



BROADFORD & STRATH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DRAFT minutes of Broadford & Strath Community Council meeting
17th March 2025
7.30 PM, Broadford Village Hall

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

Online: Margaret Clark (Balfour Beatty)

Apologies: Angus Macphie, Hermione Lamond

Other: John Finlayson (cllr), Sam Crowe (Balfour Beatty), Hans Petri (Sleat CC), Iris Donaldson, Catriona Mackinnon, members of the public

Welcome

Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

- Den has pledged towards the legal funds for the visitor levy, shared for transparency.
- Nick has a business that would be subjected to the visitor levy, shared for transparency.

Approval of Minutes

- Amend Torrin worker camp to Torrin road worker camp for clarification
- Hamish proposed minutes, seconded by Den

Matters Arising

- War Memorial: The Stairs have been cleaned, and the bushes have been cut back. Thanks to John for following up.
- Rhona has stepped forward to attend SSCC SCIO meetings as the official BSCC representative (David Trustee of SSCC SCIO.)
- Maren Ebeling (Community Liaison Manager, SSEN Transmission) has emailed the CC about following up with the Community Liaison Group. This group would deal with issues regarding the substations outside the CC to save time within the Council meetings. The council will follow up.

Community Update

- SSCC update: The AGM was on February 24th. Seven members were elected to the board, and a trustee was co-opted to be a youth representative. The Transfer of assets and liabilities of the Broadford village hall is still ongoing. Two board members formed a working group with parent council members to work on the new bike pump track, which will be located above the Village hall next to the pitch.

- Paths update - no new meeting.
- Hospital Helipad - no further info.
- Hermoine Lamont did not attend the meeting but shared information that she wanted to raise. There is a new community trust in Elgol, Elgol and Straithaird Development Trust. They are planning to express interest in the Straithaird Estate.
- HC update: HC has set a budget for the upcoming year. A meeting will be held on March 27th to discuss school expenses.
- HC update on Visitor Levy—A meeting was held on March 14th about the Visitor Levy at Skye Candles in Portree. Officers from the Council attended the meeting. Contrary to public belief, the HC has not committed to introducing a tourist Levy. The consultation process will continue until March 31st. After the consultation period is finished, a report will be brought to the HC for discussion.

Visitor Levy

- The Council took to a vote to reject the Visitor Levy in its current format. Den and Nick have abstained from voting due to their conflict of interest. The council unanimously agreed to object to the Visitor Levy in its current form.

S & R Community Benefit Fund

- Skye and Raasay Community Benefit Fund Steering Group had an online meeting. Highland and Island Climate Hub and HIE both sent an agent, as did Foundation Scotland. S&R CBF was tasked with incorporating an organisation to receive the benefit fund money from the Glen Ullinish Project. It was suggested that another organisation come in and sign the contract to secure it on their behalf.
- The Foundation Scotland representative gave a slide show presentation and answered questions from the steering group. The steering group will soon decide which direction to take.

Planning Applications

- An application has been submitted to build 8 holiday units in Broadford. The location would be on the opposite side of the Broadford Hall on the shore. Access from the main road may be an issue. The council will share details of the application on socials.
- The CC has submitted their formal objection to the Sodexo temporary workers' camp to the Highland Council.
- 24/05026/FUL: Ashaig airstrip Storage components planning application - the council still needs to submit a late objection highlighting concern that emergency services may be affected.

Balfour Beatty Ashaig Workers' Camp

- Welcome to Sam Crowe and Margaret Clark, who work for Balfour Beatty. SSEN has recruited Balfour Beatty to replace the power lines across Skye. To do so, they require two workers' camps, one on the Mainland and one on the Island. They have identified a possible site in Ashaig. Held a pre-planning consultation event at the start of March. There will be two more consultation events on the 3rd and 4th of April. Sam Crowe

attended the meeting to talk through and discuss the feedback gained from the recent consultation events. The consultation in Kyleakin had 54 attendees. The consultation in Broadford had 94 attendees. They received 70 feedback forms, both at the event and online.

