

Strathard Strategic Partnership

Draft Notes of Meeting held on Monday, 27th June 2019

Present:

Trevor Geraghty (Strathard Community Council – SCC)
Katinka Dalglish (Strathard Community Trust - SCT)
Michelle Flynn (Stirling Council - SC) - Chair
Sarah Phillips (SC)
Susan Brooks (Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority -LLTNPA)
Fiona Jackson (LLTNPA)
John Reid (LLTNPA)
Maria Lucey (SC)
Claire Elliott (SC)

Apologies: Simon Jones (LLTNPA); John Hair (Forest Enterprise Scotland - FES); Steve MacDonald (SC)

1) Welcome

Michelle welcomed everyone to the meeting. This was followed by round the table introductions.

2) Minutes and Actions of January 28th , 2019 Meeting

Minutes were approved for accuracy and can now be published on SCT and SCC websites.

3) Matters Arising

Minutes should read as Peter Sunderland (Aberfoyle Traders Association) and not Sutherland.

Action Michelle

4) Forest Enterprise Scotland

John had given his apologies to the meeting, so no update was available for the meeting. However, a discussion took place around the following points.

a) Achray Forest LMP

Action – John Hair still to send an overview of the project to agencies

b) Strategic Timber Access Fund

- £7million available nationally for landowners & councils to impact the road issues from forestry traffic.

Trevor highlighted that a pre commencement roads survey should be carried out, prior to any weight restriction being agreed and to check the condition of the road at the start of the felling project. This would ensure that we have a better understanding of the impact on that particular road. Recommendation that the pre-survey should be outsourced to a private contractor.

Action Michelle

The bridge was highlighted as Trevor advised that on 26/6/19 he had seen five timber Lorries in a row going through the village. Trevor suggested that there was an alternative route that could be taken. Lochard road has a 12 ton limit on it apparently, but can we confirm what the limit is?

Maria advised that an Inspection was undertaken on the bridge at full limit – no restrictions are currently required.

5) Stirling Council Update

a) Flood Alleviation Scheme. – Maria Lucey and Claire Elliott

Claire advised that in terms of the Aberfoyle Flood Alleviation Scheme, it is on track to deliver a design which has to be submitted by 19th December with a funding date of July 2020. However the scoping for the funding is different from previous years as there are 17 metrics that are required to be covered within the application that will assess not only the primary objective of mitigating flood impact, but also the ‘multiple benefits’ that the scheme offers. Claire advised that there is £42 million per year of Government funding for Flood schemes, up until 2025, but it is difficult to get the funding.

Phase One – Assessment of Multiple Benefits.

Claire asked how best to consult the community on what wider benefits the Flood Alleviations Scheme could offer over and above its primary objective of mitigating flooding. She agreed to circulate to the group the 17 metrics, and advised that SC is meeting with LLTNPA in a few weeks to discuss. Natural Flood Management action was flagged up as a priority for LLTNPA.

It was highlighted that SCC has now consulted on two Community Life Plans that are complemented by the Strathard Community Action Plan, which already highlight opportunities to improve school, heritage and sports facilities and other legacy elements that could benefit from a quality design of the Flood Alleviation Scheme. Claire can use these views in her report.

Discussion took place around further opportunities to consult the community on potential multiple benefits. However, there is a very tight window in which to gather this information.

Trevor highlighted that the following events were taking place in July, the Gathering at Kinlochard on 14th July and the Gala in Aberfoyle on 28th July 2019. Claire advised that they would go back to the consultants and see if they could accommodate any of these events.

Action Claire – 17 metrics to be provided to the SSP members.

Trevor will consult with the flood representative of the SCC and feed views to Claire. Katinka will highlight to SCT potential heritage opportunities in the design of the Scheme and feed to Claire.

Action Trevor/Katinka – feedback SCC and SCT views to Claire

It was also agreed that 3 monthly updates are to be provided by SC's flood team to SCC going forward.

Action Claire – provide 3-monthly updates to SCC

Maria advised that if SC could only provide evidence for 100-year flood protection, SEPA would object or a policy decision by SC would be required; the Scheme would need to provide 200-year flood protection for the funding application to be successful.

b) **Roads**

Following advising about roads closures within the SC update- see appendix one. Trevor advised that the planned B829 road works are being rescheduled due to tourism and business concerns within the village. Highlighting that the school would be closing in October and there would be construction traffic going to the school.

