

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 29th APRIL 2025

AT STRATHERRICK HALL GORTHLECK

WITH VIDEO LINK OPTION

<p>1. David Mudie, Strategic Lead – Planning and Building Standards, Highland Council MH welcomed David Mudie and thanked him for attending. Discussion and Q&A had on various non-specific planning queries.</p> <p>2. Present Mark Hindley (MH) – chair, Gary McGowan (GM), Craig Lightbody (CL) and Janet Hobson (JH) Sharon Ferguson (Admin) Public attending - Cllr Fraser, Cllr Balance, Ken Sinclair, Catriona Fraser, Hugh Nicol, Margie Elgar-Bond, Tina Jordan and Keith Oversby. Apologies – Helen Grainger, Chris Joyce, Mike Slater and Olivia Grant</p> <p>Conflicts - No conflicts</p> <p>3. Adoption of minutes – 25th March 2025 Minutes of the CC meeting on 25/03/2025 were adopted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed by JH, seconded by GM</p> <p>4. Matter arising not on the agenda Road closure for remembrance service – all agreed that a 1 hour closure would be sufficient Parking problems at Foyers shop – All agreed on 7 days a week 8am – 6pm restricted parking for 1 hour at the bottom bay at the shop. Admin met HC for site visit. They are keen to make the sign to restrict parking times and paint parking bays but were querying who was paying for it. Cllr Fraser advised to get a price for just the sign in the 1st instance Navigation light at Corriegarth WF – to be checked if still on Visitor Levy consultation – Admin done CC's response and sent response to Anna Low Yard at Gorthleck – mess all cleared now and yard for sale. CL still seeking closure from SEPA and reassurances on what can be done should this situation arise again South Loch Ness Way – the chairperson of VILN came out for a site visit to inspect the missing bridge at Ardoch that was washed away in July 23. They are making changes to the website, getting liability insurance and getting better diversion signs made up. Meeting of stakeholders to take place end of June 25 to look at longer term options De-fibs – Hugh Nicol attended to discuss getting a de-fib in the Ault Na Goire area. This has been looked at before but had been agreed that it couldn't be on a private property. Discussion had on solutions to house a de-fib in that area. Admin to look at battery/solar solutions on the roadside so that it is public access. FLS to be contacted. MH to investigate whether they need a power supply.</p> <p>5. Micro Grant Applications Boleskine Biodiversity - £500 to go towards putting a swift nesting box, power supply from a battery and camera; came in just before meeting and as only 4 CC members in attendance, Admin to share round by email for a decision.</p> <p>Previous application: maintaining War memorial - elements were thought not to be very environmentally friendly (mole traps and weed killer). GM spoke to the applicant to consider other options and this has been agreed. New costings to be provided and all agreed to pay.</p>	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>Admin to get price for the parking sign</p> <p>Check light</p> <p>Admin to share micro grant app by email</p> <p>Admin to contact applicant for new costs</p>
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6. Reports

Treasurer report from Janet Hobson

Main account - £15,442.77

Micro grant account - £5,931.83

Toilets at Foyers receipts included in main account balance

Via Stripe (QR code donations) = £71.07

VIA NAYAX (NEW CARD PAYMENT SYSTEM) = £43.95

CASH RECEIVED = £278.02

Boleskine Community Care

Care at Home

Current Care at Home stats from the Highland Hospice-

9 service users (+1), 74 hours of care per week (+12), Travel time - 25 hours per week, Total hours per week - 99 hours, Staff – 1x co-ordinator (20) 7 staff members, 2 contracts – 1x25, 1x16, (41 hours), 4 bank

Community Transport - In the month of March our Community Transport Scheme covered 759.60 miles, 37.5 hours and took 36 passengers. This was all done by only 3 volunteers! We are currently recruiting volunteer drivers; all mileage costs are covered by the Highland Council at 45p per mile.

Befriending - Both Olivia and Jo have been awarded a temporary 6-month contract to increase their hours by 5 hours per week. They are using this additional time on the Befriending Service. We have 3 Befriending volunteers booked onto the next training session at the Highland Hospice and currently have 14 referrals to the service. We have become aware that isolation is a very pressing issue within our community, and we hope to use Befriending to tackle this.

