



**STRATHNAIRN  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
General Meeting Number 342  
Farr Hall  
7.30pm  
MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup> October 2026  
Draft Minutes**



**Present:**

**SNCC Members:** Phil MacIntosh (PM, Chair), Ian MacLean (IM, Treasurer), Rob Atkinson (RA), Maria Cockburn (MC), Ian Hunt (IH), Lorna McConachie (LM, Secretary), Beth Rose (BR), Aileen Taylor (AT).

**HC Members:** Cllr David Fraser (DF).

**Associate Member:** Allan Martin (AM).

**Members of the Public:** Mark Bessell (MB), Julie Macrae (JM), (mentioned in the minutes), and 2 others.

**1. Initial Meeting Following Interim Community Council Election**

Cllr DF assumed chair to confirm the newly elected Community Councillors: Rob Atkinson, Maria Cockburn and Beth Rose. No change to the office bearers; Chair (Phil MacIntosh), Treasurer (Ian MacLean), and Secretary (Lorna McConachie). Cllr DF handed over the chair to PM.

**2. Apologies**

Doug Meiklejohn (DM),

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> September 2026: Proposed (MC), Seconded (BR).

**4. Declaration of Interest**

Members discussed when declarations of interest should be made and how they should be recorded in the minutes. The discussion also considered how declarations should be handled when members take part in decisions or hold financial responsibilities. Motion (RA), Proposed (MC) and seconded (BR).

IH advised the CC that as a director the Community Benefit Fund and Daviot Hall Board he would not take part in discussions relating to the SCBF unless he deemed it pertinent to do so. PM advised that as a board member of Farr Fitness he would not take part in discussions relating to Farr Fitness unless he deemed it pertinent to do so.

**5. Matters arising from minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> September 2026**

- a) Item 12, SCBF Aberarder Wind Farm. The statement was corrected to read that SSE have accepted some of SCBF's requested changes, but not all. Feedback from SSE Legal on various points is outstanding.
- b) Item 22 Appendix I. **Action: Highland Council** is to ask the Civil Aviation Authority to consider turning the whole of the Highlands into a Transponder Mandatory Zone. This would require all aircraft in Highlands to be equipped with a transponder, which would

then turn on any turbine lights when the aircraft was in their vicinity, meaning that the turbine lights would normally be off.

## 6. Local Place Plan

Resident feedback reinforces the need for regular updates to the LPP.

## 7. Community Policing Report and local issues

The Community Police Street Surgery will return to Farr Community Hall on Wednesday 28 October and will take place at the café. PC Kirsteen MacDonald, Community Beats Officer, and PC Josh Dempster, Interventions and Preventions, will attend. The community beats team can be contacted at: [HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk](mailto:HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk). Details on the Strathnairn website. ([strathnairn.org.uk](http://strathnairn.org.uk)).

## 8. Financial Report (Submitted by Ian MacLean via WhatsApp)

The current bank balance is £34,488.97, following payments totalling £15,139.55 since the last meeting. All invoices were checked and verified prior to payment. Approval was sought through the Community Council's WhatsApp channel, with confirmation received from the majority of Councillors before payments were processed.

### Payments Made Since Last Meeting

| Description                                   | Amount     |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|
| Yellow Cherry – Annual Website Hosting        | £290.30    |
| Omniscot – October Email/Microsoft 365        | £90.00     |
| Minute Secretary – August and September       | £130.00    |
| Project Specialist – 29 March to 31 May       | £5,062.50  |
| Project Specialist – 1 June to 2 August       | £5,062.50  |
| Project Specialist – 3 August to 27 September | £4,500.00  |
| Bank Service Charges                          | £4.25      |
| Total Payments                                | £15,139.55 |

### Current Fund Balances

| Fund               | Balance    |
|--------------------|------------|
| Project Specialist | £29,371.47 |
| Local Place Plan   | £2,695.60  |
| Events             | £0.00      |
| External Support   | £68.71     |
| Small Projects     | £400.00    |
| Unrestricted Funds | £1,953.19  |
| Total              | £34,488.97 |

### Financial Position

The Community Council continues to hold a substantial overall bank balance. However, the majority of these funds remain restricted for specific projects and purposes.