Maria then advised that there is a manned close scheduled for the Manse Road bridge for pointing works to take place between Sept/Oct 2019.

c) **Your Stirling You Decide (YSYD)**

Michelle advised that the voting had now closed on the 193 proposals for YSYD of which there were 24 projects within the Trossachs & Teith ward. Over 4,000 people voted with the results being announced next week.

d) **Town Centre Fund**

Sarah advised that the Town centre fund would open on Friday; there is £1,077,000 funding available for capital works. The Fund is also open to private investors, but funding must be spent by end March 2020. Further information available in the Stirling Council update – Appendix One

6) SEPA

No-one was available from SEPA to provide an update.

7) LLTNPA

a) **Land Use and Rural Development Framework (LURDF)**

A Steering Group comprising SCC, SCT, LLTNPA and SC has been set up to deliver the Framework (please see Appendix 2 for further information). SCC has applied for Empowering Communities Funding to deliver the final Community Life Plan for Aberfoyle; this will also inform the Framework (they felt the application process was onerous and complex for seed funding).

The Scottish Government and others are interested the process of developing the Framework and Kevin Stewart MSP may visit Strathard to learn more about these partnership activities.

Now that the Planning (Scotland) Bill has just been passed, there was an offer to provide further information/training on what impacts it may have for communities.

Action Susan to circulate invite to planning training

b) National Park Grant Scheme

People who put in an expression of interest for Aberfoyle should get information next week on the results.

c) Strathard Initiative

The Strathard Initiative (SI) is a partnership project looking at land use, natural flood management and the value of the natural assets in Strathard. Phase 1 (led by SEPA) is now complete, and LLTNPA is now leading on Phase 2. John will feed the SI activities/results into the LURDF.

Further information available in the NPA update – Appendix Two

8) Update from SCC and/or SCT

a) Strathard Community Trust Update

Katinka advised that the Heart 200 had come up at the destination group meeting, highlighting that it is a commercial venture that started with 30k to 40k of seed funding and is due to launch on 1st July 2019. The Heart 200 route takes in towns and villages including the village of Aberfoyle

Katinka advised that Jane Fifield has stepped down from the SCT. Partnership asked if they had another represented who may attend future meetings?. This will be considered by the SCT board.

b) Strathard Community Council Update

Trevor advised that there were extensive roadwork planned for Strathard over the next few weeks. However, following discussion with roads, this had now been put on hold until after the tourist season as it has an impact on the trade of the local businesses.

- Community Life Plans - there is a lot of work to be done going forward in Aberfoyle
- LLTNPA's Destination Group, which comprises small and large businesses operating in the Park, recently met in Aberfoyle and enjoyed a walking tour of the town; they were impressed by the regenerative improvements taking place.
- Marketing Strathard Digital opportunities launches tomorrow, this is a free session

c) Traders Association

It was suggested that as a large transformation has recently taken place in Aberfoyle and other areas within Strathard, It may be time to look at common issues of a Strathard-wide business forum.

9) Any other Business

- a) It was agreed that Strathard Community Council, Aberfoyle Traders Association and Strathard Community Trust continue to bring forward strategic issues to discuss at the partnership, based on the minutes of the respective meetings as it's important that the SSP agenda is driven by the community.

Action Trevor, Peter & Katinka

- b) SSP Partners' briefings to be circulated in advance of the next meeting

Action Steven, Susan, & John

It was agreed to invite a representative from Visit Scotland to the next SSP meeting.

Action Michelle

10) Date of next meeting

28th October 2019 @ 6.30pm Aberfoyle Business Hub

NB the new starting time of the meeting

Appendix One

Stirling Council Update June 2019

Schedule of proposed works for the Strathard Strategic Partnership Area

1. Broadband – Shaun Marley

Broadband Projects that I am aware that might take place in the area of the timescale are as follows:-

- Aberfoyle town wi-fi (Jan 19 – May 19)
- BT Fibre cabinet Kinlochard (now –May 19)
- Kinlochard extension (May 19 – Dec 19)
- Inversnaid / Stronachlachar (May 19 – Dec 19)

2. Play parks – Donna Mills

Have no planned works for this area in 2019/2020. However, a few months ago a section of the play area boundary fence was damaged by a car, we hope to have this repaired over the coming weeks.