New Services - We have added a couple of new services to the Hub calendar; Highland Hears attended the Hub in April to provide ear wax removal, ear examination and hearing tests. This was a very popular service as it is something no longer done at the doctor's surgery. Highland Hears will be returning to the Hub on the 22nd of May.

Due to our current hairdresser being fully booked, we realised that we needed a second person to continue to meet the needs of the community. We are delighted to have Jenny, a fully qualified hairdresser and barber attending the Hub every second week. Jenny will be doing appointments on a Wednesday and a Saturday.

Activities - Art Club is also restarting at the Hub every Monday from 2pm to 4pm. The space will be available to all to work on their projects.

10th Anniversary - Our Picnic & Party event will take place at the Hub on the 29th of June to celebrate the 10th anniversary of BCC. We currently have a bouncy slide booked, a Pimms tent and are looking for food vendors.

MH raised that Billy MacKenzie from BCC had been in touch with him and requested that both chairs of SFCT and SFCC attend the next shop steering group meeting.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust – Craig Lightbody liaison Director

At their meeting on the 2nd of April, the SFCT board voted on the appointments of Chair and Vice Chair. Peter Faye was confirmed as Chair, and it was agreed that Maureen McGuire and Maire Brown share the role of Vice Chair.

Maureen and Maire were thanked for their roles as interim Chairs up to the appointment of the permanent roles.

Following on from the success of the SFCT directors' induction training, carried out by DTAS, the remaining directors who were unable to attend the first session will be expected to complete their induction on the 8th May. This will be followed by a 'Strategic Planning' session, also by DTAS, on the 9th April. I won't be able to attend this.

Clarendon Financial Planning, the investment group who look after the trust's legacy fund, presented their yearly investment report on the 2nd April. This is a detailed, 10-page report

<p>which is summarised here: Portfolio as of 31/03/2025 – £1,523,785.66. This was a change in value over the year of £32,282,.78, representing a return of 2.16%.</p> <p>My action from the community council to the board regarding ‘Chinese whispers’ referring to the Foyers primary school building being taken into the Trusts ownership was noted and the board agreed to be mindful when commenting (on community issues as a trust director). This brought rise to discussion on a similar issue where a trust director was questioned about the ‘Trusts’ purchase of the Foyers shop’.</p> <p>The Liaison Director Role description still hasn’t been finalised. I have asked for this to be discussed and ratified at their next meeting in order for me to present it at the Community Councils’ next meeting for approval/amendments.</p> <p>The Errogie Church project is moving forward. The architect has been approached to help provide solutions to the issues which remain. The Trust is working hard to get this building operational again, but progress is slow.</p> <p>The Wildside toilets have now been upgraded to a very high standard. The local Joiner, Two Planks Joinery of Inverfarigaig, were thanked for their excellent work.</p> <p>A community consultation on the purchase of the Foyers shop and post office by Boleskine Community Care, took place on the 23rd April. I haven’t heard how that went on. I am disappointed to note that, although members of the steering group for this project are now in place, no meeting was set up before the consultation. The Community Council should impress upon the BCC that regular interaction with stakeholders is a must to fully inform the community of their progress and to garner their support. It is also a condition of the SLF for BCC to show regular communication with the community. <i>Discussion had about the importance of the potential Foyers shop acquisition steering group and clarity required that at the moment, it is unknown if a community acquisition will go ahead and if it did, who would be the entity that would take this forward as this is unknown at the moment. MH express that this 1st phase process is focused on before any other decisions are taken.</i></p> <p>Foyers Bay will officially open on the 3rd of May. Everyone is welcome to this brief open day. Steering group members will be on hand to let everyone know how to gain access etc. Feel free to pop down between 1 and 4pm. Weather permitting, there will be a free trip on the Beastie Boat too!</p> <p>The next meeting for the SFCT directors meeting has been brought forward to the 30th of April. This is due to Director training being scheduled for the 8th and 9th of May. I am unable to attend this meeting. I will forward the minutes when they are available.</p> <p>Discussion had about the importance of the potential Foyers shop acquisition steering group and clarity required that at the moment, it is unknown if a community acquisition will go ahead and if it did, who would be the entity that would take this forward. MH express that this 1st phase process is focused on before any other decisions are taken.</p>	
<p>7. Foyers Public Toilets</p> <p>Nothing to note</p>	
<p>8. Planning applications lodged since last SFCC meeting</p> <p>None received other than energy schemes</p>	
<p>9. Energy Schemes – any updates in red</p> <p>Glen Earrach Energy Pump Storage Hydro – Planning application submitted. Admin has invited developer to the next meeting on 27th May and they have accepted. Closing date for comments is 2nd June. Admin to ask for an extension now.</p> <p>Foyers Substation extension (SSEN) –</p> <p>Aberarder Windfarm (SSE) – going ahead with original plans for 12 turbines at 130m. SSE bought from RES – next liaison meeting is 6th May, members to send any queries to MH or GM ahead of that. On the Community Benefit, it had been agreed that the three CC’s involved would do a joint letter but MH awaiting a response from the other two CC’s. All agreed to just wait until they come back to MH.</p>	<p>Admin ask for an extension</p>