The Events Fund has now been fully cleared, with the remaining £1,959.47 offset against the Project Specialist grant payment received from SCBF. This adjustment has been reflected in the fund balances above.

The External Support Fund has also reduced to just £68.71, following expenditure on website hosting, email services and meeting secretary costs. An application for further External Support funding for 2026/27 is being submitted to SCBF to help maintain these essential services.

The unrestricted funds currently stand at £1,953.19, which remains relatively limited for general Community Council running costs. The overall bank balance has been reconciled to £34,488.97.

**Action:** IM and MB to discuss.

Process for Dark Skies payments discussed and clarified. **Action:** MB to prepare delegation of authority document to define clear process for payment of invoices. **Action:** MC point of contact for Dark Skies with MB.

## **9. Planning Application and updates (Submitted by Ian Hunt)**

### **a) New**

- i. Removal of S75. Woodlands, Upper Faillie, Daviot.
- ii. Erection of extension. Culclachy House, Nairnside.
- iii. Erection of three houses. Land 160m NW of Bell Hagg, Daviot.
- iv. Formation of access The Doune, Daviot.

### **b) Updated**

- i. Erection of house and garage w/ancillary annexe, and formation of access
- ii. Land 80m West of Bruachan, Daviot, Agreed.
- iii. Erection of house. Land 495m NE of Daviot Lodge, Daviot, Agreed.
- iv. Erection of house, garage, garden room and formation of access Land 130m West of Bracken Cottage, Withdrawn.
- v. Erection of house, garage, garden room and formation of access. Land 495m NE of Daviot Lodge, Daviot, Withdrawn.
- vi. Change of use from private workshop to commercial workshop. Land 35m North of Lios Nan Giuthas, Farr, Withdrawn.
- vii. Application under Section 42 of the Act for non-compliance with Condition 1 of Planning Permission IN/1997/613 to extend the period of time of extraction. Daviot Quarry, Daviot, Agreed.

## **10. Windfarms (<https://strathnairn.org.uk/windfarms-information/>)**

### **a) Aberarder, SSE Renewables**

- The final base has been poured in the areas covered, paving the way for the next stage of works, including the necessary connections.
- Eilidh Edgar is monitoring driver behaviour, and the SNCC's concerns regarding traffic, and the implementation of the Traffic Management Plan have been taken seriously. The SNCC appreciates the attention given to these concerns.
- A new Project Manager has been appointed, and the SNCC would like to extend its sincere thanks to Gerry Hamill, the departing Project Manager, for all his hard work and support, wishing him every success in his new role.
- Peat restoration work is commencing, with a biodiversity specialist who works with SSE helping to ensure that ecosystems are restored and nurtured. An event is proposed for the evening of 26 November (TBC), providing the community with an opportunity to hear from an ecologist about the restoration work and biodiversity.
- Discussions also took place regarding the repair of the culvert at Flichity, as well as the possibility of the community accessing some outdoor space at the rear of Aberarder School House, excluding the interior of the building.

### **b) Corriegarth 2, BayWa r.e**

No update.

### **c) Lynemore (Galileo)**

To be considered by the South Planning Applications Committee Quarter 3 (autumn) 2026.

### **d) Carn na Saobhaidh, RES (Croachy)**

- RES is consulting on plans for 24 wind turbines, up to 200 metres tall, near Croachy, with a possible battery storage system. This is an opportunity for Strathnairn residents to share

their views on how the development could affect the community. Deadline to respond to RES: 23rd October 2026. Have your say: <https://www.carnnasaobhaidh-windfarm.co.uk/have-your-say/>

- Following further information received after the recent exhibition at Farr Hall, a change to the proposed access route is now required. Residents can comment on the changes through the Energy Consents Unit's Scoping Addendum for Càrn na Saobhaidhe Wind Farm (ECU00005191). Deadline to respond: 3 November 2026

**e) Glenmarkie Windfarm (Vattenfall Wind Power)**

Update due in Autumn. See Strathnairn website. ([strathnairn.org.uk](http://strathnairn.org.uk))

**f) Kyllachy Wind Farm (Wind Estate)**

No update

**g) Glenkirk Wind Farm (Energiekontor UK Ltd)**

No update

**h) Farr Wind Farm (Nadara)**

Nadara is launching its Student Support Scheme for the ninth year, aiming to encourage students to consider courses related to renewable energy. Further information about the scheme and the application process is available on the Nadara Website.

