



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Creich Community Council

19th May 2025, Invershin Village Hall

Present: Scott Vettters, Chair (SC), Hayley Bangs (HB), Caroline Munro (CM), Iain Bowles (IB), Shona Paterson (SP), Norman MacDonald (NM),

Cllr Michael Baird (MB), Miranda Jones (MJ), 11 members of the public

1) Welcome & Apologies

Colin McFarlane (CMF), Russell Smith (RS)

2) Chairs Welcome

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised members of the public present to raise their hand if they wished to speak.

3) Approval of March 2025 Minutes

Amendments: Private Discussion re Beinn Tharsuinn Director: NM will remain as director
NM requested that the discussion re Mary G be added, plus thanks for her service over the years.

Proposed by SV, seconded IB, Minutes approved

4) Matters Arising

None advised

5) Financial Report/Year End Accounts (CM)

C/C Bank a/c 1 £342.76 (monthly bank charges £4.25, insurance/compliance and GDPR paid £188.84)

RBS a/c £29,627.59

CnC a/c £13,848.72

BT a/c £38,125.59



6) Secretary's update – circulated prior to meeting

Secretary's report 4/3/25-18/05/25

- Email sent to Phil Tomalin re Beinn Tharsuinn Directors
- Email sent to CC member IM re hydro fund
- Email sent to Liam Clancy re member IM resignation
- All approved Beinn Tharsuinn awards sent to HC for payment
- Approved minutes of January meeting on Web site
- Email sent to members re additional Beinn Tharsuinn questions
- Information sent to CM for payment of 2 rock by sea awards.
- Insurance renewal sent to CM for payment
- Support letter request sent to all cc members
- Further information questions sent re letter of support request
- Draft letter of support sent to all members, approved and sent to organisation
- Hub annual report sent to all members
- Letter from Jamie Stone sent to all members
- Collated all comments for Rural delivery plan and submitted response
- Email sent re community help day for Allt an Tuir representations. HB, Cmacf, IB & SP form Creich to help.
- Post put on Facebook date set for 23rd March @ The Hub.
- Email sent to Ardgay & Lairg CCs for Community Benefit Consultation meeting
- Draft minutes sent to members for approval to add to website
- Balblair windfarm and BESS ECU notification sent to members
- Extension until 26th May requested
- Contact details for Balblair windfarm sent to Lairg CC secretary upon request
- Draft minutes put on website and post on Facebook
- Acheilidh sent to members
- Put post on Facebook with all current windfarm planning application deadlines
- Post put on Facebook with postal representation addresses
- Put posters out around village for CC help afternoon
- Advised SSE Hydro fund of IM resignation and requested option of a new cc rep
- Sent Sepa consultation Guidance to members
- Sent Sepa surface flooding mapping information to members
- Acknowledgement emails sent to all fund applicants
- Letter sent to D. Campbell re future funding from Spittal to Budhie line
- Attended Community help with representations event with SP, Cmacf, IB and Ardgay CC
- Inveroykel proposal gate check passed to all members
- Allt an Tuir representation submitted to Econsents 27/3/25
- Allt an Tuir representation put on cc website and Facebook post



- Met with Ardgay CC secretary to discuss community support for submissions to Community benefit consultation.
- Responded to emails regarding Hydrogen in Aberdeenshire
- Assisted individuals with community benefit consultation for three two-hour sessions.
- Draft CC consultation response sent to all members
- Approved CC community benefit response submitted
- Sallachy update sent to all members
- Replied to Laura Bell re update on Invercassley windfarm, offered 5th may to update at meeting
- Email from Martin Godwin re tree felling for proposed Carnaig substation sent to all members
- Sutherland Resilience Initiative join request sent to all members
- Email sent to SSE Hydro re member IM resignation, new panel member to be appointed
- Inveroykel gatecheck draft by CB approval request sent to CC members
- Sent Inveroykel gateway report response prepared by IB to Stephen Macfadden
- Replied to all funding requests advising of date of next meeting and when we will notify them
- Email received from Strathnairn cc passed to all members
- GDPR invoice sent to CM for payment
- Email sent to all members from Martin Godwin re tree felling works in the Invercarron and Invershin Forest area for pylon line
- Fund records updated with new awards & end of fund evidence
- Email from Reece Ruddall re road closures sent to all members
- Lairg CC meeting for April & minutes from march sent to all members
- Draft Scoping for Beinn Tharsuinn repowering & extension sent to all members
- Amendments to draft scoping for Beinn Tharsuinn
- Approved scoping for Beinn Tharsuinn submitted to Econsents
- Letter sent to Joanne Sutherland re speed reductions through Invershin and out to Balblair Forest
- Change of meeting date put on Facebook page
- Balblair submission to Econsents
- Balblair submission put on website
- Minutes & Agenda for Lairg cc may meeting sent to all members
- Agenda drafted and sent to all members for approval
- Post on FB re Maree Todd meeting
- Rock by Sea applications sent to all members
- Proposed Balblair windfarm community benefits sent to all members
- Emailed re Sallachy community benefit update
- Agenda put on website, Facebook and in spar
- Invoice query from fund award sent to all members- email sent to applicant
- Beinn Tharsuinn applications sent to members



