

**APPROVED Minutes of AKCC Meeting in Avoch Pavilion at 7.30 pm on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

**Present:**

**Members:** Derek MacIver (DM), Fraser Brunton, Vice-Chair & Minutes (FB), Tim Phillips (TP), Rosie Brunton, Secretary (RB), Alistair Adie (AA), Nicolaas du Preez (NdP), Drew Mann (DMn),

**In Attendance:** David Brims (DB), Caroline Eccles (CE)

**Apologies:** Cllr Morven-May MacCallum (MMM), Stuart Bruce (SB), Debbie du Preez (DdP), Jenni Carmichael (JC), Kathy Taylor (KT)

- | <b>1. Welcome and apologies</b>  | <b>Action</b>                               |
|--|---|
| DM welcomed everyone. Apologies were as above. The meeting was preceded by an excellent talk about bats by James Bunyan.   |   |
| <b>2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025</b>   |   |
| The draft minutes of the meeting held on 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 were proposed by AA and seconded by RB as an accurate record.  |   |
| <b>3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025</b>  |   |
| FB thanked those who had provided updates on their matters arising in advance. He referred to the Matters Arising Register and reported the following progress by exception. Matters Arising covered by agenda items were covered separately.  |   |
| <b>3.1 Item 5c(iii)/020924: Pavilion Bridge</b> – It was established that the bridge was erected by the community and did not belong to Rosehaugh, AAA or Highland Council. It had been inspected by the Men’s Shed, DB and NdP. The materials required for the repair would cost about £320. A separate donation would be made to the Men’s Shed. As it had been agreed that AAA would fund the repairs, TP said he would ask AMcL (AAA) to instruct the works. | <b>TP to contact AMcL to instruct works</b> |
| <b>3.2 Item 5c(iii)/071024: Railway Footpath</b> – MMM was in discussion with the local Ranger and had requested details of future works. CE and AA to discuss and advise RB, who would reply to MMM.  | <b>CE/AAA to discuss and advise RB</b>      |
| <b>3.3 Item 11/020924: Christmas Lights Testing</b> – RB said work on the risk assessment would be completed in due course.  |   |
| <b>3.4 Item 5a/041124: AKCC Bank Charges</b> – TP had recommended that AKCC’s accounts should remain with the Bank of Scotland. This was agreed provided that the annual charge did not increase above £50. TP said that he would discuss further with staff at the local branch.  |   |
| <b>3.5 Item 5c(i)/070325</b> – It was agreed that it was impractical to have a dog waste bin by the shore track to the water works. DB confirmed there was a dog waste bin at the south end of Ormonde Terrace. MMM had arranged for two additional brown garden waste bins to be provided. It was agreed that one would be located at the Community Gardens and the other at the school.  | <b>RB to advise MMM</b>                     |
| <b>3.6 Item 6c(i): Local Walks Leaflet Boxes</b> – A spare box had been located and fitted.  |   |
| <b>3.7 Item 6c(ii): Parking in Avoch</b> – DMn had posted AKCC’s concerns on   |   |

social media about irresponsible parking in Avoch and said he had received good public engagement.

**3.8 Item 6c(iv): Collapsing Roadside Wall on A832** – MMM was liaising with the harbourmaster about the repair of the wall.

**3.9 Himalayan Balsam** – AA said that Himalayan Balsam (HB) was now reappearing in Avoch. Lizzie Campbell (LC) had reported some in Killen and Killen Burn. AA and CE confirmed that a Balsam Bashing Day would be held on 9<sup>th</sup> May. DMn said he would publicise the event on social media.

#### **4. Recurring Community Council Matters**

**4a. Finance Update** – TP's finance statement for the year ended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. TP said that there was £2995 in the Bank of Scotland Current Account, which was a year-end deficit of £129. He summarised the accounts, including income and expenditure. He confirmed that the annual insurance had been paid. He said that the accounts would be audited for the AGM in June 2025.

**4b. Planning Applications** – FB said there had been no new relevant applications since the previous meeting. AKCC had been contacted by Strathnairn Community Council advising that the height of wind turbines in forthcoming applications in the North of Scotland was 200m and that they would require red navigation warning lights, potentially visible from 45/50 km, depending on the intervening topography. Community Councils were asked to be aware of current applications and comment as appropriate.

**4c. Community Concerns Arising** – The hole in the wall on the steps opposite the school gate required repaired. RB said she would contact MMM. **RB/MMM**

**4d. Police Liaison Report** – Nothing relevant for AKCC this month. A 'Coffee with a Copper' session would be held at No.19 on 21<sup>st</sup> June. Time TBA. It was noted that a Ness Fisheries event was also to be held that day. Further details would be posted on social media in due course.

#### **4e. Correspondence – Secretary's Report**

**a.** Email dated 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025, from Jessica Hasson (Avoch Rainbows), seeking agreement to plant a tree at a suitable place in Avoch. It was agreed there was insufficient space in the Community Gardens and that the grassed area opposite the Lazy Corner was unsuitable. CE and AA agreed to consider further and advise RB. Mannsfield Place may be a possibility. **AA/CE to advise RB**

**b.** Email dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025, from Lynn McNeill intimating that the next meeting of the Mid Ross Partnership was on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025. Noted.

**c.** Email dated 11<sup>th</sup> April 2025, from Jamie Spratt, Airestop, regarding a mobile phone app for coordinating campervan stopovers. Noted.

**d.** Email dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025, from Age Scotland, seeking information on events for the over 50s. RB said she would refer him to the Black Isle Leisure Centre, Black Isle Cares and the Fortrose Library. **RB to advise**

**e.** Email dated 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025, from Erin Burke, seeking nominations for My Place Awards, recognising Community-led Projects/Champions. As the closing date had passed it was agreed to consider submitting a nomination next year.