(<https://nadara.com/news/student-support-scheme-2026-uk>)

## **11. Pumped Storage Hydro Schemes**

**a) Loch na Cathrach (Red John), Statkraft**

No update.

**b) Loch Kemp, Statera: (ECU 00003398)**

Awaiting information from enquiry outcome. It was noted that concerns about Ofgem's decision to support the Loch Kemp pumped-storage hydro scheme under its Cap and Floor funding process have been raised.

**c) Glen Earrach (ECU 00005121)**

Highland Council's planning committee agreed not to object to the proposed Glen Earrach pumped-storage hydro scheme near Loch Ness. The final decision now rests with the Scottish Government ECU.

## **12. Wester Lairgs Quarry**

To be considered by the South Planning Applications Committee Quarter 3-4 2026.

## **13. Strathnairn Community Benefit Fund (MB)**

- Launch of new Micro-Grant. The purpose of the micro grant is to provide a grant, with a low barrier to access, for residents / small groups, to enable access to community funds for a One-Off project or activity that has a benefit to community life. See Facebook and SCBF website.
- Two grants issued; Hogmany Party (£1400) and After School Group (£4000) both running through the SDC.
- October monthly report from Project Specialist requested. Will be issued at the end of October.

## **14. Strathnairn Development Company**

No update.

## **15. Community Halls**

**a) Strathnairn Daviot Hall (IH):**

Funding request to SCBF is due to be submitted soon.

**b) Farr Community Hall: (DM by email)**

At the beginning of September Farr Community Hall engaged the services of an independent Health and Safety consultant to carry out a risk assessment and inspection of the facility. He found a number of areas for improvement which have been addressed with the exception of one matter which has been passed to a contractor for execution.

**16. Strathnairn Website and Newsletter ([strathnairn.org.uk](http://strathnairn.org.uk))**

Newsletter issued 20<sup>th</sup> November. Refer to the website for news, events and project updates.

**17. Road Works and Road Safety**

- a) A resident raised concerns about verge maintenance on the road from Daviot Church to Balnafoich. Overgrown verges, trees and bushes are obstructing passing places and reducing visibility. **Action:** PM to contact Colin Ross.
- b) A speed survey conducted on the B851 near Farr Primary School during the week commencing 23 February recorded an average speed of 26.2 mph and an 85th-percentile speed of 32.9 mph.
- c) Flichity culvert; SSE has proposed carrying out repairs to the culvert at Flichity.
- d) Resurfacing and improvement works are planned for the B851 and B861. The dates and precise extents of the works have not yet been confirmed.
  - B861- Balnafoich Bridge to Balnafoich Crossroads: carriageway strengthening and resurfacing, together with widening on the inside of the bend to improve safety and accommodate traffic more effectively.
  - B861 - Gask: edge repairs, carriageway strengthening and resurfacing.
  - B851 - Littlemill to Dell Farm: carriageway strengthening and resurfacing.
  - B851 - Farr towards Garbole Road: carriageway strengthening and resurfacing, plus a new village gateway at the southern end of Farr. The gateway will include a priority give-way, single-lane entry feature to slow traffic and improve traffic management.

**18. Visitor Levy**

The Highland Council is consulting on a proposed Visitor Levy for overnight stays across the Highlands. The draft proposal includes:

- £5 per room or area/night for hotels, B&Bs, guest houses, short-term lets and similar accommodation for all
- £2 per room or area/night for hostels, campsites and caravan parks for all
- Applies across the Highland Council area
- Would operate for nine months of the year (excluding December, January and February)
- No decision has been made. This consultation is your opportunity to share your views and help shape any future decision.
- Consultation open until 30 November 2026
- Find out more and take part: <https://engage.highland.gov.uk/>; paper copies of the survey are available at any library or service point in Highland.

