



# **BROADFORD & STRATH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

DRAFT Minutes of Broadford and Strath Community Council meeting

17th February 2025

7.30PM, Broadford Village Hall

**Members Present:** Rhona Coogan (Chair), Hamish Fraser, Skye Deans, Alistair McPherson, David O'Donnell, Den Connell

**Online:** Nick Ferguson

**Apologies:** Hermione Lamond, Angus Macphie, Norma Morrison (BSCC)

**Other:** John Finlayson (Cllr), Claire Winskill (Visitor Levy Presentation), members of public

## **Welcome**

## **Declarations of conflicts of Interest**

- Den has pledged towards the legal funds for the visitor levy. Shared for transparency in the council.

## **Approval of Minutes**

- Minutes from last meeting (27th January) - Amendment under 'Skye & Raasay Community Benefit Fund Steering Group' to make the paragraph more concise. Amended minutes proposed by Hamish, Seconded by Alistair.

## **Matters Arising**

- Torrin Road Worker Camp Update - CC Planning objection deadline has been extended to the 28th of February. Objection is still ongoing.

## **Membership**

- Due to a resignation of a member the Council has to co-opt a new member. Proposed new member is Skye Deans who was previously the youth member but she has aged out of that position. David proposed Skye, seconded by Hamish. The Council took to a vote and it was unanimously agreed that she should be co-opted.
- Previous member was Secretary so Hamish Proposed Skye as new secretary, seconded by David.
- Youth Members - Local Youth Development Officer has identified 2 possible new youth members. David, Rhona and Skye are due to meet up with prospective members.

## **Old Hospital/Helipad site**

- Highland Council has taken ownership of the site. HC is open for discussions about future plans for the site. Possible options include health facilities, accommodation for Hospital staff and students.

## **BSCC Update**

- Old Broadford Toilets - Planning submitted for old Broadford Toilets. Currently working on building warrant drawings and COSS (Community ownership support service) for community asset transfer for lease.
- New Broadford Toilets - Planning remedial work, including a full-height turnstile.
- Camping Skye - Considering solar panels, battery storage, and small wind turbines to reduce energy costs for Camping Skye and the Growers Hub. Stage 1 of HIE green grant is complete, working on stage 2.
- Land - BSCC have currently expressed interest in 4 sites of land.
- Flourish (mental health and wellbeing group) is working with Rag Tag. Sessions start in March and will be running twice a month.
- Corry Capers - Got Whole family wellbeing funding for family sessions and training, these will start in April. Going to develop a Hugel Bed near the new housing developments.
- Waste project - Cardboard shredder and glass crusher purchased from community use. Sustainably Skye event at Growers hub - 22nd of March.
- Tree Nursery - Improvements made to small polytunnel thanks to community gardener. Tree planting event - End of February/ March.
- Compass has offered a container for the community. Suggestions of where to situate would be welcome.

## **Community Updates**

- SSCC SCIO Update - Unsuccessful in their bid to the SSEN transmission regional community benefit fund. SSCC AGM will take place on the 24th of Feb at the Broadford hall. Looking at the possible community asset transfer of the pitch and car park above the hall. SSCC needs a community council representative at their meetings. David is present, as Trustee. Representative will be chosen to attend SSCC meetings (finalise at March meeting).
- Paths Advisory Group - No Further update, next meeting will be about deciding which budget to focus on.
- The New School - New Updated walkthrough video, will be shared on the BSCC facebook.
- Helipad/Airstrip - NHS has moved the emergency helipad down to the airstrip. Council has raised the issues of the airstrip storage planning application but have not yet heard back.

## **Planning Application**

- 24/05026/FUL: Ashaig airstrip Storage components planning application - The deadline is officially closed, council in agreement to submit a late objection highlighting the concern that emergency services may be affected.
- Change of use of the old Broadford toilet block.

## **S & R Community Benefit Fund**

- No new update

## **Visitor Levy**

- Welcome to Claire Winskill who has joined the meeting, she is here to ask the community council to oppose the visitor levy. Other councils in the area have already objected (Uig, Struan, Minginish & Dunvegan.)

#### Statistics noted (first half of 2024)

- ❖ Domestic visits: 69% of total visits (42% were Scotland residents - 2.7 Million)
- ❖ Domestic spend: 45% of visitor expenditure (22% were Scottish - £586 million)
- ❖ International visitors: 31% of visits, 55% of expenditure
- ❖ 29% tourists staying in Scotland are resident in Scotland

#### Business Impact Assessment

- ❖ Survey Results:
- ❖ 136 responses from accommodation operators
- ❖ 48% considering closing due to financial challenges 35% would exceed VAT threshold
- ❖ 45% claim not viable at any levy percentage
- ❖ 75% said non VAT registered businesses should be exempt from levy

#### Concerns with Proposed Levy

- ❖ Potential Negative Impacts: Increased administrative burden, reduced business competitiveness, worsening seasonal employment, potential business closures

#### Consultation Criticisms

- ❖ Perceived as prescriptive, lacks comprehensive business impact assessment and potentially harmful to local tourism economy
- Next steps for visitor levy
  - Consultation on the 14th of March in Portree, LAS. Online events available as well
  - Engage with the federation of small businesses - Hamish to look into this
  - Gather community feedback
  - Draft a community response

#### Banking

- No further update, waiting for all signatures to sign. After all have signed the status of the community bank account will be changed.

#### AOCB

- War memorial - Brief discussion about restoring the memorial and drainage concerns. Councilor John Finlayson will follow up to see when restoration will happen.
- Community Garden Bins - Concerns from a member of the public that the Bins are not fit for purpose. Will look at getting replacement bins if they are damaged.

#### Public Discussion

- Torrin Road Worker Camp - Drainage impact assessment has been published. Concerns raised about change in sewage and drainage planning.
- Torrin Quarry Closure - Member of the public questioning the closure. CC has not received any information about the quarry. Suggested that we question why it has been closed.

#### Meeting closed

Date of next meeting: 17th of March, venue TBC