**f.** Email dated 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025, from Connecting Carers seeking to explore experiences of unpaid carers in Highland, living with a long-term disability as **RB to**

well as caring for someone else. RB to forward poster to DMn, who would post it on social media. **forward poster**

g. Email dated 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025, from the Community Regeneration Fund confirming that TP's application for funds for the Public Toilets Project had been unsuccessful because the funding round had been oversubscribed. It was noted that there would be further opportunities to apply in the future.

#### 5. **Avoch Amenities Association**

There was discussion about how best to support AAA, which had been unable to fill current vacancies, including secretary. It was agreed DM would discuss the matter with AMcL and explore if it would be worth holding a joint meeting with AKCC to consider the options. **DM to discuss with AMcL**

#### 6. **BICC & Black Isle Place Plan** - TP said there was nothing new to report.

#### 7. **AKCC Website**

FB said although CL had made substantial progress with the new site, additional pages were still required. The new Avoch and Killen Live site looked attractive and some good photographs had been obtained, though more of Avoch Harbour and local landmarks were needed. Jenni Carmichael had been very helpful and had asked local businesses to provide photographs. FB said he now had access to the Spanglefish software. TP and FB had agreed to meet later in May to work on the outstanding text. It was agreed that the current site was outdated and should be taken down. FB said he would contact CL. **FB and TP to meet**  
**FB to contact CL**

#### 8. **Public Toilets Working Group.**

RB said that the next meeting of the Group was on 27<sup>th</sup> May. DM commented that progress was very slow and that he was concerned about how that would be viewed by the community. The option of fixing the wate pipe and reopening the current building was revisited, though AKCC no longer held the lease and concerns were raised about the sustainability of funding the ongoing revenue costs.

RB said the next stage was for the Working Group to seek funding for a feasibility study of all the various options. TP said HIE development funding or Scottish Land Funds could be available. The public engagement survey, which had resulted in 112 responses, showed a clear preference for more modern toilets, rather than reinstatement of the previous facility.

RB and TP referred to the significant amount of work required to reopen the toilets, irrespective of the option selected. It was agreed that the group would need to recruit additional members with specific skills to take the project forward.

#### 9. **Sharing Shed Update**

It was noted that slabs to support the new storage shed had been laid next to the Sharing Shed, although some additional works were required. TP said the joiner had been unwell but that construction of the storage shed would start soon. It was envisaged that the estimated cost of approximately £1200 would be funded by a grant and the AAA.

#### 10. **Community Improvement Works and Volunteers**

**10.1 Avoch Spring Cleanup** – Although the small turnout of 3 people had been disappointing, despite the advertising campaign, substantial progress

was made clearing weeds from around the Lazy Corner, with lots of positive feedback. It was hoped further sessions would be held later in the year.

**10.2 Himalayan Balsam** – See item 3.9. CE to draft an article for Chatterbox.

**CE to draft article**

**10.3 Summer Programme of Improvement Works** – AKCC appreciated the work being done by AA and CE to encourage participation in projects such as improving the railway path, the Brae Steps, the Spring Clean-up and Himalayan Balsam Bashing. CE and AA were asked if they could provide a follow up programme of improvement works for the summer months that could be advertised on social media by DMn.

**AA/CE to provide programme to RB/DMn**

**10.4 AKCC Flood Prevention Plan** – FB gave a brief account of the work he and DMn had been doing to develop a Flood Prevention Plan for Avoch and Killen. He said there had been considerable public interest and engagement on social media, with the provision of photographs, videos and other information. A collection of 19 pages of maps and associated photographs was tabled for information.

FB had obtained helpful support and information from DdP (Chair, Avoch Primary School Council), about the longstanding flooding issues at the school that were a serious concern for the school, families, AKCC and the community. All the information obtained was being collated into a document, which would be circulated in due course for comment, approval and information. The intention was to engage with Highland Council, Local Councillors, Landowners, Farmers, SEPA, Scottish Water, Avoch Primary School, the local community and other stakeholders to develop and implement an effective Flood Prevention Plan for Avoch and Killen.

**FB/DMn to complete Draft Flood Prevention Plan**

#### **11. Avoch and Killen Nature Conservation Plan**

CE gave an update on the Nature Plan and related activities. The plan had excellent input from members of the community. CE was thanked for leading the project and producing such an excellent document, which AKCC formally adopted. A PDF version of the [Nature Plan](#) is stored in the Public Access Folder on AKCC's network drive and can be viewed by clicking on the link above. CE said she planned to contact James Bunyan (JB) regarding provision of a map of the AKCC area for inclusion in the Nature Plan.

**CE to contact JB**

CE said the picnic area opposite the Lazy Corner required to be mowed after July and the bank above the Corner needed strimmed at the end of the year.

#### **12. AKCC Assets**

Due to his other commitments, SB had been unable to progress the Asset Register, records and maintenance schedule for some months. FB had offered him support. RB said that she would discuss the matter with him. Although SB was not responsible for asset maintenance, CE said benches at the Lazy Corner needed revarnished and work was required in the phone box.

**RB to contact SB**

#### **13. AOCB** – DB reported Transition Black Isle were opening a Library of Things in the High St. Rosemarkie on 19<sup>th</sup> May. This included tools and other items.

#### **14. Date of Next Meeting (incorporating the AGM)**

The AGM will be held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 at 7.00 pm in Avoch Pavilion followed by normal meeting. Please note earlier start time.

**DM/TP to send RB reports**