**19. Short Term Lets**

Highland Council is consulting on proposals for two Short Term Let Control Areas, which could place restrictions on the number of short-term lets in certain areas. Find out more: [Highland Council – Short Term Let Control Areas Consultation](#)

## **20. Correspondence received (via email unless indicated otherwise.)**

- a) Highland Council Colin Ross, B851 Farr school road speeds update.
- b) Community council interim elections update.
- c) SSSEN Community Benefit Funds update.
- d) RES, Community engagement & exhibition on proposed Carn na Saobhaidh Wind Farm follow up.
- e) Colin Ross, Highland Council Loch Kemp – Ground Investigation Works and B851 Traffic feedback.
- f) Loch Kemp Pumped Hydro Storage OfGEM consultation, Tim Eagle MSP.
- g) Loch Kemp Pumped Storage Hydro – OFGEM Consultation and Section 36 PLI Max Bannerman MSP.
- h) Free training series for rural and islands Community Councils - Five consecutive Wednesday evenings 5:30pm-7pm starting 14th October - 11th November 2026 Online via Teams.
- i) Highland Council Inverness Community Council Forum Draft Minute.
- j) Energy Consents Unit; Scoping Addendum for Carn na Saobhaidh Wind Farm (ECU00005191), approximately 22km south of Inverness – Respond by 3 November 2026.

## **21. List of Events, Meetings and dates for attendance and interest**

- a) Aberarder Wind Farm Grid Connection Project Update – Kirsty McNamara, Community Liaison Manager, and Ryan Bell, Community Investment Manager (responsible for working with the community to set up and manage the community benefit fund associated with the transmission infrastructure). Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October, 7pm to 7.30pm, Farr Community Hall.
- b) The Community Police Street Surgery will return to Farr Community Hall, on Wednesday 28 October at the Cafe. PC Kirsteen MacDonald, Community Beats Officer, and PC Josh Dempster, Interventions and Preventions, will attend.
- c) Aberarder Local Fund – Consultation Wednesday 28 October 9.30am to 12.30pm (Community Café), Farr Hall.
- d) Aberarder Local Fund – Consultation Wednesday 4 November 3.30pm to 7pm Strathnairn Hall, Daviot.
- e) Aberarder Local Fund – Consultation Thursday 5 November, 3.30pm to 7pm, Farr Hall.
- f) Remembrance Day Parade, Sunday, 8 November 2026.
- g) Aberarder Local Fund – Consultation Microsoft Teams, Monday 9 November 7pm to 8pm.
- h) A9 Dualling Strategic Planning team communication Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm to 7.30pm. Farr Community Hall.
- i) Highland Council Inverness Community Council Forum, Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 5.30pm.

## **22. Questions from members of the public**

**Communication and governance;** MB raised concerns about SNCC's communication processes and sought clarification on how correspondence is handled. Members discussed their democratic role as community representatives and emphasised the importance of transparent, objective and fair decision-making. It was noted that meetings are conducted openly and the monthly meeting is the process for discussions and debate to take place.

**Handling correspondence;** Correspondence received in time is listed on the agenda, which is issued one week before the monthly meeting. Relevant correspondence received after the agenda is raised at the meeting. Matters relevant to the Community Council are discussed openly at its monthly meetings to support transparency and accountability.

**Farr Hall correspondence;** The specific concerns related to a Farr Hall letter discussed at the previous meeting. The letter was subsequently circulated to all SNCC members. Neither the Farr Hall statement nor the Farr Fitness statement was read aloud, ensuring parity of treatment. Members noted that SNCC's remit is to consider planning and wider community matters, rather than to act as a mediator or arbitrator between community groups. MB clarified that the concern related to the process and the need for a shared understanding of how it operates. Members acknowledged that this was a new and sensitive situation, and that lessons had been learned.

**Conduct and communication;** Different views were expressed during the discussion. Members agreed that effective communication between all groups is important and that social media should be used responsibly. The contribution of all community groups and volunteers was recognised and valued.

**Councillor's comments;** Cllr DF recognised the complex issues facing Strathnairn and the value of volunteers in setting priorities and moving matters forward. He noted that healthy debate and differing opinions are normal. He would raise any concern privately if he believed a mistake was being made but stated that he had no current concerns. SNCC continues to receive guidance from Cllr DF and Highland Council's Community Council support team.

**Conclusion;** Members agreed that the discussion had been beneficial in clearing the air. The points raised were taken on board, with a shared commitment to learn from the situation, improve processes and work cohesively in support of the community.

