Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Council held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 3rd February 2026 in Kilmonivaig Church Hall

Present: John Fotheringham (Chairman), Melvyn Giles (Secretary), Alison Munro (Treasurer) Sharon Donald, Christine Clephan, Val Steele, Ian Matheson, Linda Taylor, and Councillor John Grafton and 2 members of the public.

Apologies: Ian Langley, Jenny Hastings, Councillors Liz Saggers and Sammy Cameron.

Conflict of Interest Declarations: None

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting on 13th January 2026 having been circulated and there being no amendments were approved:
Proposer: Melvyn Giles Seconder: Val Steele

Presentation by Phoebe Caulfield of Balfour Beatty regarding the delivery of Worker's Camp Units for the Skye Reinforcement.
Following previous correspondence and a presentation at the EARBA Community Alliance Meeting on 19th January the Chairman had invited Phoebe to give a presentation to the Community Council.
Phoebe started by explaining that following the EARBA Community Alliance Meeting where concerns had been expressed about the A889 and A86 Trunk Roads, the 20 MPH Speed Limit in Spean Bridge and avoiding school drop off and collection times significant changes had been made to the programme.
The number of Units remain the same namely between now and June 2026 we are anticipating 68 vehicle movements, delivering 136 sleeper units, with a further 20 movements, delivering 40 units, following in October. These deliveries will be police escorted on 1-2 days per week, and should reach Spean Bridge at 12:30, 13:30 and 14:30 each day. These deliveries are with the caveat that the schedule may change with weather, staffing, demand on site etc. but I will endeavour to inform you of major changes.
The haulier has also informed me that all drivers undergo CPC training and are continuously updated on all road-related matters. If there are concerns regarding speed near schools, we would advise you make direct contact with Police Scotland to explore this further. As a project, they are also working with local schools to create materials to pass on to drivers to advise of the importance of driving safely and behaving on the roads further reinforcing this and opening up the conversation with students.
When operational it is expected those working on the project will work 11 days on and 3 off and will travel to the camp via the A82 and A86.
The Chairman thanked Phoebe for the presentation and reacting positively to our concerns.

Matters Arising:

a. **Community Police Officer –** Sgt Paige MacDonald was unavailable so report held over until March.

b. **Transport Scotland/BEAR Scotland** – Whilst appreciative of the work undertaken to clear the fallen trees principally on the A92 at Letterfinlay the Chairman has written to BEAR Scotland with the suggestion that now is the time to remove all the mature trees alongside the trunk road at this point and replace with new planting and await response.
   BEAR's Connextions Newsletter available on request.
c. **Active Travel:** Keith Hoole of the Connecting Spean and Roy SCIO has been leading the dialogue with HITRANS and they have proposed an online meeting on 24th February. The Chairman will attend.
d. **Highland Council** – Separately two public comments praising the tree felling alongside the Loch Arkaig Road have been passed to Highland Council.
e. **Environmental Standards Scotland –** Nothing to Report.
f. **Coire Glas & EARBA Pumped Storage Schemes –** The Chairman and Secretary attended the EARBA Community Alliance Meeting on 19th January 2026 and a report of proceedings was circulated. Cap and Floor negotiations are proceeding with OFGEM but both pose significant impact on our lives, and nobody in authority is listening.
   Given the various roadblocks we have encountered in trying to ensure consent conditions are not undermined we have asked the Ferret Investigative Journalists if they might make enquiries, and await their decision.
g. **Place Plans** – The Secretary has been in touch with Highland Council who have confirmed changed dates for our Place Plans to be included in the revised West Highlands and Islands Local Development Plan. The onus is now on us to amend our plans to ensure our contribution meets the new deadlines. The Secretary will produce and circulate a paper for comment on how we should proceed.
h. Belford Hospital – in the absence of the Vice Chairman nothing to report.
i. **Government Consultations** – Each month further consultations are announced. We continued to monitor them and noted recently are Family Law Consultation, Onshore Electricity Generation increasing the Threshold for applications under the Electricity Act and Extension of the Freedom of Information to include Care Homes.
j. **Resilience Committee** – The Secretary praised Val Steele for her efforts to date. She had attended the Lochaber Community Partnership Meeting and gained useful information from other members. It is proposed that the Community Council is split up into zones or clusters with someone taking responsibility for organising action, A Questionnaire will be produced and distributed as wide as possible

k. **NESO National Energy System Operator –** The Chairman attended the Online Webinar. Our energy system is planned and operated in a way that considers the interactions across electricity, gas and other forms of energy. NESO considers the relationships with other sectors, such as water, transport, telecommunications and industry. A key part of NESO is the ability to give independent advice on how to plan and run the energy system. They look at the whole picture, considering all the different problems and the choices that must be made. Their goal is to find the best outcomes for people who use energy. They bring

together eight activities needed to deliver plans, manage, and run the energy system, both now and in the future. Bringing these activities together in one organisation encourages holistic thinking on the most cost-efficient and sustainable solutions. It was interesting and worthy of monitoring.

l. Deer Management – The Chairman had researched the number of Deer Management Groups in our Community Council Area and found that there were four. Whether we should expand our participation will be decided after Ben McKeown of Nature Scot addresses us.

