Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Council held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 4th November 2025 in Kilmonivaig Church Hall

Present: John Fotheringham (Chairman), Ian Langley (Vice Chairman), Melvyn Giles (Secretary), Sharon Donald, Jenny Hastings, Val Steele, and Councillors Sammy Cameron, and John Grafton and 8 members of the public.

Apologies: Alison Munro (Treasurer), Christine Clephan, Ian Matheson and Councillor Liz Saggers

Conflict of Interest Declarations: None

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting on 7th October 2025 having been circulated and there being no amendments were approved:
Proposer: Melvyn Giles Seconder: Ian Langley

Matters Arising:

a. **Community Police Officer –** Sgt Paige MacDonald and a colleague attended, and Sgt MacDonald explained her background was in Crime Prevention and offered to set up some public events in our community particularly in relation to scams. Concerns about traffic speeding in our community was expressed.
b. **Transport Scotland/BEAR Scotland** – Due to the recent inclement weather all Trunk Road resurfacing both in progress and due has been delayed. Please check with the Scotland's Traffic Website for current programme.
   The Chairman has written to BEAR Scotland on a variety of issues and still awaits a response. Kate Forbes MSP has not yet given a date for a meeting with either HITRANs or the Chief Executive Bridge although HITRANS has made an initial approach.
   Our Trunk Road priorities remain; Active Travel routes, a pedestrian crossing on the A86 in Spean Bridge, traffic calming on the A86 in Roy Bridge, upgrade the A86 and a safer pedestrian crossing over the Telford Bridge.
   BEAR Scotland have given a detailed report on the procedures to be adopted relating to the disposal of Tailings and Scalpings although it appears that the roads Contractor has a certain amount of leeway concerning disposal.
c. **Highland Council** - The Chairman has written to the Principal Waste Management Officer AGAIN seeking an explanation why our communities do not currently have access to the garden waste service but so far, no reply.
   He has written too about the issues identified in Spean Crecent last month and his request has been referred to Housing as they are responsible for that garden estate.

It is noted that some pruning may have taken place. Also, regarding the issues identified in Roy Bridge but no response from either.

d. **Environmental Standards Scotland –** The ESS has published the consultation results on their Strategy 2026-2031 which has been circulated. As we were one of the 35 organisations to participate it was interesting to see the overall conclusions. Our specific concerns appear to have been supported by most contributors, and we will have to see whether the Scottish Parliament addresses them or not.

e. **Coire Glas & EARBA Pumped Storage Schemes –** Kate Forbes MSP sent us an Update on the Cap and Floor Process that both SSE Renewables and Gilkes Energy are engaging in**.**

f. Bunroy Road – The Chairman wrote once again to Highland Council to see if they would attend a meeting with residents prior to the completion of the Road Construction Consent Documentation, or whether they had any other solution to the present impasse. We await a response. He will press for an answer as will our Highland Councillors.

g. **Belford Hospital –** Our thanks to the Vice Chairman for circulating the latest plans.

h. **Government Consultations** – We have finally received the results of the Scottish Government Consultation for Community Benefit for Net Zero Energy Developments which has been circulated. It is a massive document and has not come to any significant recommendations, many predictable, dependent on whether you are a Developer, Council Authority or possible recipient. It will need scrutiny and analysis and may yet be overtaken by the UK Government's own consultation as Energy is a matter reserved to Westminster. It was interesting to note that both SSE Renewables and SSEN participated but Gilkes Energy did not.

i. **Forest Plans** –The Chairman wrote to Scottish Forestry regarding the Mamore and Killiechonate Regeneration Plans before the closing date voicing our concern about the drastic deer culling proposal. Other areas faced with the same issue of deer browsing impacting on regeneration have carried out less drastic culls and had successful seedling growth. We also have concerns about deer moving into village gardens and increasing vehicle collisions if culling became widespread. Mr Eppens of Killiechonate Woodlands explained in some detail about his dilemma relating to improving his woodland protecting regeneration and oak trees but fighting a losing battle against the deer. It was agreed that we would continue to research the issue.

j. **Resilience Committee** – Ian Langley has circulated the Community Council's previous Emergency Plan together with a Community Resilience Plan. Both need updating and the Community Trust has offered the Roy Bridge School Refectory as a Resilience Hub until it is demolished. The Resilience Sub-Committee will explore the options and report back.

