Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Council held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 4th August 2026 in Kilmonivaig Church Hall.

Present: John Fotheringham (Chairman), Sharon Donald, Christine Clephan, Jenny Hastings, Ian Matheson, Linda Taylor, and Councillors John Grafton, Liz Saggers and 6 members of the public.

Apologies: Melvyn Giles, Alison Munro, Val Steele, and Ian Langley.

Conflict of Interest Declarations: None

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting on 7th July 2026 having been circulated and there being no amendments were approved:

Proposer: Ian Matheson Seconder: Sharon Donald

Presentation by Diane Baum of the Loch Abar Mòr Partnership

Loch Abar Mor are currently running a consultation on the potential reintroduction of beavers to the River Lochy catchment. This follows the process outlined in the Scottish Beaver Strategy and, depending on the outcome of the consultation, could lead to an application to NatureScot for a licence to release two or three beavers into the catchment at 6 sites. They want to engage with stakeholders to understand their views, and to consider the effects beavers could have and what could be done to manage and mitigate any negative impacts. The public consultation began in July and include a mail shot, drop-in events and online communications. If they decide to proceed it would not happen before late 2027 at the earliest The Chairman thanked Diane for her presentation.

Matters Arising:

a. **Community Police Officer** – PC McDonough attended and highlighted the unfortunate number of RTC had happened on our two trunk roads the A82 and A86 this year. Speeding and dangerous driving appeared to be the culprits and under staffed Police Scotland were endeavouring to tackle the issue. He will remind Inspector Anderson that we still await a response to our query about the lack of police presence at a site visit which descended into chaos after the requested attendance failed to materialize. Our problem with unconsented works and possible criminal behaviour was highlighted by members of the public present as was the theft of timber from a Forest and Land depot in Glen Roy Forest. The Chairman thanked PC McDonough for listening and presenting some solutions.
b. **Transport Scotland/BEAR Scotland** – BEAR's Scotland's Summer Newsletter has been circulated. We note that other villages are enjoying new pedestrian crossings and Active Travel Construction but not us.

Overnight carriageway resurfacing is taking place on the A82 North and South Arden Roundabout and at Luss from 2nd August to 16th September. Convoy Vehicle will escort vehicles at 10mph through roadworks.

It is noted that there are traffic lights at Kinlochlaggan on the A86 where a narrow section appears to have suffered subsidence. The Chairman to write to BEAR Scotland and ask if the damage is attributed to preparatory works at EARBA or the ongoing transport of Units to SSEN's Worker's Camp at Aberchalder and ascertain when it will be fixed.

The Chairman will ask BEAR Scotland once again about clearing the culvert adjacent to the Roy Bridge Community Garden.

c. **Highland Council -** The Chairman drew the attention of those present to the difficulty he had experienced in getting replies to correspondence from Senior Officials in Highland Council and it was agreed he should write to the Chief Executive seeking an explanation and asking when action will be taken against developers and landowners that flout planning legislation.

d. **Enforcement Charter Amendment –** The Chairman circulated the Highland Community Councils and received fifteen positive responses to date. It was agreed that he would now circulate all Ward Councillors in the Highlands seeking their support and ask the two Chairman of both the North and South Planning Committees to table it at their next meeting. Councillor Saggers agreed to raise it with the South Planning Manager at the South Planning Committee Meeting on 6th August.

e. **Coire Glas & EARBA Pumped Storage Schemes –** The Chairman and Secretary met with Angus MacDonald MP regarding Cap and Floor, and Community Benefit for both Coire Glas and EARBA. We are anxious to determine from the Energy Minister, what financial guarantees that Gilkes Energy have given OFGEM of their capacity to build the Pumped Storage Scheme and Commission it by 2033. We were also keen to know if the UK Government were going to set a rate for Community Benefit as under Cap and Floor Arrangements the Taxpayer would be subsidising the scheme. He will seek answers to both questions and report back. The Chairman had spent some time reading the OFGEM consultation material on Cap and Floor for Long Duration Pumped Storage and if the UK Government were going to reach their 7400MW target by 2033 both Coire Glas and EARBA would have to be built as they are by far the biggest schemes.

f. **Nature Scot** – Nothing to Report

g. Environmental Standards Agency – Susan Jaconelli has written to the Chairman thanking him for the updated information and promising to draw some conclusions on our case shortly. She has focussed on agencies duties within environmental legislation, and whether there are effectiveness issues with that legislation particularly how inter agency working is managed for the fulfilment of general duties to protect the environment.

h. Belford Hospital – Nothing to Report.

i. **Resilience Committee** – Nothing to report.

