Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Council held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 2nd December 2025 in Kilmonivaig Church Hall

Present: John Fotheringham (Chairman), Ian Langley (Vice Chairman), Melvyn Giles (Secretary), Jenny Hastings, Christine Clephan, Val Steele, Ian Matheson, and Councillors Sammy Cameron & John Grafton and 1 member of the public.

Apologies: Alison Munro (Treasurer), Sharon Donald, and Councillor Liz Saggers.

Conflict of Interest Declarations: None

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting on 4th November 2025 having been circulated and there being no amendments were approved:
Proposer: Ian Langley Seconder: Jenny Hastings

Matters Arising:

a. **Community Police Officer –** Sgt Paige MacDonald was unable to attend, and in her absence, it was agreed that the Community Council and possibly the Community Trust with Police Scotland would hold an event in the forthcoming months to alert residents to the dangers of Scams.
b. **Transport Scotland/BEAR Scotland** – The Chairman has received a response from both BEAR Scotland and Kate Forbes MSP. The former apologized for the various changes to the resurfacing works on the A82 and A86 which were due to inclement weather, and their Landscape Team will trim the offending hedge across the A82 from Nursery Park in the coming weeks. Kate Forbes has written to Alison Irvine CEO of Transport Scotland requesting an in person meeting with the Chairman at the earliest convenience but in response we have been offered is a virtual meeting with Kate and Ian Woodcock, Transport Scotland's Area Manager. Agreed to offer the Ferret a story on Transport Scotland's failings. Notice of barrier replacement on the A82 north of Luss requiring single lane working with traffic lights between the 8th and 19th December and 5th to 31st January with the exception of Sundays.
It was agreed to report flooding in the Bus Stops at Spean Crescent to BEAR Scotland.
c. **Active Travel** – The Chairman and Keith Hoole of the Connecting Spean and Roy SCIO attended the Active and Sustainable Travel in Rural Communities hosted jointly by the Highlands and Islands Climate Hub and Social Enterprise Academy at Dundreggan Rewilding Centre near Invermoriston. A most interesting course learning about others had tackled the funding and operational difficulties around active travel, and an invaluable networking opportunity as we continue to campaign for active travel provision in our communities. The Chairman has requested a copy of the Route Appraisal Report through Freedom of Information that led Transport Scotland to the

conclusion that the route from Spean to Roy was not cost effective and await its receipt. Although both have been in touch with HITRANS regarding a meeting we still await confirmation of a date.

d. **Highland Council** – A response from Waste Management concerning garden waste was finally received and circulated, but offered no liklihood that our community council would included in the programme of collections. This is unsatisfactory so the Chairman has requested a Freedom of Information Enquiry to determine which community council areas are in receipt of such collections as he will use the information for a formal complaint about the Council.

e. **Environmental Standards Scotland –** The Chairman has written to ESS seeking an update and await their response.

f. **Coire Glas & EARBA Pumped Storage Schemes –** The comprehensive report on the proposed Strathmashie Sub Station linked to the EARBA Pumped Storage Scheme has been published and circulated. They intend to pursue Option 1 and had a meeting with the Laggan Community Council on 27th November to discuss their plan. The next Coire Glas Liaison Group Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 16th December at 7.00pm in Glengarry Village. The Transport Team for SSEN's Skye Reinforcement Project building a worker's camp between Fort Augustus and Invergarry have been in touch to warn us about traffic movements on the A86 and A82 initially between now and Christmas. The Chairman will meet with representatives either w/c 8th December or at the next Community Council Meeting.

g. Deer Management – Two items relating to deer were identified in the last month and made available to the Community Council for their information. The Ferret online investigative journalism published an article titled Deer damage hundreds of Scotland's protected areas, and Val Steele attended and reported on business from the Knoydart Deer Management Group. There appears to be widely different bodies of opinion about the extent of culling required to protect native regeneration with some believing that 10 deer per sq km is sufficient, others 8, 6 or 4 and local estates Jahama, and Killiechonate seeking 1.5. It was agreed that we should ask Ben McKeown of Nature Scot and Joanathan Hart of Jahama to address January's Community Council Meeting.

h. Bunroy Road – As we anticipated Highland Council's Transport Planning Team are adamant that the frontagers to the road are key, and over 50% would have to agree to bringing the current road up to adoptable standards and pay the full cost of such work. By completing the Road Construction Consent, providing detailed engineering drawings and core samples from the road Highland Council would then assess the extent of the work necessary to bring it up to adoptable standards. Without this evidence they are unwilling to assist further. We note that a resident has undertaken some remedial work and we welcome such generosity**.**