<p>Cloiche Windfarm (SSE) – Consented Dec 23 (ext to Stronelairg). Await construction timings</p> <p>Dell Windfarm (Coriolis) – Scoping application in to alter the original approved plans from 14 turbines to 10, amend height from 130.5m to 200m and to vary the layout – Two applications in; one section 42 to extend the current planning that has been awarded and a section 36 to apply for a new version of the plans known as Dell 2. Await coming to planning committee</p> <p>Corriegarth Windfarm (Greencoat UK Wind) –</p> <p>Corriegarth 2 Windfarm (BayWar.e) – Permission granted Dec 23.</p> <p>Loch Liath Windfarm – North side of Loch Ness, on Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston land but visual from SFCC area – HC to object to this application at next planning meeting</p> <p>Culachy Windfarm (Fred. Olsen Renewables) – On FGCC land. Planning refused – going to public enquiry.</p> <p>Loch Na Cathrach Pump Storage Hydro (previously known as Red John) – Above Dores, approved at public inquiry. New manager in place but no correspondence or update received.</p> <p>Loch Kemp Pump Storage Hydro (Statera Energy) and Ness Weir II - proposed hydro pump storage at Dell Estate – screening application for the switching station. If anything hasn't been disclosed in that application, the advice from David Mudie was to report that to planning. Statera have now done the visualisation that the CC requested but the switching station and borrow pit are missing from the drawing. Admin to report to Statera. Ground investigation works that are inside the SAC must be considered by NatureScot but anything outside is permitted development but regs are that any works done must be reinstated after 6 months. This time there are 18 boreholes and 25 pits being done as well as various bits of tracks. MH to write piece to notify various departments. There is also a track on the south of the site that Dell estate is for taking deer carcasses out, but it is 7.5m wide. This has been referred to planning enforcement. Dell estate has also been doing some felling on a different area which the CC were not consulted on. When MH approached the contractor, an altercation occurred which has been reported to the police. Scottish Forestry to be contacted to ask again why the CC weren't consulted on this one. Update on planning system as new documents including new visual has been uploaded. There is a paper copy of all documents in the Wildside centre.</p> <p>Carn na Saobhaidh Wind Farm (RES) – Situated in the Strathnairn and Strathdearn area, the proposal is to access from the A9 using and established road for other windfarms. At scoping.</p> <p>Lynemore Wind Farm – out with this area (Strathairn) but turbines over 200m tall - all to look at plans</p>	<p>Scottish Forestry to be contacted again</p>
<p>10. Roads</p> <p>Layby with drop edge has been fixed.</p>	
<p>11. Correspondences</p> <p>Email had been received from Margie Elgar-Bond; a cyclist in the recent Etape cycle race hit a deer crossing the road near Foyers. This was a concern that Margie had raised in 2021 to the local Councillor at the time. Suggestion from email was the event is held later in the year after the busy tourist season. Admin has written to the event organiser but understandably hadn't heard back yet as there was also a fatal incident in Inverness with a participant. MH noted that the date for 2026 was already set. Await reply from organiser and Cllr Fraser to speak to previous Cllr, Margaret Davidson for the background of the timing of the event.</p>	
<p>12. Up and coming events</p> <p>Ultra X (running event but road not closed) – 3rd – 4th May (one race starting from pier at Lower Foyers)</p>	
<p>13. AOCB</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>14. Next meeting</p> <p>Tuesday 27th May 2025 7pm @ the BCC Hub, Lower Foyers</p>	<p>Admin to put agenda on noticeboards</p>