



Strathdearn Community Council

Notes from meeting held in The Strathdearn, Tomatin, on 12th August 2025

Councillors Present:	Susan Falconer (SF) – Vice Chair Hannah Yarr (HY) – Secretary George Mcleod (GM) - Member
Also Attended by:	Councillor Ken Gowans (KG) – Highland Council Councillor Duncan MacPherson (DMacP) – Highland Council Councillor Duncan McDonald (DMcD) – Highland Council 7 members of the public (both on line and in person)

Item Ref	Details	Action By
1	<u>Apologies</u> Margaret Menzies (MM) – Treasurer Jimmy Duncan (JD)- Chair	
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> None	
4	<u>Minutes of the meeting of 10th June 2025</u> Minutes approved by GM and Seconded by HY, with the following corrections: • Apologies from DMacP and McD to be included • Communication and action amendments regarding Item 5 (a) - Litter bin in Lay-by at junction with A9 and Tomatin access road	
5	<u>Matters arising</u> Following our last meeting, Balfour Beatty have confirmed artwork locations. The names and visuals will be available via the community website. Regarding tree planning and pesticides, Balfour Beatty have confirmed they “ <i>will be planting UK native plant and seed mixes which are from the nearest provenance to our project site. Our contract stipulates that any chemicals used for pesticide application must be non-toxic to human beings, birds and animals – this extends to bees.</i> ” Lucky2be have been engaged regarding defibrillators in the area. A proposal of 6 locations has been made by JD, which are currently under review. A formalised update will be given in Sept. Discussion took place around the resilience action taken during the previous session, and SCD have confirmed they are focusing on assets in the local area. Following the recent power cuts this was tested, however consideration should be made around those not on Facebook. Suggestion was made to include within the next newsletter. SCD will be carrying out a lessons learnt, and will be discussing with the board shortly. Recognition came forward from both the public, and those tourists staying locally, regarding how well the resilience plan was implemented. Helen Bailey has been secured to carry out both the local place plan, and community action plan. We have registered with the Highland Council that we will be carrying out a local placeplan, which has been acknowledged. It was suggested by a member of the public, that we have the opportunity to push the boundaries of the local place plan, to include things such as resilience, nature and carbon. Boundary lines on other local place plans are being checked by Helen to ensure	

	we don't have gaps or overlaps, and it was suggested we should ensure we future proof this work by building capacity in the community (ie GIS tools which allow better access, and can be utilised in other work). There are many synergies with both the community action plan, which is why these will both be carried out in parallel. Costs are being built out for both plans.	
6	<u>Financial Report</u> SF stated that SCC had £1,060.64 in their bank account as of 17th June 2025 (in the absence of MM). Following the AGM, documentation was shared with Community support to apply for the next grant. <u>Action:</u> Chase up the council on the grant.	HY
7	<u>Law and Order</u> No report had been received from the police regarding law and order. The Community Beats/City Centre Newsletter has been shared on both Facebook and the website.	
8	<u>Road Safety.</u> The Woodbridge at Rraigbeg is still under discussion. Following return from holidays, KG will give more of a formal update during the next meeting. National rail has confirmed station road is within their remit. Given it is a safe route to school, their maintenance team will fill in the potholes. The agreed plan and date are still to be confirmed. The highland council have confirmed the area of Old Mill Road is adopted and the potholes will be repaired. A date for work has not been confirmed.	
9	<u>Applications to the Trust</u> • Grass cutting- Grass cutting the road verges through Strathdearn. Total cost: £1,800 • Strathearn Parent Council- Renew the annual 'pot' of money to facilitate travel, trips and outings for the pupils at Strathdearn Primary School (to include the Nursery). The application to the SCCT was approved last year and I attach a spreadsheet on how this money was spent. The rural location of Strathdearn means that travel costs can be prohibitive when organising anything outside the school and can place considerable financial burden on the school and the parents. The fund also enables staff to plan more exciting and beneficial outings that may not have been possible in the past. This money would continue to cover travel to swimming lessons, sporting events, theatre, cultural outings, and the end of year P7 residential trip and may also include some visiting organisations. Many of these trips arise later in the year or at short notice and planning precise costs can be difficult. We would propose giving an update at the end of the year to the SCCT on how the money has being spent, and returning any unused funds at the end of the year. Total cost: £9,000 • South baths- To continue to provide the Strathdearn community with a monthly Sound Bath for a further 12 months. This follows the success of the previous 3½ years (current funding due to expire at the end of August 2025). Total cost: £2,646 Due to summer holidays, these applications were agreed via email circular, and have been, or will be submitted to the trust.	
10	<u>Planning Matters</u> One residential property was flagged for interest, given its prominence and access to the road. Offline it was decided there was no further matter to discuss for the community council.	

