle Memorial Hall**

1. **Sederunt:** Ros Dingwall, Scott Provan, Fiona McEwan, Maureen Campbell, Mike Campbell, Sue Russell, John Clow, Owen McKee, Cllr Tony Ffinch, Cllr Fergus Wood.
2. **Apologies:** John Fraser, Ralph Wolfe, Cllr Paul Owens, Duncan Cameron.
3. **Minutes of AGM 2006:** agreed. Proposed Maureen Campbell; seconded Ros Dingwall.
4. **Matters Arising:** none
5. **Chairman's Report:** A year of comings and goings best sums up 2006/07 I think; community councillors, Councillors, MSP's, police constables and flood waters; the one constant in all the ebb and flow has been the holes in the B829!

We've been delighted to welcome to our number Fiona McEwan, Sue Russell and Mike Campbell, all representing Kinlochard, so that at last we have a full complement of councillors for each ward. Fiona is now well-established in her role as Planning correspondent, and Sue has taken over the onerous task of minute secretary with great success. Mike unfortunately is about to become one of those 'going' as he is about to leave the area. We wish him well. Paul Owens has also had to leave our ranks, but for the best of reasons, as he became one of our three councillors elected under the new multi-member ward system. So goodbye and hello to him and hello to Fergie Wood, a well-kent face locally, and to Tony Ffinch who were also elected to represent us on Stirling Council. Goodbye and many thanks to Alatair Beaton who retired as councillor this year after many years service in the area. We were very sad to also bid farewell to Sylvia Jackson, who failed to be re-elected as MSP for our constituency. Whatever your political leanings Sylvia was always delighted to help with any problems and put in many hours helping us in Strathard and becoming a friend at the same time. I look forward to developing a similarly productive relationship with new MSP, Bruce Crawford.

This year was also 'goodbye' to PC Donald King and 'hallo' to PC Jo McDowell. She and Ricky Govan continue to support us by regularly attending meetings and providing help and support where necessary.

Looking around the wards, Inversnaid/Stronachlachar has at last had slightly more comings than goings. We were delighted when two local families moved into former Water Board houses, which were taken on by Rural Housing Association, following much encouragement from all local groups. I hear that the tearoom at Stronie pier is now up and running again, something we had also pushed for, and that this year at least, numbers have been somewhat healthier at Inversnaid Primary School. Its always a delight to have meetings up there; the last one was held in what had become a Jacobean Castle! Earlier in the year there had been fears of the possible closure of the School, but a meeting with David Cameron, director of Children's services laid those fears to rest for the immediate future, when he saw how happy parents are with the education their children are receiving. When in that neck of the woods we are regularly joined by Duncan Cameron from RSPB, who keeps us in touch with their activities, and its always a pleasure to hear his reports.

Kinlochard has definitely been worst affected by the tides, floods, potholes, etc., once again. Is it some kind of penance for the privilege of living in what is probably the most beautiful part of Strathard? They fought off the threat of a mobile phone mast being installed at close proximity to the village, but nothing can stem the encroachment of Loch Ard across the B829. However after the two major floods in December, Fiona McEwan started researching the problem, gathering information from all sources, which has been fed back to the Council who seem to be entirely ignorant of the fact that we have communities cut off for days at a time! It will take a while but funding is now available to study the problem and look at methods of alleviation. As for the road... well a little bit at a time seems to be the answer. More money will be spent on it at the end of August, and it is constantly on our agenda.

Another example of coming and going was the loss of the postbus service to and from Kinlochard, which was finally replaced by the coming of a new service run by Aberfoyle Motors, and very welcome it is too! As you will all know by now Aberfoyle Motors is itself under threat since, up to the present, no parties have come forward with an interest in buying it as a going concern when John Paterson retires. The Community Council and the Trust have been delighted with the response to the questionnaires which went out about the future of Strathard, including that of Aberfoyle Motors, and we are hopeful that some form of community purchase of the property will allow us to retain these services for the future.

Hopefully NOT going is the dispensary at the Medical centre. This is a facility we have all taken for granted, but, with an application in to open a pharmacy in the village, we have had to look at the possibility of changes being made to the services being provided at the Medical centre. Nearly all of the community has decided that they wish to retain the existing service, and so we are fighting to do just that.

Also NOT gone is the Horsa Hut at Aberfoyle Primary School. We were delighted last November when the National Park Planning Committee agreed with the Community and refused the Council application to replace this tatty building, because the Council had consistently not listened to community wishes to have the building moved as far as possible to the side of the playground to maximise playground space and to prevent the new construction impeding the view of our existing school. Having waited six months with no news forthcoming about the next steps we are to say the least, gravely disappointed, that once again the Council have ignored community wishes and have only now submitted an appeal to have the planners' decision revoked. If this appeal succeeds then building can go ahead in spite of everything we have all said about its suitability. And this is consultation???

But I'm not finishing on a low note. The best of the 'comings' for us has been the group of local youngsters who have turned up at our meetings to discuss the playpark, and the facilities that they need to keep them from being hounded out of the carpark and other areas where they try to set up., either for football, biking or skateboarding. There's many an adult could learn from the way they conduct themselves at a meeting! It will be a pleasure finding ways to help them make their own entertainment – and that's all they are asking of us. Provide a bit of ground and they will do the rest. I am delighted to hear that the Forestry Commission have just offered to look at the situation and see if they can help. It's a start!

And now I'm going! But not till I've thanked all my community councillors who have consistently supported and helped me this year. The job's so much easier and more fun when you have help and my thanks to you all.

6. Treasurer's Report: Audited accounts presented. No questions. Proposed: R Dingwall; seconded J Clow. If Maureen is unable for any reason to get to the bank to do pay-ins, Fiona & Sue are happy to do this. The Senior Citizen's Christmas Dinner account needs some boosting – fundraising options to be discussed over the next few meetings.

At this point, Owen McKee took the Chair for the election of Office bearers:

7. Election of Office-Bearers:

Chair – Ros Dingwall. Proposed Maureen Campbell, seconded Sue Russell
Vice-chair – John Clow. Proposed Ros Dingwall, seconded Fiona McEwan
Secretary – John Fraser. Proposed Ros Dingwall, seconded Maureen Campbell
Treasurer – Maureen Campbell. Proposed John Clow, seconded Ros Dingwall.
Though not a formal post, Sue Russell will continue to be minutes secretary.

8. AOCB: None