

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 26th MAY 2026
AT THE HUB, LOWER FOYERS
WITH VIDEO LINK OPTION

1. Present

Mark Hindley (MH) – chair, Helen Grainger (HG), Gary McGowan (GM), Michael Slater (MS), Chris Joyce (CJ) and Jewels Lang (JL)
 Sharon Ferguson (Admin)
 Public attending – Cllr Fraser
 Apologies – Craig Lightbody & Cllr Ballance
 Conflicts – None

2. Adoption of minutes – 28th April 2026

Proposed by GM, seconded by MS

3. Matter arising not on the agenda

De-fibs – The de-fib for Inverfarigaig has still not arrived. MH has been trying to resolve this but not getting a reply anymore. All agreed to give them 10 days to deliver it, or we will request a refund.
SLNT/Ultra X - Admin has spoken with the SLN Access group; they received £416 from Ultra X last year but haven't spent it yet. All felt that any payment should be used towards improvements to the trail. Ultra X are to give SFCC a donation this year and it will be ringfenced for a solution to the missing Ardochy bridge.

Whitebridge bus service – Cllr Fraser and Admin to meet with HC public transport to discuss issues with the service and create a survey.

Dark Skies initiative – HC about to discuss a policy on dark skies. Whilst there are lots of benefits of dark skies, there are difficulties in implementation.

Fireworks survey – the survey results are as follows;

Would you like the Stratherrick and Foyers area to be considered for a Firework Control Zone? Yes 53 No 47 (98 responses online and 2 paper)

Would you like to see the Stratherrick and Foyers area be a firework-free zone? Yes 52 No 49 (99 responses online and 2 paper)

Do you think fireworks should be freely available to anyone who wishes to use them anywhere in the Stratherrick and Foyers area? Yes 31 No 70 (99 responses online and 2 paper)

Would you like to see an organised firework display funded by Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust again this year? Yes 55 No 46 (99 responses online and 2 paper)

All agreed that there wasn't a clear enough mandate to take things forward with a firework control zone but agreed to wait to hear what Craig Lightbody thought as he produced the survey. Admin to publish survey results.

Deer shooting at Wester Drummond – MH contacted the Police following the last meeting and was told that firearms and shooting are well regulated and they are content that the rules are being followed and they don't consider it a police issue. MH wrote to Aliona Priima and Michael White to let them know. MH has since received an email from the Wester Drummond Residents Group with Signed Objections, Qualified Assessor's Report, Shooting Permissions Letter, Map of Homes and Land and a Letter to NatureScot. MH replied to the group and asked if they could let them know the response from NatureScot and that we would discuss tonight but not heard back from them.

4. Micro Grant Applications

Kirsteen Campbell - £500 to purchase two new picnic benches to replace broken ones for Glenlia green; all agreed. Plastic benches or a maintenance plan to be considered.

Alister Chisholm - £500 towards printing costs of books detailing medical facilities and people who provided these services in the area from 1800 till 2015; debate had over this as technically a

Actions

MH to contact company

Admin to share results with CL and the Community

commercial enterprise and as the application has come from an individual, not a group, it is harder to manage. Admin to discuss with Alister the possibility of SFCC purchasing a number of the books for local primary schools, doctors' surgery etc. rather than a grant.

Admin to contact applicant

5. Reports

Treasurer report

Main account - £14,982.40 (includes a new payment of £1,500 from this year's Etape race)
Micro grant account - £5,113.21 (the CC have previously approved two payments of £500 each to BCC that have still to be paid so the micro grant total should be £4,113.21 if both payments are made (£500 towards generator shed Feb 26 – conditions not complied with yet and £500 to pay for inflatables at garden party – await last year's completion report and invoice))
Toilets at Foyers receipts included in main account balance -
Via Stripe (QR code donations) = £135.63 (May)
Via NAYAX (card payment system) = £74.84 (May)
Cash = £266.76 (May)
Payment of £40 taken in error via card payment system has been refunded.