It was agreed to include the substance of the communication with Highland Council at the end of the Minutes.

i. **Belford Hospital –** The Vice Chairman attended the Partnering for Progress Event in the Nevis Centre on 12th November in which NHS Highland gave a presentation about the New Hospital complete with Video which was well received by the public present.

j. **Government Consultations** – Each month further consultations are announced. In November the Draft Climate Change Plan, the Agglomerations Noise Action Plan for Scotland, the Scottish Road Works Register Prescribed Fee Regulations 2026, and the

k. **Resilience Committee** – Two proposals have been circulated to Community Councillors for their consideration, and both authors were given the opportunity to address the meeting prior to a vote being taken about which one to adopt.
It was agreed by a majority that the Plan produced by the Secretary and Val Steele would be our preferred option and Melvyn would takeover as Chair of the Sub-committee.

l. **War Memorial** – The Spean Bridge. Roy Bridge and District War Memorial registered with the Imperial War Museum is indeed the Commemorative Window in the Chancel at Kilmonivaig Parish Church. Both the Kirk Session and Community Council are anxious that it is recognized as such and a brass plaque is mounted both inside and out to commemorate the fallen of our parish that gave their lives in both World Wars.

Correspondence:

1. **Local Energy Scotland's Annual Conference** will be held on 10th December at the Strathclyde Technology and Innovation Centre, 99 George Street, Glasgow between 10am and 5pm. The Community Council was circulated to see if anyone was able to attend.
2. **Planning Aid Newsletter –** available for circulation on request.
3. **Gairlochy Red Telephone Box –** The outstanding matter has been successfully concluded and the community will be adopting the box.
4. **Halkirk and District Community Council** – intimated their decision not to proceed with a motion to Highland Council meantime due to lack of interest.
5. **James Mackie** - regarding a meeting at Talla Nan Ros (Main Hall), King Street, Kingussie on 10th December from 7pm to 8.30pm to discuss how erosion scars on the Allt Mor a tributary of the River Spey are responsible for sediment build up and flooding in Kingussie. Erosion Scars on other rivers and urgent requirement for peatland restoration will be highlighted.
6. **Holyrood Insight** – Public Sector Complaints Conference at COSLA Edinburgh on 24th February 2026 between 09:30 and 15:45 to learn how Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's Good Complaint Handling Principles has put people at the heart of the process. The community Council feels at £279 +VAT per delegate we will forgo our participation but given our experience that most public bodies try to deflect any complaints and don't learn from criticism it seems a pointless exercise.
7. **Fortnightly Community Support Briefings** – these are circulated for individual Councillors to highlight those that are relevant or worthy of progressing.

8. **Scottish Community Development Centre** – are running a number of online sessions on Trust in Government with your participation and the results shaping the Scottish Government's Open Government's Action Plan 2026 to 2030,
9. **Event Enquiry – Race Durare –** Dot Ferguson has replied to the Organiser with a detailed explanation.
10. **Janis Strachan** – the An Gearasdan Transport Forum December Meeting is cancelled. Next meeting is scheduled for 6th January 2026.
11. **Cameron Kemp –** John Muir Trust Petition who want the Scottish Government to review planning legislation. Wild places must be protected from runaway industrialisation. Communities must be listened to when assessing major energy development. The Chairman signed on behalf of the Community Council.
12. **North Highland Initiative** – an autumnal recap on developments. Noted.
13. **Ian Boyd of the Social Enterprise Academy** writing to let the Community Council know about our upcoming 'Developing Sustainability Residential'. Thanks to funding from the Scottish Government's Ecosystem Pathways Fund, we are offering a fully funded 'Developing Sustainability Residential'. This will look at developing financially sustainable organisations, including ways to increase income and social impact. Participants will leave the residential with new ideas, new connections, and new energy to address the opportunities and the challenges they face. This opportunity is open to all social enterprises, charities, community groups, and third sector organisations in the Highlands It will take place from Monday 02 - Thursday 05 March 2026 at Dundreggan Rewilding Centre in Glenmoriston.This link includes more information and a link to
register: https://your.socialenterprise.academy/course/view.php?id=2656
14. **Scottish Community Councils** – seeking new powers for Community councils in line with English Parish Councils. A template letter has been produced and copies available for Councillors to send to MSPs and Highland councillors.
15. **Linnhe Community Alliance –** It would appear that thanks to the generosity of the Kilmallie Community Council the Secretary issue appears to have been resolved for this year, so a meeting is likely in the New Year.