Currently discussing with Kinlochard the replacement of play equipment due to the current equipment being close to exploration date.

3. Network Team – Carlyn Fraser

The Network team (formally Traffic Management & Road Safety) have no works agreed for this area at this time. However, we are currently investigating a request for a pedestrian improvement on Main Street which could come forward within the next year.

4. Flooding Team – Maria Lucey Duchary River Monitor:

“Residents of Aberfoyle and surrounding areas may be aware that one of our key river gauge monitoring sites, near Duchray Cottage, is experiencing signal issues. Our service providers have replaced various components in an attempt to get the site up and running again, however this has not been successful. The mobile phone signal in the area has been tested and is patchy.

We are currently pursuing the option of connecting the device to an active landline, which will alleviate signal issues. Negotiations with BT and other involved parties are underway. We are also exploring the potential option of a 5G “internet gateway” to be connected to a hub in Aberfoyle. This 5G gateway, acts as a signal booster and is suggested to have a reach of 10 km. Given the landscape, it is unclear whether this method will be as reliable as a landline. Presently we are unable to provide a timeline for resolution. We appreciate your patience in this matter. Further updates will be provided once we have a known timeframe.

Flood warning is the statutory responsibility of SEPA. The council provides public access to river gauges installed for our operational use as an additional service, as we understand that there is currently no warning for the Strathard area and have tried to facilitate as best we can. It is important that Community concerns are directed to the flood warning authority (SEPA) to strengthen the case for their services to be provided locally. We have worked

collaboratively with SEPA, over a number of years, to ensure that the need for an official flood warning is recognised. In accordance with the Forth Flood Risk Management Strategy, the proposed flood warning would not become operational until 2020. We have also commissioned the Trust for Conservation Volunteers (TCV) to undertake community resilience work. We encourage the community to engage with this.”

5. Service - Infrastructure Delivery – Drew Leslie

A project at Aberfoyle Primary School is currently being scoped for delivery in 2019/20. The nursery accommodation will be remodelled and expanded and the school house brought into use for school accommodation, to improve the overall condition and suitability of the school. It is anticipated that the works will commence in early Summer 2019 and be phased over a number of months to minimise inconvenience to the school community. Engagement with local stakeholders will begin in November 2018.

Stirling Council has just signed a lease for the car park at the Inversnaid Hotel. The Hotel plans to do works to upgrade the car park although unsure of the timeframe for the works.

6. Economic Development – Steve MacDonald

- Ongoing support of Business Hub
- Free public Wi-Fi for Aberfoyle. Funding allocated to install free public Wi-Fi in Aberfoyle. Strathard CommunityTrust (SCT) to sign off.
- Programme of business support activities initiated with STEP.
- Flood alleviation scheme – info provided by Stirling Council

Investment in infrastructure. Capital monies have been allocated to Aberfoyle, principally to support improved signage and interpretation and shop dressing/improvements. Karen and Tracey currently working up design and costings to be submitted to Steve for approval

Appendix TWO

Strathard Strategic Partnership Update from National Park Authority (NPA) for Meeting on June 27, 2019 v2

1. 2018-2023 National Park Partnership Plan Annual monitoring report will be produced in the autumn, with a follow-up Partner event.

2. Strathard Land Use and Rural Development Framework

NPA has made a commitment to prepare planning guidance for Strathard, which will be known as the Land Use and Rural Development Framework (LURDF). We have set up a steering group who will co-design the document and this includes Strathard Community Council and Strathard Community Trust as well as expert advisor from Architecture and Design Scotland. The group has met twice and we will now meet monthly until the guidance is completed in June 2020. The next meeting will discuss the external consultant's brief and they are expected to facilitate external stakeholder workshops that will feed into the process in late-autumn 2019. The community council have made a bid to the Empowering Communities Fund to undertake the final Community Life Plan for the area, in Aberfoyle.