Boleskine Community Care

No report received

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust

SFCC attendance by Gary MacGowan -
Tracey McWilliams was introduced to the meeting, who is currently considering joining the Board. I briefed the Board on April's SFCC meeting with Colin Ross and informed them that their questions raised at the last Board meeting were passed onto Colin, who will come back to SFCC with updates. I then gave a brief update on the final submission SFCCs objection to the proposed Loch Kemp Hydro scheme which was submitted on 11th May.
The Board offered to lead on future negotiations with energy companies on behalf of SFCC, regarding community benefit. This could either be undertaken by SFCT Board members or through an independent negotiator – I agreed to raise this at the May SFCC meeting.
Jules Lang informed the meeting that Carol Masheter (SSE Community Investment Manager), had advised that the community benefit money for Aberarder Wind Farm is now available to SFCC and that a decision needs to be made as to whether SFCC want the money...or not.
There was agreement that the recent joint meeting between SFCT and SFCC was received very well by all who attended.
The next SFCT Board meeting is Wednesday 3rd June.

Discussion followed on Community Benefit negotiations (CBN); as discussed at the recent joint SFCC/SFCT meeting, CBN is done jointly with both parties. MH to write to SFCT to confirm that this is the case. MH reported that SSE have been back in touch regarding the Aberarder WF CB. At the initial CBN done in Aug 24 with the chairpersons of both SFCC and SFCT, SSE stated that this area would not be receiving yearly payments from this scheme (Spilt 75% to Strathnairn and 25% to Strathdearn) but this area would receive two payments of circa £22k over two years to cover disruption over construction period. The CC had previously felt this amount was too low. The amount has now increased to £87,446 in a single payment. All agreed to accept the new offer. Discussion had on where the payment should go and micro grants. Cllr Fraser reminded the CC about the rules on assets. All agreed to request to SSE that £62,446 goes to SFCT and SFCC gets £25,000 to be ringfenced and saved to continue the micro grant scheme which is currently funded by SFCT. MH to write to SSE.

MH to write to SFCT

MH to write to SSE

CEO Report to Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council -

Errogie Old Church - The planned work is now coming to a close. The Building Standards Surveyor did an initial visit before issuing the Building Completion Certificate and we are pleased to report there were only 2 minor areas for action. 1 to cover changing the colour of the handrails in the disabled toilet and, 2 was to submit the drawings of the slight changes to the emergency exit.

I was invited to the inaugural meeting of the Friends of Errogie Church community group where they formally adopted their constitution and elected their office bearers. We will be developing a Memorandum of Agreement to define the roles and responsibilities of the Community Group and the Trust in the on-going management and usage of the Church. The group are advertising a 'Night at the Musicals' event on Friday 19th June, if the Completion Certificate has been received.

Resilience Plan - A funding application to the Community Fund (SSE) has been raised to commission a consultant to help with the development of the plan. We should hear in August if we are successful.

Strategic Planning Process - The Directors have had their 1st meeting at which the Project Coordinator and Funding Officer presented the Concept Papers for the projects that have been prioritised for our '26-'27 financial year. The Directors are currently evaluating the projects against the agreed criteria and will present their findings to the full Board in June.

Each concept paper will be evaluated against seven criteria:

1. Strategic Context & CAP Alignment
2. Community Impact
3. Operational Feasibility
4. Financial Viability of both Project & Operational Costs
5. Monitoring & Evaluation
6. Sustainability & Legacy
7. Innovation & Added Value

The 5 proposed projects are: Riverside Field, Corkscrew Road Community Workshop and Garages, Wildside Centre Play Park Improvements, Temporary Gym Facilities at Wildside Centre and Thain Road Housing Proposal

Community Grants - For May, a total of £15,430 was distributed. We now publish the breakdown of this total into the various categories of grants we provide on our website.

MH thanked SFCT for organising the recent joint public meeting and all felt it was a very successful evening. Thought to be given on a topic for the next one in Sep 26.

