

Boat of Garten & Vicinity Community Council

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 31 August 2022

In Culvardie, Deshar Road, Boat of Garten

1. Record of Attendees and Apologies Received:

Community Council Members: Kathryn Gillings, John Dickson, Valerie Fairweather.

Apologies were received from Alan Bennet.

2. Matters Arising: The Closure of the Saw-mill

The meeting was called to consider the news that the saw-mill is to be closed. It was intended to invite an employee of the mill to the meeting; Valerie has spoken with the Manager of the Saw-mill, David Mills, who appreciated the invitation but declined to attend.

David Mills has worked at the mill for over 30 years, his priority is his workers and their future employment, though he will also lose his post. He reported that Fergus Ewing had been very helpful and put them in touch with PACE, Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) is the Scottish Government's initiative dedicated to helping individuals and employers with advice and support when faced with redundancy. PACE offers free advice and support and helps take away some of the strain of dealing with redundancy.

Mr Mills is planning a career fair in the Boat of Garten Community Hall which has been arranged for 22nd September and is being organised and funded by PACE. It was suggested that members of the Community Council attend the fair to demonstrate support.

Several people have reported that both Fergus Ewing and Highland Council have been very helpful, but apart from the introduction of PACE, the Community Council is unaware of the results of this helpfulness. In particular, members were interested to understand what Highland Council plans for the saw-mill site might be. It was suggested that it would be appropriate to preserve the industrial use of the site with the construction of industrial units and offices to help provide employment to replace the jobs lost.

Mr Mills pointed out that the saw-mill has a bench-seat for the Community Council made in memory of Gordon Grant. It is a solid and heavy construction, if we can find a location for it quickly, the mill will place it for us.

3. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.00pm.