



Cromarty and District Community Council

Approved minutes of meeting held on

Tuesday 27th May 2025, 730pm

Virtually via Microsoft Teams and in person at The Victoria Hall

Present

Community Councillors: Paige Shepherd (PS) – Chairwoman, Alan Plampton (AP) – Treasurer, Andy Thurgood (AT) – Vice Chair and Nigel Shapcott (NS).

Youth Member:

Highland Councillor(s): Sarah Atkin (SA)

Member(s) of the public: Caroline Burrows (CB), Alan Grant (AG) and Nora Watson (NW)

1. Chair's Welcome & Apologies

PS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

For the first time in a long time – everyone was present from The Victoria Hall. The meetings continue to be recorded via Microsoft Teams.

Apologies received from Member - Alan Rycroft and both Youth Members - Orlagh MacIver and Allan Munro.

2. Declarations of Interest

No changes since last meeting.

3. Approval of previous minutes – 28th April 2025

The minutes were approved by AT and seconded by NS

4. Youth Issues

Goalposts – volunteers required to help CCDT erect these! PS to speak to MH and discuss what action is required. **Action – PS.**

Members weren't aware of any other youth developments.

13. Any Other Business (brought forward..)

13.1 – Keep Cromarty Tidy

Looking for an agreement with members to support a volunteer effort to tidy up the town ahead of Open Gardens and beyond.

A 'tenant group' in Townlands was discussed as this existed years ago and they received funding from The Highland Council for tidying up the streets, gardens etc. Fly-tipping also continues in the area behind the houses. Members and residents suggested that the land be flattened/surfaced and find a use for it to prevent this happening.

AT confirmed that under his 'One-Cromarty' project, Townlands is one area of the town that lacks any representation so it would be great if this took off.

SA to contact THC re: potential residents group. SA's next flyer for Townlands will be an update and will be to gauge support for a formal residents group. Also contact them about the fly-tipping/flatworm site identified as it is their land and to report back on THC proposed action.

Action – SA.

Discussion then opened around tidying up the town as a whole, with resident AG leading the conversation. All members agreed that the main problem is that volunteers are needed, particularly as the group that used to operate to pick up litter is no longer active. We need to communicate with residents (not just via FB) as to tidying up the town and form a group to make this a more regular thing. Need to call out for volunteers and apply to have the waste that we collect picked up by The Highland Council. **Action – NS/AP**

NS to ask for permission from The Harbour Trust for CDCC to tidy up the area around the harbour with funds we already hold for 'amenities' and we will action this ASAP. **Action – NS.**

Further discussion is required but the above can be actioned in the meantime.

NW and AG left the meeting at 815pm.

5. **Cromarty Community Development Trust**

Minutes were circulated from the May meeting – AT asked if everyone had seen them.

5.1 - Townlands Barn

NS mentioned during the 'Keep Cromarty Tidy' chat that an application was going in for funding (with a deadline of Friday 30 June) with the suggestion that it be changed into a communal garden/allotment space. It was confirmed that the application was going to be a joint one between CCDT, CDCC and CCP. Before CDCC can support however more information is required. AT to speak to Matt H and ask him to discuss this further with PS. **Action – AT.**

After meeting C&DCC was willing to 'support' the CCDT application on the basis, given that it is CCDT land, the CCDT was taking the lead and given the possible sensitivity to future Albyn Housing proposals for the neighbouring CM01 development site, those needs would be the priority. NS assured Members that any project on the CCDT Townlands Barn land would be moveable to another site in Cromarty if it impacted on developing CM01, although NS was hopeful this would not be necessary. Need to secure the area and clear the ground to ensure it's safe (CCDT will arrange).

5.2 - East Church Hall

Looking to continue with the 'lease' option – 25yr lease, 5yr option for THC and an annual option for CCDT.

5.3 - Development Officer.

Funding now available so they can advertise the position

5.4 – Mobile Sauna

Feasibility study being carried out, CCDT would like to show some kind of support for this. Survey can also be done online – recommend that this is filled out.

