Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry SCIO
Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 21st November 2024

Present: 11 Full Members (Membership 104 so meeting quorate) plus 2 Associate Members

Apologies: Melvyn Giles, Margaret Horner, Charlotte Hatto, Ian Matheson, Alison Hyde, Ben Hadfield.

Minutes of 2023 AGM held on 18th January 2024 – Having been circulated at the meeting, the minutes were approved with no amendments.
Proposer: Ross Maclennan; Seconder: Ian Langley

Community Development Officer Update – Tony Perriam gave an update presentation to the meeting via Power Point, focussing on

1. Projects Completed over 2023-24: the Community Firewood Bank**,** where there had been 73 deliveries over Winter 2023-24 to 43 households with residents over 75 and the Spean Bridge Playpark, where new equipment was installed by Caledonia Play in May after a successful fundraising drive.

   With the agreement of the partners a defibrillator was planned at Mhor Health in Spean Bridge to provide additional coverage beyond existing units at Spean Bridge Fire Station/Community Centre, Roy Bridge Memorial Hall, Spean Bridge Golf Club and (on matchdays) Lochaber Camanachd Club. £350 had been paid towards Spean Bridge Primary School excursions, with a further £2,000 earmarked by the trustees for the school's use.

2. Spean Bridge Community Garden and Woodland: following our earlier Expression of Interest in July 2023, a formal Asset Transfer Request for Highland Council's ground around the Community Centre had been submitted by the SCIO in June on behalf of the community. An entry date was not expected before February 2025, although the consideration would remain at £1 despite a valuation by the District Valuer at £23,000. We have requested a tree survey.

   A Steering Group has been identified to co-ordinate fundraising, consultation with residents and open days. Following the transfer, the area is expected to incorporate allotments, a polytunnel, the existing playpark, a sensory garden and a riverside footpath

3. Roy Bridge Primary School: Our October 2023 Expression of Interest has been approved in principle. A forthcoming Feasibility Study of £32,868 is now fully funded (including for contingencies) by four grants totalling £36,479 from the Communities Regeneration Fund, the Scottish Land Fund (Stage One) and SSE Renewables. No SCIO contribution should be necessary. The Study includes reports by our architect, structural engineer, topographical surveyor, quantity surveyor, and CHT. It will also include an open market valuation.

   The next stage will be an enhanced Housing Needs Survey by the Communities Housing Trust (CHT), and then a consultation and open event co-hosted with both CHT and our architect. If a formal Asset Transfer Request is then approved by

Highland Council, any subsequent purchase will be underwritten by the Scottish Land Fund, who will pay up to 95% of open market value.

A possible mix could include affordable housing, business units, a holiday let and the continued lease by *Taigh na Sgoile* of the former schoolhouse. Rents could be at social/affordable, mid-market or market levels, depending on funders' stipulations and sustainability.

4. Roy to Spean Cycle/Foot Path; given its prominence within our Community Action Plan as an overwhelming priority for residents, Tony touched on the continuing challenges faced by the Community Council and the separate Active Travel SCIO.

   Whilst the Roy Bridge to Inverroy upgrade was scheduled for 2025, the longer and crucial Inverroy to Spean Bridge section had still to overcome route and funding issues. Even the Leanachan to Spean Bridge link, initially touted as a legacy to the 2023 Downhill World Cup, had stalled due to planning considerations.

The Chairman thanked Tony for his update and for his continued commitment to the charity.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman's Report for 2023-24 having been circulated, there were no questions, and it was adopted. A copy accompanies these minutes.
Proposer: Ian Langley; Seconder: Brian Smith

Treasurer's Report: In the absence of the Treasurer the Chairman read out the Treasurer's Report accompanying the annual accounts for 2023-24 which had been circulated. The accounts were then approved by the members without question.
Proposer: Ian Langley; Seconder: Ross Maclennan

Election of Trustees: A third of the Trustees are due to stand down each year but are eligible for re-election. There are currently 11 trustees.

The following Trustees have decided to retire at the AGM and not seek re-election: John Fotheringham (Chair), Brian Donald (Treasurer) and Ross Maclennan. In addition, Christine Clephan and Keith Hoole stood down as Trustees during the year.

The Chairman thanked the retiring Trustees for their time, freely given, and their contribution to the direction and success of the charity over the years. In particular, the Treasurer Brian Donald was singled out by the Chair for his steadfast commitment in the role since the inception of the SCIO in 2012. Tributes to all the departing Trustees are attached to the Chaiman's Report.

The following Trustees remain in post: Sharon Donald (Secretary), Ian Langley, Brian Smith, Melvyn Giles, Margaret Horner, Valerie Steele, Charlotte Hatto and Rik Eppens.

The SCIO's longstanding Independent Examiner Bob Lee has also decided to stand down this year. Voluntary Action Lochaber examined our annual accounts for the first time, an arrangement that is expected to continue.

As Vice Chair of the Community Council and a longstanding SCIO Trustee, Ian Langley then outlined the remarkable achievements of John Fotheringham in his time as Chairman of the SCIO and proposed a Vote of Thanks. All present heartily endorsed the sentiment.

Two new Trustees were appointed *in absentia* by the meeting, having previously indicated their willingness to stand:

Joanna Kotula	Proposer: John Forheringham; Seconder: Ian Langley
Eilidh Maitland	Proposer: Sharon Donald; Seconder: Brian Smith

Election of Office Bearers - The following were duly elected:

Chair - Sharon Donald	Proposer Ian Langley; Seconder Valerie Steele
Treasurer – Valerie Steele	Proposer John Fotheringham; Seconder Liz Fotheringham
Secretary – Ian Langley	Proposer John Fotheringham; Seconder Ross Maclennan

Any Other Business:

A generous and unexpected donation of £2,000 had recently been received from Highland Actuarial Solutions of Upper Inverroy, who were thanked by the members present. The gift would be suitably acknowledged on our website.

As retiring Treasurer, Brian Donald passed on his thanks via Sharon for the support shown to him by the Trustees and members over the years and endorsed Ian Langley's tribute to the outgoing Chairman.

The Chair thanked all for attending and the Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Ian Langley, Secretary