### 23. AOCB

- a) Daviot wildfire (2023): JM asked whether any information is available about the cause of the wildfire and whether official reports were produced. **Action:** Cllr DF to investigate.
- b) Culloden Observatory and dark skies: The observatory is experiencing significant light pollution and is seeking support through Strathnairn's Local Place Plan to strengthen the case for dark-sky measures. As the observatory borders several Community Council areas, coordination may be required. It was suggested that Strathnairn Dark Skies undertake a light survey, if feasible, and present the findings to the relevant Community Councils.
- c) Power outages: Recent outages affected parts of Strathnairn. SSE described these as an "unplanned outage". **Action:** IM to follow up.

### 24. Next Meeting – Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2026

The Community Council is required to issue the agenda 7 days before the meeting. To be certain that an item can be included please make sure that it is submitted ten days before our meeting is due to take place. Copies of this agenda and the minutes of Community Council meetings are circulated by email. If you would like to receive a copy your email address can be added to the circulation list by application to [secretary@strathnairncc.com](mailto:secretary@strathnairncc.com).

PM thanked all for their contribution, and the meeting closed at 21.45 hrs.

## 25. Appendix I Aberarder Wind Farm Connection

Present: Kirsty McNamara (Community Liaison Manager), Ryan Bell (Community Investment Manager), Lynsey Walker (Project Manager, SSEN), and Kevin McBeath (Operations Manager, Omexom).

### Project Overview

A PDF providing the project overview is attached. Members requested further clarification and information on the following matters:

- **Traffic volumes and vehicle types:** provide estimates of the number and types of vehicles expected and incorporate this information into the Traffic Management Plan.
- **School and bus-route safety:** reflect the number of schools along the route and the times when children and young people will be waiting for buses at the beginning and end of the school day.
- **Coordination with other projects:** collaborate with other infrastructure and forestry operations, including logging traffic, and incorporate cumulative traffic impacts into the relevant Traffic Management Plans.
- **Helicopter operations:** notify local farmers in advance where low-flying helicopters could disturb livestock.
- **Community information:** produce a poster explaining why helicopters are being used, including the resulting reduction in road traffic and associated cost savings.
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### Community Benefit Fund

Ryan Bell is responsible for working with the community to establish and manage the community benefit fund associated with the transmission infrastructure. The aim of the consultation is to define:

- **The area of benefit** – where funding should be available.
- **Fund priorities** – the issues and opportunities most important to the community.
- **Fund structure** – how the fund should operate, including the duration of the fund and the level of funding available for community projects.

| Event Details                          | Location                                                          | Date / Time                                                |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Drop-in session / Presentation and Q&A | Farr Community Hall, Inverarnie Park, Inverness, IV2 6AX          | Wednesday 28 October<br>9.30am to 12.30pm (Community Café) |
| Drop-in session / Presentation and Q&A | Strathnairn Hall in Daviot West (Daviot Hall), Inverness, IV2 5XL | Wednesday 4 November<br>3.30pm to 7pm                      |
| Drop-in session / Presentation and Q&A | Farr Community Hall, Inverarnie Park, Inverness, IV2 6AX          | Thursday 5 November<br>3.30pm to 7pm                       |
| Presentation and Q&A                   | Microsoft Teams – <a href="#">Register your attendance</a>        | Monday 9 November<br>7pm to 8pm                            |

Aberarder Local Fund webpage:

<https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/information-centre/community-benefit-funding/funds/aberarder-local-fund/>

### Interested residents are asked to apply to join the panel.

Community Councillors are not permitted to join the panel. A question was raised whether excluding Community Councillors from the decision-making panel is necessary to achieve independence, or whether the same objective could be achieved through proportionate safeguards. Concern was raised that excluding Community Councillors from community fund panels could undermine community-led decision-making, exclude valuable local knowledge and further limit

volunteer recruitment, particularly in rural areas. It was felt that potential conflicts of interest could be managed through appropriate safeguards rather than a blanket exclusion, and that DESNZ and the fund developer should reconsider the restriction.

The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero produced document Community funds for Transmission Infrastructure: Guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/electricity-transmission-network-infrastructure-community-funds/community-funds-for-transmission-infrastructure-accessible-webpage>)

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