5.5 – Open Gardens

Looking for volunteers – as many as possible are welcome!

5.6 – Campervans

Discussion continues regarding campervans parking outside of campsite as it's impacting where residents can park etc. PS suggested that perhaps there could be more signs in the town pointing campervans towards the campsite. AT to follow this up. **Action – AT.**

There were no other comments.

6. Matters Arising from previous minutes – 28th April 2025

1. (4.1 – To speak to Wanda re. redesign of Cromarty Sign). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
2. (4.2 – Public information notice to be prepared re. social housing). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
3. (4.3 – To catch up with Kari re. email to J Nightingale about Pirates Graveyard). **Action – PS.**
4. (4.4 – Cromarty Sign at bus shelter needs progressed, ownership sought. **Action – PS.**
5. (4.5 – Public meeting to be held re. parking byelaws around Cromarty (include alongside Place Plan meeting)). **DISCHARGED.**
6. (4.6 – To see if Kari is willing to be involved in tourism portfolio). Portfolios have just been re-jigged. **DISCHARGED.**
7. (4.7 – Sub-committee to be created re. Freeport etc (long-term project)). **Action – AT.**
8. (4.8 – Continue to be voice of the community re. Highland Broadband). Works and initial connections complete. AT to support on any arising issues. **DISCHARGED.**
9. (4.9 – To recruit litter picker volunteers for 2025 season). Being done as part of 'Keep Cromarty Tidy'. **DISCHARGED.**
10. (4.10 – To gather ideas to celebrate 50 years of community councils (in 2027))! **Action – ALL.**
11. (4.11 – To follow up on items still outstanding with THC after meeting regarding town maintenance). **Action – AP/AT.**
12. (4.12 – To continue to discuss issues re. bus lateness with Stagecoach, SA and rector of Fortrose Academy). Ongoing. **Action – PS.**
13. (4.13 – PS to seek contact details from resident re. owner of Nigg Pier). **Action – PS.**
14. (4.15 – To chase up the loose/missing drain cover at Clunes House with John Stewart once contact details have been received (via AT). **Action – NS.**
15. (4.16 - To arrange clearance of ECH grounds/maintenance etc sometime in March (mid to late). **DISCHARGED.**
16. (4.17 – To speak to Fraser Thompson about grit bin not being refilled). **DISCHARGED.**
17. (4.18 – Review speeding in Bayview and surrounding areas). **Action – PS.**
18. (4.19 - Emergency resilience training to be arranged during summer 2025). **Action – AP.**
19. (4.20 - Article for the Chatterbox to be done re. CHT). **DISCHARGED.**

20. (4.21 - More information to be sought re cruise ship levy before deciding to support or not). **DISCHARGED.**
21. (4.22- Send info to Sarah A re. potholes on Shore Road so she can follow this up). Has been actioned. **DISCHARGED.**
22. (4.23 - Send letter of thanks to Port of Nigg for subsidising the ferry). **Action – PS.**
23. (4.4 – Query the mooring items on the beach in front of The Royal Hotel with The Boat Club – trying to find owners before removing). **Action – NS.**
24. (5.6 – To chase the report re. Shore Road and condition/status of repairs with THC). **DISCHARGED.**
25. (7.1 – To discuss sustainability/accessibility work with The Courthouse employees). **DISCHARGED.**
26. (7.2 – To arrange a ‘financial masterclass’ on the year end financial statements with the youngers members of the council!). Ongoing – in discussion with TYC. **Action – AP.**
27. (10f – PS to send March Police Report to AR). **Action – PS.**
28. (13.1 – To discuss the signs re. dogs in the park – new design/wording). **Action – ALL.**
29. (13.2 – To review portfolio list and share jobs out more evenly). **Action – ALL.**

7. Treasurer’s Report

The Treasurer’s Report and accompanying notes (**Appendix A & B**) were prepared by AP and circulated prior to the meeting.

Only a couple of standout comments:

£700 was received from ward discretionary fund

£350 was received from Middleton Trust for the toddler group

Money owed from Stagecoach has been dropped for now but won’t be forgotten about!