Treasurer's Report:
There was no report as the Treasurer was absent, but it was agreed that we would pay £36 for annual membership of the Ferret. I was also agreed to upgrade our email address to premium for 6 months at £4.99 per month initially to allow us to link it with our new email address. The current balance is we believe £9786.13.

Stronelairg Wind Farm Community Fund Micro Grants:
Two Applications
Family of 11 year old Swimmer requiring support for transport and accommodation at events – Awarded £250
Spean Bridge Primary School seeking £500 to assist with transport to Panto. – Awarded £490.
It was agreed in principle that we would award £500 to secure two brass plaques one inside and one outside the Commemorative Window which is our District's War Memorial.

Planning:

Planning Application 25/01736/ FUL- Erection of House and Garage. Formation of self contained unit on upper floor of the garage (Plot 1) amended proposal on land 120m NW of Taigh Breagh, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge – To be considered at the South Planning Committee Meeting on 3rd December with recommendation to grant despite Community Council Objection.

Planning Application 25/02655/FUL – Change of use of land, siting of cabin, shed , formation of hard standing, erection of fence (in retrospect) at land 190m SW of Darroch Cottage, Spean Bridge. – To be considered at the South Planning Committee Meeting on 3rd December with the recommendation of refusal

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. As Standalone does not conform with NPF4 Policy 17 so CC objected.

Planning Application 25/04127/FUL – Extension above Garage to form short term letting unit 10m N of Balcary, West Tirindrish, Spean Bridge. – Community Council maintained its objection on the grounds insufficient parking, no disabled access, residential property with one pod already.

Planning Application 25/04145/FUL- Proposed Pod at Land 15m NW of East Park, Bunroy, Roy Bridge - Approved

Any Other Business:
Next Meeting Tuesday 6th January 2026.
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Meeting closed at 20:30

Melvyn Giles
Secretary

An Extract of a letter from Highland Council's Transport Planning Team on Bunroy Road as they deal with Road Construction Consent (RCC) applications for the building of new roads and have background knowledge of the road adoption process with regards to the current legislation.

Section 16 of the Roads (Scotland) Act sets out the process for applications for private roads to be adopted by a Local Authority.

Section 16 states that a private road can be adopted as long as it built to the standards set out in Section 13 in the Act **or** the Local Authority are satisfied that it is built to an acceptable standard **or** the road has been built through an RCC application. Given the age of the road it is highly unlikely that there is an RCC application for the road and after looking at images on Google Streetview, the Council would require remedial works to bring the road up to an adoptable standard.

Therefore, as the road is not currently up to an adoptable standard, we would have to apply the requirements of **Section 13**.

Section 13 requires the 'frontagers' of the private road to bring the road up to an adoptable standard and states that at least 50% of the frontagers must agree to the works and agree to pay the full cost of the works required. 'Frontagers' are the owners of the land fronting or abutting the road.

In terms of the required remedial works the Transport Planning Team would liaise with colleagues in the Local Area Team to determine what would be required. However, a quick look at Google Streetview but accept these images are from April 2022 so this is not an up to date or exhaustive list of the possible issues:

- Various potholes – especially on the approach to the railway bridge
- Verge overrun
- Locations where edge strengthening may be required
- No passing places
- No clear turning head at the proposed end of the adopted road

In the past we have asked for 'core samples' to determine the make up of the road to make sure that structurally, the road is sound. However, the requirement for this level of assessment would have to be agreed with my colleagues in the Area.

With regards to the bridge which is currently owned and maintained by Network Rail, as they are a 'responsible authority' they 'could' maintain ownership of the bridge whilst the Council 'could' adopt the 'road' on the bridge deck. If the bridge was owned by a member of the public, as they are not a 'responsible authority' the ownership of the bridge would need to be transferred to the Council in order to adopt the road. So, although in theory the Council would not need to take ownership of the bridge to adopt the road, Network Rail may have a different opinion, so any plans to adopt the road would require liaison and discussion with Network Rail. I'm not sure what it's like now, but the images from 2022 show that the surfacing on the bridge deck is in poor condition. Further investigative work would be required to determine what works are required on the bridge deck and these can be quite complicated and costly. Some key issues for surfacing on bridge decks are: waterproofing, drainage, thermal expansion, adhesion and durability.

As I said earlier, the full extent of works required would need to be assessed with our colleagues in the Area Office and the works approved through a shortened form of a Road Construction Consent application. I would also advise that its possible that you will be required to provide some detailed engineering drawings for an RCC application, depending on the works needed. Here is a link to more information about that process and you should be aware that although there is no charge for an RCC application, inspection fees are required. https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/767/road_construction_consent

I hope this information is helpful but if you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Transport Planning Team.