Support for the site includes;

- ❖ The public was happy that the site was away from villages.
- ❖ Access to the site was good.
- ❖ Visibility of the site is low.
- ❖ The land is already used for industrial purposes.

Concerns for the site include;

- ❖ Local infrastructure- Concern of its ability to cope, particularly around medical facilities.
 - ❖ Traffic and access to the site- Balfour Beatty will develop a traffic management plan.
- ❖ Environmental impact- They have conducted an environmental walkover and received their environmental screening back. The screening report included the river, which is likely to accommodate otters. There is also an area of SSSI to the east of the potential site, but it isn't within their development area. The land has shallow levels of peat.
- ❖ Antisocial behaviour- Balfour Beatty is working on a self-contained site. There will not be a bar on the site. They have developed a code of conduct for staff to adhere to. They will also chat with the local police to see if there are any other considerations they need to make.
- ❖ Water and sewage- Work with a borehole on site. It is necessary to investigate whether it will impact properties around the site. A drainage treatment system will be installed on-site to deal with waste.
- ❖ Noise- They will conduct a baseline survey about noise. Residents near the site have requested a buffer to reduce noise.
- ❖ Fuel usage- Concerns about the fuel station in Broadford and its potential impact on workers commuting to and from the site, especially during the tourist season. The intention is to be self-sufficient for vehicles onsite, but the effect on workers needs to be addressed.
- ❖ Tourism- The site should be screened so it's not visible from any road areas.
- ❖ Land use- The land is currently being used for common grazing. It is partially used for industrial purposes due to a sawmill area.
- ❖ Housing- The site is self-contained, so its effect on the housing market should be limited. SSEN has identified that they would like to contribute to housing; SSEN and the Highland Council would do this.
- ❖ Light pollution- may affect residents near the site
- ❖ Community struggling with tourism
- ❖ Close proximity to existing properties- The Neighbors have requested a soil back, and Balfour Beatty is happy to accommodate that.

Questions from the councillors;

- ❖ Drug and Alcohol?- Balfour Beatty will conduct Random drug and alcohol testing. The work they do is very high risk, so they do not want to be enablers to access alcohol.
- ❖ Timeline?- They are midway through a 3-month consultation period, which expires at the end of April, with more consultations on the 3rd and 4th of April. The formal feedback period of 14 days after the consultation period would finish around mid to late April. Formal application sent to the Highland Council at the end of April. Highland Council has a 5 - 6 month period to respond. If granted approval, start to build operations for the early parts of 2026
- ❖ The pump stations have already had empty pumps this year. How are you going to reduce the impact on the community?- Balfour Beatty has spoken to Asda, and they were reassured that they will begin to get daily deliveries when the tourism season starts.
- ❖ Do you have any alternative sites? There is one other possible site, which is not within the Broadford area but still on Skye.
- ❖ Community Benefit?- A contribution to the cyclepath active travel infrastructure, potential use for any kind of health services as a whole, apprenticeships for local people surplus materials to locals, support for the south skye campus, road improvements, improvements for breakish hall, potential community fund, broadford hospital program and a couple things around communication.

Thanks to Sam and Margaret for attending the meeting, sharing the community's feedback, and being open to answering any council questions.

Membership

- Youth Members - Iris Donaldson and Catriona Mackinnon attended the meeting as possible new youth members. They would both like to continue attending meetings and will next discuss if they would join the council as official youth representatives.
- Associate Membership—Sleat Community Council, Kyleakin & Kylerhea Community Councils are now officially accepted as Associate Members. They join the Community Company and Parent Council of the Broadford Primary School as Associate Members. The next step is to contact the Sconser Community Council.
- Den will contact the Parent council to see if they want to send a representative to attend future meetings.

Banking

- All necessary members have uploaded their signatures to the bank. RBS has said it will send out contact information so David can communicate directly with them, but they have not done so yet. No more updates

AOCB

- Venue- The Council has unanimously decided to move the venue back to the UHI office. Reasons include, Noise- There are other activities going on during our meeting in the hall that can cause distractions. Technology- The UHI is equipped with technology that accommodates online guests.

Public Discussion

- Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland

Meeting Closed

Date of next meeting: 21st of April, Venue UHI