There were no further comments from members.

8. Victoria Hall (VH) Report including Youth Café

The Victoria Hall Report (**Appendix C**) that was prepared by AP, plus the Youth Café Powerpoint presentation prepared by Fraser Thompson (**available on Cromarty Live**) were circulated prior to the meeting.

Youth Café –

Have decided not to recruit another youth worker and instead are increasing the current youth workers contract to 20 hours (from 15h). Is going to cost a bit more but will allow there to be a pension scheme set up for the employee.

There were no further comments in addition to what’s already reported!

9. Replacement of Chairperson for Cromarty Harbour Trust

Chatterbox article has now been prepared! PS to speak to resident who had been recommended to come on as a trustee and she will report back to members. **Action – PS.**

10. **Portfolio reports**

Portfolio Reports prepared by NS, AP, AT, PS and AR (**Appendix D-H**) were circulated prior to the meeting.

Nigel Shapcott

a) Reeds Loop

Nature Scot and The Highland Council (Phil Whaite) have done a drone survey of the area to see if they can come up with a sustainable plan for repairs required. AP confirmed we can support minor repairs in the meantime.

AP suggested that some sort of material be put down in the field to create a walkway for the users. NS to put this to the committee. **Action – NS.**

b) East Pier

East Pier is closed, funding has come through and work has started (harbour).

Alan Plampton

c) Affordable Housing Sub-Committee

Still haven't heard back from Albyn and it's getting very challenging now! Email is being sent this week to give them *another* chance & then we are going to have to look into alternate measures.

We registered CM03 as a site for interest after the last meeting and we have received notification that someone else has also registered interest (but it wouldn't be for affordable housing).

Andy Thurgood

d) Port of Nigg

We received advanced notification re. work that was going to be carried out plus other movements at the Port. All members agreed this was positive and shows an improvement in the communication between us.

e) One Cromarty

Look at the aggregated responses, decide how we are to take these things forward. To discuss at a later date. **Action – ALL.**

Paige Shepherd

Nothing in addition to what's reported

Alan Rycroft

Not present but report was circulated prior.

There were no further comments on members' portfolios.

11. The Highland Council

Report prepared by SA (**Appendix I**) was circulated before the meeting.

There were no further comments!

12. Correspondence Received

12.1 - The Courthouse

Email received from The Cromarty Courthouse requesting match funding in relation to sums received from the Architectural Heritage Fund (which will allow them to retain one of their employees who's heavily involved with the current refurbishment). All members agree that CDCC cannot financially support but will give them options:

- 1) Advise them to speak to CCDT (funds could come from Open Gardens, or other earnings).
- 2) Apply to ward discretionary fund (or CDCC to do this on their behalf).

Action – NS/PS.

Nothing further received this month!

13. Any Other Business

13.2 – Land ownership

Query about how we find out who is responsible for certain pieces of land in Cromarty (or the owner of) when ownership hasn't been digitalised? SA suggested queries are sent to her and she can speak to Lyndsey Johnston (fellow Councillor) who is familiar with another piece of software they might be able to use. AP to send details of the land in question to Sarah. Action – AP.

Nothing in addition to what was discussed earlier in the evening.

14. Date of next meeting

Monday 30 June 2025 at 730pm.

Meeting ended at 945pm.

APPENDIX A
AGENDA ITEM 7
TREASURER'S REPORT NOTES

- 1. 2024/2025 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** have been audited and presented to the AGM. A change of auditor caused a delay but all completed without any change to the figures although for clarity, and transparency, the Accounts payable has now been restated as Accruals and Victoria Hall Repairs Fund. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 2. AMOUNTS RECEIVABLE/PAID IN ADVANCE** still reflects the £150 planning fee is still to be repaid by Stagecoach, but as this is dragging on, we have removed it from receivable and will show as a donation when received. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 3. AMOUNTS PAYABLE** still reflects £200 that is to be used on a Primary School project. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 4. SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR YEAR** reflects the monthly BoS bank charges, the Annual Cromarty Live Licence Fee and sundry expenses including the Auditor gratuity. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 5. COMMUNITY AMENTIES & EVENT FUNDS** reflects THC funding of RLP maintenance, RLP maintenance and restatement of the Stagecoach £150. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**
- 6. TODDLER PLAYGROUP FUND** reflects continuing MT funding and monthly costs. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Alan Plampton
27/05/25