11	<u>Windfarms – Progress from SWIAG</u> • SWIAG has now submitted formal response to the 4 wind farm applications. These documents may look similar, however they differ depending on where the windfarms are located, and what aspects of them were affected. Overall feedback was around the cumulative impact of all applications. • The two remaining application (Kyllachy and Carn Na Saoibidh) have not been changed or updated on the Energy Consents Unit website. • Fergus Ewing responded to the Community Councils representations, stating that he has reached out to Gillian Martin and she felt it was not be appropriate to comment as these are live applications. • A well-attended session took place at the Kingsmills, Inverness regarding windfarms on 12th August, attended by GM and JD. This was a follow up from the previous session in Beauly. There were 10 MSP's present, with notable absences from Gillian Martin (Energy secretary for Climate in Scotland) and Micheal Shanks (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero). Key messages were that community councils were concerned about the number of wind farm, pump storage, and offshore renewables, which could lead to the industrialisation of the highlands. A suggestion was made during the Kingsmills meeting that there should be an independent planning enquiry commission set up, which would review all of the energy plan in the Highland and Islands. There was also a request for a pause until this policy/plan is in place. The 10 MSP's signed a document to open this discussion in parliament.	
12	<u>Update from SCD</u> SCD General Manager • Ian McGhie is the new General Manager and joined SCD on 23rd June. Ian spent 33 years in the military and also has extensive experience in the commercial sector and will be a real asset to SCD. Hazelbank Woods • The official Community Ownership Celebration took place on the 21st June. There was a ribbon cutting ceremony followed by a talk by Duncan Bryden outlining the history and development of the woodland. This was followed by a children's walk and games. • Louise Ramsey joined SCD during July as our new Community Woodland Coordinator and held an open evening on the 25 th July. This meeting allowed the woodland users to hear what work was being proposed and feedback the improvements that they would like to be carried out. Affordable Housing • The contractor continues to make good progress on the housing construction. The foundations are complete and the erection of the kits for the first two houses commenced on week beginning 4th August • The criteria for who can will be eligible is being worked through and will be signed off by the SCD board. This will be shared with the community shortly, and an independent lettings agent will be sources to review the applications against the eligibility criteria. • Regarding how people submit notes of interest, this has previously been communicated via the newsletter. This will be re-confirmed in an upcoming edition of the newsletter.	
13	<u>Correspondence</u> Following a process led by SCD, the community council have been asked to review a new street name for the affordable houses. The proposed name is Viaduct View following a submission of suggestions by the public, cross checking criteria and consulting postal services. There was no	

	further commentary made on this name during the session, so these notes will be sent back for alignment. For awareness, a felling notice has come into the community council for a small area near Lynbeg. This will be shared with the community. Concerns were raised about the quality of the A9 diversion, that would be in place for 2 years. It was agreed that Balfour Beatty and Transport Scotland would have carried out a review of this.	HY
14	<u>Any other business</u> There is an upcoming Community Council Election. Nomination form will become available from Tuesday 19th August, closing Tuesday 2nd September. The current Community Council encourages local people to come forward to protect the future of the Community Council. The timetable will be made available to the Community.	
15	Date of future meetings – 9th September 2025 Meeting closed 9pm	