- All correspondence for discussion at meeting sent to cc members
- Sepa consultation teams sent to all members
- Request sent to Force 9 for visual clarification on which parishes are within visual siting of Balblair windfarm
- HB contacted Force 9 re community benefit

HB thanked for her work

- 7) Resilience Plan
Nothing advised

- 8) Planning & Licensing (RS)
All circulated

Council discussed the number of water tankers/day

MB advised there is a blockage in the reservoir, so water is not getting into the treatment plant. More water to be tankered throughout the year, exceptional to be filling at this time of year.

Concerns of limited supply as it currently stands.

MB advised Lairg Road pipe leaking, may need to open other side of the road

NM advised that years ago no new housing was allowed because of lack of water - future developments should come from springs or bore holes.

The Council asked MB to speak to Scottish Water. HB to formally request this and also raise the issue of GI Works, Carron Place in Ardgay - tap/drinking water being used to keep drills cool - 8-10,000 litres a day

Why not use water from Loch Buidhe?

Strong argument against the development of BESS = lack of water

- 9) UPDATE: Rosehall (SP)
Ongoing roads issues, Altass Road in bad condition, too many potholes

UPDATE: Bonar Bridge (HB)

Email sent to Joanne Sutherland for update re Invershin speed signs and how to get path from village to Balblair Woods speed reduced. Awaiting response

UPDATE: Invershin (IB)

Ongoing issues of speeding, signage

- 10) HC Report



Roads issues: MB following up with Joanne Sutherland

Numerous complaints going to HC Chief Exec re state of roads in Highlands

Road dressing not done last year intend to do a great portion of that this year

“Westies Road” is on capital road programme plus the road by Robert Sawyer

20 mph issue went to full regulation. Some areas still have 30mph on road, these will be burnt out

11) Wind Farm & BESS updates

- **Coillie Beith** letter circulated to councillors (25.04) no action

Planning application going in at end of this month

- **Balblair** – Representation submitted 25/4/25

Community benefit letter to discuss in private meeting

Agreement to extend HC period to make representation

- **Inveroykel** Gateway letter sent to all members

Bill - consultation meetings 28th & 29th May (Culrain & Rosehall) website not to be updated until 28th May - potentially 20 turbines instead of 29

BESS, 50,000 square metres. 25,000 tonnes of batteries

HB to ask for a presentation in Bonar Bridge or Ardgay

- **Strath Oykel**- Approved- judicial review

- **Braelangwell** – No Updates

- **Invercassley** – request to attend June meeting with updates. Council agreed for them to attend ahead of the AGM as they have “made some changes”

- **Dalchork BESS**- objection lodged

- **Allt An Tuir**- representation submitted 27/3/25

- **Garvery** – Approved

- **Sallachy**- Approved

- **Acheilidh** - MB advised this is going in front of full council on 29th May, planning committee was a 5-5 vote. Chair’s vote went with officers’ recommendation of no refusal but the motion against it got sufficient votes, and it was agreed to bring back to full council

- **Beinn Tharsuinn repowering**, extension & Bess - scoping submitted 16/4/25

The developers would like community consultation at a future meeting of 30 minutes, for a 5–10-minute presentation, with 20 minute Q&A. Presentation will include visualisations. Wait until September for invitation to present.