APPENDIX B
AGENDA ITEM 7
TREASURER'S REPORT

Statement of Financial Position at 27th May 2025				
		£	£	£
Net Assets			<u>Movement</u>	<u>at 27/04/25</u>
Bank & Cash in hand balances as at 27th May 2025		15,686.75	874.10	14,812.65
Paypal Balance as at 27th May 2025		0.00	0.00	0.00
Amounts Receivable/Paid in Advance		0.00	-150.00	150.00
Amounts Payable		-200.00	0.00	-200.00
Total Net Assets at 27th May 2025		£15,486.75	724.10	£14,762.65
		£	£	£
Represented by:				
C&DCC Accumulated Fund Reserves at 1st April 2025		1,328.19	0.00	1,328.19
Surplus/ Deficit for the year to date		-310.39	-130.90	-179.49
		1,017.80	-130.90	1,148.70
Provision for Guidebook reprinting at 1st April 2025		211.75	0.00	211.75
C&DCC Amenity & Event Funds				
Community Amenities/Event Funds		6,934.46	500.00	6,434.46
Community Resilience Fund		1,976.38	0.00	1,976.38
Cromarty Live Fund		0.00	0.00	0.00
Community Defibrillator Fund		1,738.89	0.00	1,738.89
Net C&DCC Reserves		11,879.28	369.10	11,510.18
Designated Community Funds				
Gluren bij de Buren Fund		125.26	0.00	125.26
Toddler Playgroup Fund		2,166.29	355.00	1,811.29
Cromarty Rising Fund		1,315.92	0.00	1,315.92
		£15,486.75	724.10	£14,762.65
Alan Plampton 27th May 2025				

APPENDIX C
AGENDA ITEM 8
VICTORIA HALL REPORT

1. **Finances** Bookings are looking good although we did lose a lucrative wedding booking due to sudden family illness. The Hall did NOT ask for a cancellation fee as we felt that it would only increase the family pain and create goodwill to see them return at a future date. It also creates a welcoming message to Cromarty visitors. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
2. **Repairs & Maintenance** Painting work on the back offices to decorate the new YC Snug Project have been completed by a local tradesperson and we are now receiving acceptable tenders for flooring renewal. The project is fully funded. Some minor work on under stage storage is being quoted for. In addition, other quotes are awaited, for kitchen maintenance including the replacement of the Fire Doors to the Park. A new water source with hose has been created for various cleaning needs including the gritters. Fire Extinguisher maintenance was successfully completed, and the next boiler servicing is booked. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
3. **Sheddie** The Resilience team now have access to a water source for cleaning etc. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
4. **Youth Cafe** Latest report is attached. As mentioned above, the Snug Project is now fully funded. The YC committee have decided to not recruit a replacement youth worker but amend the other youth worker contract to cover. This will be further explained at the meeting. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**

Alan Plampton - VHMC
27/05/25

APPENDIX D
AGENDA ITEM 10 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS
ALAN RYCROFT

Police Liaison

Our Police Scotland liaison officer had no relevant information for us this month, but I have not yet received their formal monthly written report, which they have agreed to send to me directly (rather than to the general C&DCC email address).