3. National Park Grant Scheme 2019/20

Grant Scheme launched to support *National Park Partnership Plan 2018-23* outcomes. Expressions of Interest (EOI) being assessed now and successful EOIs invited to full application end of June. A small-scale Tree Planting Grants Scheme and a Community Development Trust Capacity Grant Scheme have also been launched. See [website](#)

4. Land Partnerships and Wild Park 2020

The Land Management Team work with land-owners/managers (including NTS Ben Lomond, RSFS Cashel, Comer Estate and Forestry & Land Scotland) and Partners to deliver better integrated management of the land and water environment providing multiple benefits for nature and people across the NP.

[Wild Park National Biodiversity Action Programme 2018-23](#) has been published. A number of projects have been identified in the Programme including the 'control phase' of the [Cuilvona and Craigmore](#) (Site of Special Scientific Interest) Rhododendron Control Project (part of the Trossachs Invasive Species Project). Note the completion of the [Re-introduction of Water Voles in the Trossachs](#) Project. The LURDF process will take land/water-management issues into account, alongside the phase-1 ecosystems services project (Strathard Initiative) interactive [mapped data](#).

5. Core Path Plan and Outdoor Recreation Plan

The statutory Core Paths Plan outlines the network of Core Paths found within the NP. Consultation on a new Plan ended in April 2019 and the NPA is currently considering all the responses and objections. The Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013-17 outlines commitment to actions and aspirations that enhance outdoor recreation opportunities across the Park. Consultation on a new Plan will take place in autumn 2019.

Climate Change

Scottish Government recently declared a 'climate emergency' and Climate Change continues to be a high priority. We work with partners on building resilience/collaborating on landuse/ water management projects, which capture carbon and reduce flooding impacts, e.g. natural flood management, building designs that incorporate energy conservation, woodland expansion/enhancement, building habitat networks and peatland restoration.

6. Trees and Woodland Strategy

[Trees and Woodland strategy](#) consultation is closed, with anticipated publication of the final version later this year; there is specific reference to natural flood management activities that help reduce flood risk downstream in and around Aberfoyle. Expansion of woodland cover and protection of carbon rich soils will also help reduce greenhouse gas and tackle Climate Change. See the [interactive map](#) to see mapped woodland development opportunities/constraints.

7. Litter Prevention

Litter Prevention Officer aims to develop a joined-up approach to Litter Prevention and an Action Plan. There is intention of holding an engagement event in the autumn to discuss community views and ideas.

Visitor Management

The Camping Development Framework 2019-23 being delivered with refreshed action plan to work with partners to find solutions and help address key gaps in low cost camping infrastructure. There will be pilot interventions to tackle irresponsible toileting at key sites associated with camping. Also we will develop visitor information for motorhome/campervan users and identify priorities and solutions for the provision of targeted waste disposal points.

Health and Learning

Education Team will continue to develop, expand and deliver volunteer, education and outreach opportunities, to ensure people from a wide range of backgrounds are enjoying, valuing and helping manage the NP, including Volunteer Rangers, young volunteers, Junior Rangers, Climate Change educational resources, field trips, John Muir Award and inclusion/diversity activities.

8. Development Planning and Communities

Will continue to deliver, monitor and promote the Local Development Plan and commence preparation of the next Local Development Plan in spring 2020. We will continue to support community forums, such as the Strathard Strategic Partnership and LURDF and maximise benefits for the Park in the existing Council-led City/Rural Growth Deals. Communities will be supported to progress actions that improve quality of life and place through a grant agreement with the Community Partnership, who will deliver targeted capacity support, community-led action planning and a social enterprise learning project (June 2019). The Team will also support delivery of Years 2-5 of the [Callander Landscape Partnership](#).

9. Tourism and Visitor Experience

The Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund project will be delivered on West Loch Lomond (public toilet, carpark improvement) and a new project application submitted for East Loch Lomond. A programme of high-profile events will be delivered with focus on Year of Coast and Waters 2020, cycling and others. A business tourism tool-kit will be developed, and improved commercial/marketing activity will be supported for managers of the West Highland Way.

10. Ranger Service

The Rangers (full-time, seasonal, volunteer) provide a professional services to visitors and locals on land and water, providing information, assistance, safety support, education and supporting responsible behaviours. The Ranger Service works on visitor management and wildlife crime issues in partnership with Police Scotland's Operation Ironworks ([Annual Report for 2018](#)).