Correspondence:

1. **Fortnightly Community Support Briefings –** these are circulated for individual Councillors to highlight those that are relevant or worthy of progressing.
2. **Lochaber Community Partnership –** appear to be inviting us to their online meetings and the Chairman has highlighted Transport and Connectivity and Community Resilience as two Themes for 2026 that would most interest us.
3. **Highland Council's Budget Challenge Community Council Engagement South –** As the online meeting clashed with our Community Council Meeting, we were unable to attend.
4. **Councillor John Grafton regarding the Visitor Levy Amendment Scotland Bill** – having circulated the relevant papers Councillor Grafton was looking for comments from the Community Council. An interesting debate followed and although the majority were in favour of a levy no figure was proposed.
5. **Highland Council** Local Governance Review by Scottish Government Webinar 26th February 6- 7.30 pm.
6. **Flood Risk Management Plans** passed to Resilience Sub Committee.
7. **Lochaber Community Partnership Committee's Meeting is on Resilience –** After ignoring Community Councils they are now circulating us and inviting us to TEAM's meetings online. This Meeting is about Resilience and the Sub Committee has arranged to get the promotional information.
8. **Invitation to the Highland Community Council Convention Round Table** on the impact of Major Energy Infrastructure on our Communities on 24th February 1 to 3pm at Scottish Parliament, Holyrood, Edinburgh. Noted but we would not be attending.
9. **West Highland Community Rail Partnership** AGM on 14th February from 1.30pm in Duncansburgh Church Hall.
10. **Dot Ferguson – The Commando Memorial Collection Box** has been removed as it was severely damaged by rust. There will be no collection box until a new facility is in place.
11. **Highland CIC** – are launching a Highland Sustainable Investment Fund and a Highland Renewables Exchange Newsletter.
12. **BBC Debate Night** – the BBC are looking for audience members for Debate Night on 11th February in Fort William.

Treasurer's Report: Current Bank Balance was £9135.22 with only expenditure Chairman's Travel and Expenses £251.02.

Stronelairg Wind Farm Community Fund Micro Grants: None. Although it was agreed that in principle we would look favourably on suggestion boxes for the villages.

Planning:

Planning Application 25/04133/FUL – Change of Use of Agricultural Land and the siting of 4 units (3 letting and 1 laundry unit) and associated infrastructure for holiday letting purposes at Land 80m NW of Riverwood House, Bohenie, Roy Bridge.

Planning Application 25/04694/PNO – Erection of Agricultural Shed (Storage of Machinery and Tools) 108 sqm at land 169m NW of Riverwood House, Bohenie, Roy Bridge.
The Secretary submitted planning submissions for both Bohenie Planning Applications to highlight our concerns about development in important geological areas in the SSSI.

Planning Application 26/00127/PIP – Erection of House and Garage at land 80m W of Springburn House Stronaba, Spean Bridge
Examined to see if on SSSI but found outside**.**

Planning Application 26/00148/FUL-Erection of House and Agricultural Building (renewal of 22/5365/FUL) at land 700m SW of Glenspean Lodge Hotel, Roy Bridge.
Checked with Planning Authority why so scant information. Simplified Procedure permitted. Is on the SSSI and doubtful whether it conforms with NPF4 Policy 17.

Planning Application 26/00183/PNO – Peatland Restoration Class 20A at land 2300m SE of Balailstair South Laggan, Spean Bridge – Approved.

Planning Application 26/00348/PNO – Formation of Forestry Track Class18 52m long 4 m wide timber harvesting HGV to turning points at land 2175m SW of Torgulbin, Tulloch, Roy Bridge.- Found to be in Laggan Community Council Area.

Any Other Business:
The Secretary had written to Nature Scot about permitted works in a SSSI and had received an interesting and informative reply which was noted.
The Chairman is attending an Online Training Course on Tuesdays from 17th February for 10 weeks. After a discussion it was agreed to change the meeting dates to the first Wednesday of each month for the next 3 months.
Next Meeting Wednesday 4th March 2026.

Meeting closed at 20:30

Melvyn Giles
Secretary