APPENDIX E

AGENDA ITEM 10 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS

ALAN PLAMPTON

1. BICC No further update from April. **ACTION – Information only, no action required**
2. Affordable Housing Sub Committee has still not received any new news from Albyn Housing and the Sub-Committee has been discussing how best to further matters without causing more delays. The draft submission to the Highland Development was completed (a repeat of our submission to the IMFDP) and we have asked the THC to reinstate CM03 under their 'Call for Sites' request. We have also received notification of a privately owned site up at Cromarty Mains, which is being offered under the same 'Call for Sites' request. However, this is a development for market value private sales and not affordable housing. **ACTION – Information only, no action required.**
3. Defibrillators Still awaiting developments between our supplier and THC to finalise siting in Townlands. **ACTION – Information only, no action required.**

Alan Plampton 27/05/25

APPENDIX F
AGENDA ITEM 10 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS
ANDY THURGOOD

Meetings attended

I attended a meeting with the Highland Council Community Engagement Manager on 14th May, along with the CDCC Chair and Treasurer, to discuss Community Empowerment.

Correspondence

I have liaised further with the Development Trust regarding the re-instatement of goalposts on the links. This should have been undertaken over the weekend 26/4, but the Trust have been unsuccessful in the coordination of the task, and have requested assistance from CDCC. **Action required – to discuss at OGM.**

I received advance notification from Port of Nigg regarding dredging activities in the Firth. This has been circulated this to known interested parties.

I have received the latest results of monitoring data for noise from the Cromarty Firth, during the February and March period, by the Highland Council. I am currently liaising with Gregor MacCormick (THC) and Councillors Atkin and McCallum to arrange an online meeting to discuss the findings.

I received correspondence from a resident concerning the obscuring of vision turning out of Braehead onto High Street, by shrubbery on the corner, that also covers signage identifying the school. I have forwarded to Scott Duncan at THC Amenities for attention.

Noise and other nuisance from the Firth

The results of Highland Council noise monitoring for February and March have now been received (see above).

No further issues to report this month.


Projects

The 'One Cromarty' facilitated workshop aggregated responses have been shared with groups attending the workshop. A couple of responses to the request for the prioritising of the items discussed, have been received back.

CDCC needs to record a response. **Action required.**

Andy Thurgood
26/05/25

APPENDIX G
AGENDA ITEM 10 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS
PAIGE SHEPHERD

Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Erect agricultural shed <p> Land 40M NE Of Muirhead Farmhouse Cromarty Ref. No: 25/01780/PNO Received: Fri 09 May 2025 Validated: Fri 09 May 2025 Status: Under Consideration</p>
Shore Street Parking	Caravan parking is still happening at the front of shore street. It was asked if signs could be erected to encourage parking at the campsite. I have spoken to Andy regarding this who will take this back to the Development Trust
Fly Tipping	Fly tipping at the back of townlands park continues to happen. Please if you see anyone fly tipping, please report this.

APPENDIX H
AGENDA ITEM 10 - PORTFOLIO REPORTS
NIGEL SHAPCOTT

Portfolio Report for Cromarty and District Community Council- May 2025- Nigel Shapcott

HC Core Path report- Reeds Loop Path, Lady's Walk, 100 Steps

- 1) Reeds Loop Path (shore part) - All in all it is still in a functional state. The path has been mowed and will be mowed again in late May early June. Following up from the meeting of last month- Phillip Waite has carried out a survey by drone with Naturescots Dynamic Coast Project Manager.
- 2) 100 Steps - No change.
- 3) Highland Local Access Group - We await the next meeting date.

Cromarty Harbour Trust (CHT)

- 1) As a reminder Colin has provided us with notice that he will be resigning in March 2026 and informs us that C&DCC have an important role in filling that position according to the "rules". I have done a draft article for Chatterbox related to this, by way of an interview with Colin.
- 2) All 5 pontoons have now been deployed and the harbour is filling up..
- 3) Resolving issues with THC re planning permission for the new shed.
- 4) East Pier deliberations with HES have been successfully concluded for the "face-lift" and work starts Tuesday 27th May when equipment will start arriving. An HES sign will be installed and HES also on site 6th June.
- 5) Cromarty Boat Club- crane was successfully concluded 28th April

Cromarty Care Project (CCP)

