

## **Boat of Garten & Vicinity Community Council (in Abeyance)**

### **Minutes of the Informal Meeting held on 12 September 2022**

#### **In Coedwig, Nethybridge Road, Boat of Garten**

**1. Record of Attendees and Apologies Received:**

**Community Council Members:** Kathryn Gillings, Alan Bennet, John Dickson, Valerie Fairweather, Alison Morris.

**2. Status of Meeting**

It was noted that the council is technically in abeyance. This is an informal meeting of the former members of the Community Council to consider the situation and to discuss the way forward.

3. Back in August, Alan Bennet saw an article in the Strathy referring to nominations and elections to the Community Council. He wrote and sent an email to the Ward Manager at the Highland Council asking for advice and guidance on how we should proceed. He received no response other than an out-of-office notice. Shortly after Alan was away on vacation.
4. At the end of August, Muriel Cockburn emailed to say that she had seen a notice to the effect that, due to the lack of nominations for candidates for election, the Boat of Garten Community Council was in abeyance.
5. Alan Bennet again asked for advice.
6. We, as members of the Council, were never sent any advice, nor invitations for nominations nor nomination forms.
7. The response from Highland Council is that the Community Council is technically in abeyance until the next scheduled elections which are set for March 2023.
8. Valerie Fairweather also made enquiries and was advised that we need to make our case to Alison Clark, Head of Services, Community Support and Engagement for Highland Council. Alan Bennet agreed to make a phone call to Alison Clark tomorrow, to be followed up by emails to Ms Clark and Muriel Cockburn.
9. Alan Bennet had researched the rule of establishment of the Community Council. Under section 6.2.4.3 it says that at the discretion of the Highland Council, they can seek nominations at any appropriate time. It seems that this would allow us to ensure that new members are nominated and elected returning the Community Council to a quorum and therefore bringing it back from abeyance.
10. Alan Bennet, Kathryn Gillings and Valerie Fairweather remain as elected members, but as there are only three elected members, the Council is not quorate. Alison Morris and John

Dickson both confirmed that they are prepared to be nominated and stand for election to the Council to restore the quorum.

- 11.** In the meantime, Valerie Fairweather has arranged for the bench seat, donated by the Sawmill, to be placed by the Community Company.
- 12.** Kathryn Gillings has signed a nomination form for John O'Donnell to be a director of the Community Housing Trust.
- 13.** With regard to the Scottish Water planning application, John Dickson reported that the word from operatives on the site is that SW have abandoned plans to install a dosing cabin and to erect fencing around the site.
- 14.** The meeting is aware that news of the state of the Community Council has spread around the village and that there is the likelihood of misunderstanding regarding the present situation. The members therefore drafted a brief statement (see below) which John Dickson, as Secretary, was asked to circulate to the mailing list used for distribution of the minutes.
- 15.** If the Highland Council refuses to accede to our request to be reformed, even after we do our best to persuade them, members of the group agreed that they would all resign.
- 16.** There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

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### **Statement from the Members; 12 September 2022**

We are sorry to report that the Boat of Garten Community Council is currently in abeyance. This situation has come about because, despite our request for advice and guidance, the Highland Council failed to provide us with notice of the deadline for nominations for elections to the Community Council. This leaves the existing Council inquorate and it has therefore been put in abeyance.

We have complained to the Highland Council and are trying to persuade them to allow nominations and elections outwith the normal timetable. We are optimistic that this will allow the Community Council to reform and restart operation within a matter of weeks.

We will do our best to keep all parties informed as the situation develops.

Kathryn Gillings	Chair
Alan Bennet	Treasurer
John Dickson	Co-opted Secretary
Valerie Fairweather	Elected Member
Alison Morris	Co-opted Member

Boat of Garten  
12 September 2022