- **Achany extension** just come in - to be circulated to councillors.

18 turbines, 81MGW (formerly Glen Cassley) consented by Scottish Ministers in 2023. Developers want to increase the height of turbines, scoping report will be submitted shortly



to ECU. Formal consultation and consenting process will follow. Scoping report will be shared with the community council.

SP - they want to put in a BESS - lots more pylons, higher turbines - disallowed previously due to impact. They say what was passed is not economically viable anymore. There was no BESS in the previous submission.

Consented section 36 to be modified to put new turbines into plans

12) **SSEN Update**

No update

13) **Achany/Rosehall fund update (SV, SP)**

No update

14) **Correspondence (HB)**

- Convention of community councils, aiming to have a greater voice re the impact on communities of major energy infrastructure. Meeting scheduled for Saturday 14th June. Council representation requested
- HB to forward the invitation to all councillors HB to send Bill's Balblair windfarm letter 22.04 plus a copy of CC's submissions to the organisers of the event
- NM recommended thanks to Colin and Bill for their brilliant objections to the renewable energy schemes in the area and suggested their work and fact-finding be shared among other community councils.
- Emails received from Jim Mackie re Hydrogen Production Plants - mentioned a hydrogen plant planned for Creich. MB advised this is for Beinn Tharsuinn, they may have to pipe in water. HB to save information from Mr Mackie's emails and store for later use.
- Email from SRI - circulated. Appeal for board members. Date for AGM to be advised. SP to have a look at it
- Information received re Ground investigation works - Spittal to Loch Buid
- SEPA meeting re Environmental Performance Scheme Weds 4th June Teams meeting 7-8pm, register by 2nd June

15) **Visitor Levy** – RS submitted approved response

Consultation closed. HB asked if results will be published, MB confirmed they would be

16) **Far North Line Project**

No update. A group from Lairg have adopted their station with support and funding from ScotRail

17) **Community Benefit consultation** – HB submitted approved response



Creich and Ardgay CCs helped people with submissions

David's app made responding much more accessible

HB attended an event only two people there wanted community benefit to be shared nationally. Majority feel that community benefit should remain local. Regional pot should be an additional payment perhaps

18) **Rural Delivery Plan** - 17th March

No update - response submitted

19) **AOCB**

Maree Todd at the meeting was asked if Gillian Martin and Dr Alasdair Allan could meet with NoRos but this was refused as Noros is a protest group. Maree Todd was then asked if they would meet with the community councils, she said she would put that to them.

HB to write to MT to invite them to meet with community councils

MoP asked re Stonehenge toilets, Bonar Bridge, what is the position on overnight parking?

No restriction on overnight parking. Toilets are closed and have been taken off HC map online and physical signage blanked out.

MB advised that the council is not reopening the toilets due to blocked pipes and vandalism
Men's shed looking at the toilets as a possible men's shed

MB to ask HC for evidence of vandalism

The council discussed the fire at Rogart Vets and the time it took for the Fire Service to arrive.
Engines need 4 people to respond to a call out before the engine can leave.

20) **Date, Time and Place of next meeting** AGM, 9th June 2025, 7pm Bonar Bridge

Meeting end 8.15pm

21) **Private session**

- Declarations of Interest SV and HB
- New CC rep for Creich on SSE Hydro fund CM
- Update to funding guidance was agreed concerning the funding of new recruits
- The four questions previously agreed to be asked of CnC and BT applications have been being asked but not yet updated on the website. There was a question regarding when this was agreed, previous minutes were shown.
- It was agreed to review funding again for the September meeting.
- Community benefit from Balblair Force 9 want to manage the fund CC do not approve



- BT applications approved £5,000 core funding for Kyle of Sutherland Hub, £2, 200 for Bradbury centre painting
- Rock by Sea 3 driving lesson requests were approved for £300 each, Cassley Office Solutions £415 to attend self-assessment tax training, Bradbury awarded £373.68 for first aid and food hygiene training; £ 73.68 is to be reduced from their next year's availability for funds
- 1 request for landscaping assistance was refused with guidance to other possible sources of help.