6. Foyers Public Toilets

SFCC had previously been seeking clarification on what the money collected in the donation post for Highlife Highland at the top of the falls was used for and how much is collected. Cllr Fraser has now had a response from Chief Exec of HH stating figures for last two years and that clarification that the monies collected support the High Life Highland Ranger Service, rather than a ring-fenced maintenance budget for the Foyers Falls site specifically but HLH ranger team also assists Highland Council with smaller, reactive works at Foyers Falls, as and when required and within the skills and capacity of the team. Typical examples include minor fencing repairs; path edge works and general site upkeep. These tasks are undertaken alongside the ranger service's wider responsibilities and are not costed on a site-by-site basis against our donation's income. SFCC are not aware of any works taking place at the falls and Cllr Fraser asked that we reply with photos of the defects and broken bridge and also check the wording on the donation post.

7. Resilience Plan

A funding application has been made by SFCC to SSE's resilience fund to pay for a consultant to work with all stakeholders to pull together the resilience plan as other areas we have spoken to said the work had taken a long time and taken a lot of volunteer effort. Admin to do an email to all stakeholders to update them.

8. Planning applications lodged since last SFCC meeting

Aviation light at Aberchalder – although the light has gone off or has been changed to infra-red, we still haven't had an official response; admin to get official response.

26/00645/FUL Erection of 3no. holiday lodge, managers house and garage, Land East of West Drummond Cottage Whitebridge; all agreed to comment on the access and the hidden dip nearby.

Admin to get photos of defects and wording on post.

Admin to email all stakeholders

Admin to request official response
Admin to write comment to planning

9. Energy Schemes

Aberarder Wind Farm – Next Community Liaison meeting date is 2nd June. MH and GM to attend. SFCC have just been informed by email that the aggregate from the proposed borrow pit onsite, is not suitable and the aggregate is now having to be brought in by HGV's. This issue and the environmental impact of creating a borrow pit then not using to be raised.

Loch Kemp – MH thanked all CC members and also Kyra Motley, who helped immensely with the closing statement. Developer has not submitted their closing statement. GM expressed his and all members of CC's thanks to MH for all his outstanding work throughout the public enquiry.

Dell 2 Wind Farm – GM to attend the peatland site visit, admin to notify the developer and admin to forward information to GM.

Glenmarkie Wind Farm – roundtable meeting to be held on 16th June. Four members of the CC confirmed they could attend. MH had received an email from Strathdearn CC asking to meet to discuss CB splits for this WF; MH proposed that the CC make it policy that CBN are not done until after planning is decided, seconded by HG. MH to write back to Strathdearn to confirm this.

10. Roads

SFCC to agree priorities across the area and email to Colin Ross at HC. Lack of road lining across the whole area is an issue and makes the roads more dangerous, especially when the edge is high. Cllr Fraser asked for any reports of hidden speed signs by vegetation as this is being looked at.

11. Correspondences

Email received from planning re on the proposed Highland Rural Short Term Let Control Area (STLCA). Briefing notes to be shared with members and consultation to be shared with community. Email received about a dead pig in the Falls of Foyers; admin has reported to Environmental health but not sure what can be done. MH to discuss with rescue services.

12. Up and coming events

BCC Summer party – Sat 4th July @ The Hub, Lower Foyers

13. AOCB

Review of the Community Action Plan – An independent review of the Community Action Plan is underway. Everyone encouraged to take part - <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe8GnJotw-nhrex6DPZpsTREVZRO-IHUvlgRXeM2T2N4yDw/viewform> The results will be for use by all stakeholders and groups. MH raised that at the recent Loch Kemp LPI, the LPP wasn't strong enough on development. Admin to look into whether it can be amended. Suggestion that and CAP could be the topic for joint meeting. Road closure for Remembrance event – Admin to start the process. River Fechlin – GM raised that this river is currently running all the time, when it normally levels fluctuate due to Foyers Pump Storage.

14. Date of next meeting

Tues 30th June 2026 7pm @ The Stratherrick Public Hall, Gorthleck

AGM followed by normal CC meeting

Reports to be in for Tues 23rd June

MH & GM to raise at meeting

Admin to notify developer & send info

MH to send email

All to work on priorities
Admin to send email

Admin to share info to CC and community
MH to discuss with rescue services

All to share and encourage participation

Admin to look into reviewing the LPP
Admin to email HC