- 1) CCP have Ben Leyshon coming on board as a new trustee very soon, still seeking a further trustee - anyone fancy it please let me know!
- 2) Parent and Toddler Playgroup – on-going commitment from CCP to fund both activities and equipment.
- 3) Gardening Club to create planted tubs. Chairs for Chat bench - CCP to fund.
- 4) Trikes have been out and about - well used during Crime and Thrillers weekend, looking forward to using them again for the Open Gardens event.
- 5) Summer Cafe - well attended, children really enjoying the planning of menus, making food each week and playing board games with lunch members.
- 6) Classic Film Club on-going twice monthly films, funding secured for next year through Port of Cromarty Authority.
- 7) CCP agreed funding to Cromarty Nursery for their Graduation celebrations at end of school year.
- 8) We have completed and returned the One Cromarty response spreadsheet, promoted lots of debate and CCP feel the project could be really positive for the whole community.
- 9) CCP 10 Year anniversary - Planning on-going for celebration of CCP 10 year Anniversary. Still asking for people's memories of CCP over the years and any photos, we'll be working with Cromarty Camera club to put together a wee slide show and display of photos.
- 10) CCP is currently looking at a possible joint funding application with CDT for developing a patch of land behind Townlands Barn for community use and discussions with Cromarty Arts Trust on possible workshops that CCP could support.

APPENDIX I
AGENDA ITEM 11 – HIGHLAND COUNCIL
CLLR SARAH ATKIN

Cllr Atkin – May 2025 update. Highlighted issues from my month (for the minutes)

Highland Council

Housing has been a big political issue this month. Specifically, allocations policy and homelessness. An item at full council wanted support for a review Highland allocations policy but just for Badenoch & Strathspey (this had come to full council via the Area Committee for approval.) An amendment asking for a review of the allocations policy for the whole region was supported. This is a good opportunity to see if changes can be made. I support this move.

Context:

- Highland is rare amongst local authorities in Scotland in already having a 'right to reside' allocation of points.
- Homelessness: any change to allocations policy won't alter the homelessness obligations. These are set by legislation coming out of Holyrood.
- Anyone in Scotland can arrive in the Highlands, declare they are homeless, and the Council has a legal duty to house them (initially, on a temporary basis.) Applicants from elsewhere in the UK can be sent back but initially, will need to be given shelter and then be assessed and processed (all of this takes time and money.)
- Highland's homelessness performance does stand up well to national scrutiny. The service works especially hard to ensure children are in temporary accommodation for the minimum of time. Around 50% of housing allocations are now to homeless applicants.
- The homelessness paper at Housing & Property Committee explains the homelessness obligations clearly (available to read on the Highland Council website.) Also, the Officer presenting stressed to us that it is Inverness where over 80% of the applicants from outside the Highlands wish to live. The vast majority of homeless applicants elsewhere **will be** from their local area. The bottom line is, **we don't have enough housing** – of all tenures.

Highland Housing Challenge - call for sites: the 'call' has now concluded. The sites submitted will now be mapped. A follow up meeting/summit around the housing challenge (from the economic aspect) is scheduled for 6th June.

Ward Business

Funding Streams for projects: the community regeneration team asked our views on a different approach for community groups bidding in for funds they manage. Currently, a 'call' goes out and groups applying or expressing interest vastly exceed the funding pots available. This creates pressure for staff and for community groups filling out forms. A more strategic and targeted approach is needed. One idea was a system akin to a 'bank' of possible projects. Groups submit to the 'bank'. A project is included in that 'bank' and when the money from the various funding pots comes in, the team can look and proactively earmark projects from the bank that might be suitable and 'shovel ready' to apply. **This is in the early stages of thinking.** It is an approach I would support.

Roads: our capital programme is confirmed for 25/26. Bayview Crescent is included. No start date yet. I am chasing this. Local members are lobbying officers and the leadership to make the Black Isle a bespoke case for additional funds. We have so many terrible roads and the list is getting longer and longer.

Cromarty

I attended the VE Day event organised by the Four Ways club. I'm still waiting to hear from John Nightingale re: the possibility of a shed in the park in Townlands to keep items – tools, litter pickers - for wide community use.

Councillor Sarah Atkin

Find us on 

www.cromartylive.co.uk

Prepared by Claire Fraser – June 2025