Correspondence:

1. **FEARNA –** The Chairman noticed a DPEA Appeal whilst monitoring their Website on FEARNA PSH which we had not been consulted although we had been an objector. It was agreed that we would monitor events but let our objection stand without the need for further involvement.
2. **Highland Council –** The Call for Sites Survey to the Highland Local Development Plan has been circulated and must be completed by 18th September if anyone wishes to contribute.
3. **Fortnightly Community Support Briefings –** these are circulated for individual Councillors to highlight those that are relevant or worthy of progressing.
4. **Robert Wallace of Tilhill –** Glas Dhoire Forest Plan Review circulated and noted.
5. **Forest and Land Scotland –** Notification of instances of wood being stolen from a worksite close to the entrance of Glen Roy Forest. Police Scotland have been informed and FLS are taking steps to restrict vehicular access and increase staff patrols. There is a Health and Safety risk as interfering with stacked timber could compromise their stability and lead to collapse.
6. **New Powers for Scottish Community Councillors –** Newsletter 10 available for circulation and their Survey closes mid August.
7. **Climate Leadership Opportunity for Young People within Communities –** Circulated and Noted.
8. **Robert Hooper –** Regarding the unconsented works at Plot 2 Gairlochy, Spean Bridge INV57050. There is considerable activity 7 vehicles, a caravan, a container, and a pallet shed, and what appears to be a car repair business on the site but no planning approval. Highland Council appear unwilling to act. Scrutiny of the deeds suggests the owner is in breach. Both Councillors Grafton and Saggers will follow up and the Chairman will highlight in his submission to the Chief Executive.
9. **Finley Armstrong – on behalf Angus MacDonald MSP –** Angus shared his latest report Remote Scotland Spiralling towards Unviability which has been circulated. The Chairman highlighted the essential points and we will continue to maintain dialogue with our MP to try and remedy some of the injustices.

Treasurer's Report:
In the Treasurer's absence the Chairman reported a balance of £7982.09 which included £250 from SSDT courtesy of Rik Eppens and the Chairman will write to thank him.

Stronelairg Wind Farm Community Fund Micro Grants:
An application from Ben Nevis Vets for £500 toward the rehabilitation and care for Kaiser Roy, the stray Cat found limping in Roy Bridge. Unfortunately owing to the severity of the

injury amputation of the limb was considered the most appropriate action to give Kaiser Roy a pain free life but costs had escalated to £2000. It was agreed by a majority of 4 to 1 to make an award of £500, but not to court publicity and to suggest the cat is rehomed in our Community Council Area.

Planning:

DPEA Appeal: ANA-270-2003 – Relating to an Appeal of an Enforcement 25/00134/ENF At Land 90m South of Sonas, Kilmonivaig, Spean Bridge PH34 4EX – We were unaware of this quite extensive issue, and applaud the Enforcement Team's actions to date. We will monitor the appeal to DPEA and if it is refused, we will seek removal of the offending material quickly.

Planning Application 26/00407/FUL – Erection of Hut and Retrospective Composting Toilet at land 115m NE of Inverlair Bridge, Tulloch, Roy Bridge – The Community Council objected but Planners are recommending grant at the South Planning Committee on 6th August. This will be the third Hut in the near locality**.**

Planning Application 26/00920/FUL- Alteration to Hotel and Installation of Pods to form 55 Letting Bedrooms, façade upgrade, new wall, new pergolas, and formation of 44 parking spaces at Spean Bridge Hotel – Withdrawn, but we will monitor to ensure no work undertaken without planning approval.

Planning Application 26/01905/FUL – Erection of Short-Term Letting Unit at land 20m W of 5 West Tirindrish, Spean Bridge. Noted. It was agreed that we should have a policy on the continued expansion of second homes and holiday lets in our communities as we are steadily reaching saturation point.

Planning Application 26/02081/PNO – Erection of Agricultural Storage Building at land 1.25 m NW of Tirindrish Steading, Spean Bridge. – Approved

Planning Application 26/02605/FUL – Erection of House, Shed, and Associated Drainage at Land 45m SE of Schoolwood, Roy Bridge – with hindsight and on reflection we have submitted an objection to the Shed, whilst remaining in support of the house erection.

Planning Application 26/003036/FUL – Siting of cabin for short-term letting at land 50m SW of Corrie Glas, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge. – We are monitoring this application and are in discussion with Nature Scot. We may seek a meeting with Planning regarding the comments attributed to a Senior Planning Officer**.**

Planning Application 26/03066/FUL – Formation of ATV Track at land 1700m NW of Ardecive House, Achnacarry, Spean Bridge – Approved.

Planning Application 26/02555/FUL – Gin Distillery at Moy Farm Banavie, Fort William – Approved.

Any Other Business:

Next Meeting Tuesday 1st September 2026.
It was reported that the amount of rubbish in the Woollen Mill Car Park is causing concern and the Chairman will write to those managing the Car Park.

Meeting closed at 20:30.

John Fotheringham
Chairman