Correspondence:

1. **Biodiversity Team in Nature Division of the Scottish Government –** the Publication of The Parallel Roads of Lochaber Site of Special Scientific Interest Nature Conservation Order 2025 which came into effect on 23rd October 2025. Given the Enforcement Action and the repeated failure to adhere to the planning laws despite repeated warnings it is an inevitable conclusion. We will continue to monitor developments.
2. **Remembrance Services –** The Community Council have traditionally participated and laid a wreath on behalf of the community at the Commando Memorial Service on Remembrance Sunday and Sharon Donald will do so this year. However, the War Memorial for the Parish of Kilmonivaig which includes our community is the large Commemorative Window in Kilmonivaig Church and an act of Remembrance takes place there at 11:00 on Sunday 9th November and the Community Council Chairman will lay a wreath there too. We will also work with the Church Kirk Session to have a plaque recognizing its significance placed under the window.
3. **BT –** relating to the Gairlochy Telephone Box. It appears that they must await OFCOM's decision before they can act.
4. **Forestry and Land Scotland** advising the public that due to Storm Amy damage with fallen trees and debris, Trails, Paths, and Forest Roads in Glen Loy, Erracht, Camisky, Mucomir, Loch Arkaig, Clunes and Loch Lochy may be blocked and it will be sometime before all are assessed and fully open again.
5. **Kathy Warner** – feels that Kilmonivaig Church Hall is somewhat remote, lacks a hearing loop and may restrict public attendance. She further suggests that a suggestions box in each of the villages may be appropriate. In the past the Community Council did meet annually in Roy Bridge and Achnacarry, and may look at it again. We did meet in the Primary School, but it became too expensive, and the Church Hall is ideally suited for our needs. The Community Council agreed t5o look at her suggestions.
6. **NHS Highland** – Reminder of NHS Highland's Annual Review at the Conference Suite, MacDonald Resort, Aviemore on Tuesday 16th November.
7. **Linnhe Community Alliance** – The Alliance is still looking for a Secretary. VAL has offered to assist at a cost, or train in the use of AI, and Ward Discretionary Funds may be available. Unlikely to see any progress or meetings in the short term.
8. **An Gearasdan Integrated Transport Forum –** Agenda for meeting on 2nd November, and a plea for more Committee Members**.**
9. **The Highland Sustainable Development Summit Conference and Exhibition** – to be held on the 25/26th November in Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness – Noted.
10. **Hugo Fox** – offering a fully compliant Council Website for £9.99 +VAT a month. Noted but no action.
11. **Community Support** – Invitation to Planning for Progress Drop in Event at Nevis Centre 12th November 1 to 7pm.
12. **Jason Hanlon regarding Race Durare** – seeking guidance for a sandbag race event in the proximity of Spean Bridge. The Chairman will respond.

Treasurer's Report

It was agreed unanimously that the donation for the use of the Church Hall should be £240.

Expenditure this month Wreathes £96, and West Coast Today £39 leaving a balance of £9786.13.

Stronelairg Wind Farm Community Fund Micro Grant: It was agreed than an application from Kathy Warner for £500 for a bridge over a burn in Bunroy was unacceptable in its present form as it had neither the Landowner's written agreement nor an accurate estimate of costs. It was agreed that when both were successfully addressed the application could be resubmitted**.**

Planning:

Planning Application 25/03055/FUL - Coire Glas Hydro Pumped Storage Scheme – Construction of Tunnel, Tunnel Portal, and Portal Apron to accommodate Installation of 400KV Export/ Import electricity cables to connect Coire Glas Generating Station to National Grid at land 4.4KM SW of North Laggan Farmhouse, North Laggan. - It was noted that even SEPA were concerned about the disposal of Rock and Spoil and although the amount generated on this proposal was 600,000 tons SSE Renewables have not been consistent in their policy about disposal so we will contribute to this application to highlight our concerns.

Planning Application 25/03905/FUL- Erection of House (Amended Proposal 22/04223/FUL) at Land 35m E of Mountain View, Murlaggan, Roy Bridge – This is the ninth application on this site and all but one has been approved. No reason to suspect that the Planners will not approve this application.

Planning Application 25/3956/FUL – Erection of Ancillary Accommodation for Family and Short-Term Letting Use at Land 50m SW of Coire Glas House, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge. On SSSI although not on the area covered by the Nature Conservation Order. Neighbours suffer water supply outages and access track should be brought up to adoptable standards. CC will comment and may object.

Planning Application 25/04104/S36 – Erection and Operation of 19 Wind Turbines for 40 years to a height of 200m high at Beinneun 2 Windfarm, 8km NW of Invergarry.

Planning Application 25/04020/SCOP – Coire Glas Switching Station, Control Buildings and Associated Works at land 1.4km SW of Glen Luie, Invergarry

Any Other Business:
Next Meeting Tuesday 2nd December.
.
Meeting closed at 21:00

Melvyn Giles
Secretary