



BROADFORD & STRATH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

21 April 2025

UHI North, West & Hebrides – Broadford, 7.30PM

Members present: Den Connell, Rhona Coogan (Chair), Nick Ferguson, Hamish Fraser, Catriona Mackinnon (Youth Member), Angus Macphie, Alistair McPherson, Norma Morrison (BSCC), David O'Donnell

Other: Colin Mackinnon (Stathaven Airfield), Chris Ogg (Robertson Construction), Hans Petri (Sleat Community Council liaison), Martyn Ayre

Apologies: Broadford Parent Council, Iris Donaldson (Youth Member), John Finlayson (Cllr)

Welcome

Declarations of Conflicts of Interest - none

Approval of Minutes from previous meeting

amendments made and then proposed by Nick and seconded by Den.

Matters Arising since last meeting

- Clan Donald estate. Sleat Community meeting took place, attended by over 150 people, due to the announced sale of the land at Clan Donald estate. Next SCC meeting Tues, 6 May, An Crùbh. Community would like to be involved in a partnership with the new trust, if formed. Thanks to Hans for update.
- Our email circulation lists to be updated with all new Associate Members, including Associate Members, BSCC, Sleat CC, Kyleakin CC and Broadford Parent Council.
- Police were invited this evening, but no response was provided to confirm attendance. If they do not attend this evening, we will hope to have them at our next meeting.

Ashaig Airfield – Colin Mackinnon

Welcome to Colin Mackinnon, who outlines his proposed plans for the Ashaig Airstrip:

History:

- Highland Council previously reviewed the viability of operating three airfields: Broadford, Plockton and Dornoch. The Council indicated that Ashaig Airfield would remain open, with potential for reinstating commercial flights.
- Concerns raised about the Council's lack of expertise in leisure/recreational aviation and airfield operations. David Swanson at THC oversees public service obligations but lacks relevant airfield experience.

Current project status:

- A **Letter of Intent** has been submitted to Highland Council proposing a **Community Asset Transfer (CAT)** under a “Community of Interest” (e.g. pilots) and not a “Community of Place” (geographical community).
- Airfield currently unprofitable as it has only a runway and lacks income-generating amenities.
- Proposal under development with Clan MacKinnon Society (USA) to establish a small Mackinnon Clan Heritage Centre at the site, helping to offset maintenance costs.
- Council has suggested a potential **£1 million+ valuation** based on proposed turbine blade storage revenue.
 - Independent RICS valuation being sought via Bidwells (contact: Angus).
- While work is underway to establish a foundational structure for the proposed community-led airfield initiative, the model will follow a similar structure to **Strathaven Airfield Ltd.**, a Scottish Company, limited by guarantee:
 - Asset lock in place
 - No shareholders or dividends
 - Members liable for £1 only in the event of dissolution
- The new organisation will adopt the **Scottish Government’s standard template** for not-for-profit entities with asset locks.
- Articles of Association will include minor customizations but must be acceptable to **Highland Council** for the **Community Asset Transfer (CAT)**.
- This structure ensures the airfield cannot be repurposed for private or commercial development, such as holiday resorts.
- The new organization would be **completely independent** from Strathaven Airfield Ltd.
- Clarification provided on **Community Asset Transfer (CAT)** rules:
 - **Community of Place:** decision-making members must reside in the geographic area.
 - **Community of Interest:** decision-makers must belong to the defined interest group.
- due to this proposal involving a **Community of Interest, local representation on a new CLG board would be prohibited due to proposed asset transfer rules.**
- **Associate memberships** are possible (e.g. Broadford residents can be associate members of an interest-based airfield group), but current CAT structures **do not allow equal membership** status for non-qualifying individuals.
- Ongoing consideration of how to structure membership and decision-making within these constraints.
- Call for community suggestions for low-impact uses of airfield space that won’t interfere with runway operations.

Information regarding related developments:

- **Proposed Breakish Wind Farm:** ○ Potential impact on airfield operations during specific wind conditions.
 - A detailed objection report has been submitted, citing Civil Aviation Authority guidance, on behalf of the British Microlight Aircraft Association and the Light Aircraft Association.
- **Wind Turbine Blade Storage:**

- Proposed blade storage at the airfield may infringe runway clearance zones.
- British Microlight Aircraft Association have submitted an objection.
- Lack of clear measurement data in council documents and no response has been received.

Thanks to Colin Mackinnon for his attendance this evening.

Following the above information the CC felt strongly that this community must be involved if an asset transfer of any kind is to take place.

New Broadford Primary School Project - Chris Ogg, Bid Manager, Robertson Construction

- Robertson Construction is currently tendering for the Broadford Primary School project.
 - The company was previously involved but the project was paused due to funding issues in a wider school package.
 - Broadford's funding remains intact; project is now progressing.
 - Community engagement is a key part of Robertson's bid approach.
 - Construction could last 60–80 weeks, with up to 80 workers on site.
 - Peak construction may overlap with the tourist season, creating potential challenges.
 - Robertson aims to be a respectful presence and partner with Highland Council and the local community.
 - Chris Ogg attended to understand community concerns and identify ways to support the area during the project.
 - Location query – would there be a location that members of the community could suggest for a potential workers camp for say 40 men. Global infrastructure site suggested.
 - Robertsons keen to work with community to leave lasting legacy of sorts – even if site for accommodation could be utilised after it has been used.
 - Thanks extended to Chris Ogg (and Robertsons Construction) for attending the meeting and contacting the community regarding the project.
1. Police Report – postponed until next meeting.

Community Updates

- SSCC SCIO currently £315,000 secured for the Astro pitch. Two funding bids completed – Highland Council Regeneration Fund and one to SFA. Hopeful for a decision on these in June.
- Crowd-funding page now live for local individuals and businesses to contribute towards the project.
- Meeting Mon 28 April 7.15PM at BVH to form a working group to pursue the creation of a pump track on the site between the pitch and the new school.
- BSCC have been working on a renewables project. Electricity bills for Camping Skye in excess of £30,000. Moving on to stage 2 of the HIE Green Grant Fund and EOI in for the HC Community Regeneration Fund looking at solar panels, wind turbine and battery storage.
- Toilets – funding received from Highland Council to do some work on the Broadford toilets. Entrance system to be changed, to encourage more users to pay. Work to begin in May and the toilets to remain open whilst work is undertaken.
- Hospital path:
 - An application was submitted to the Ian Finlay Fund, which is currently closed.

- Future availability of funding remains uncertain due to a challenging and fast-moving funding landscape.
- Woodland Development:
 - An expression of interest (EOI) has been submitted for woodland adjacent to the BSCC forest, which is owned by HIE.
 - EOIs remain active for two additional sites near the HIE woodland.
 - Awaiting clarity on the **helipad** situation; a decision is expected in the coming months.
- Flourish Project: ○ A new partnership project has begun in collaboration with **Ragtag**.

Planning Applications

Concerns for distillery – much larger building than current one, three times larger. Residents of Riverbank have voiced concerns about the scale. Underground car park. Infrastructure – road has lots of potholes, no road markings. Share application and invite members of public to comment.

Banking

- RBS account now open, funds to be transferred to new account. Three signatories at the moment, David, Rhona and Hermione. Two authorisations needed for all payments. Thanks to Hermione for her continued help in making payments and doing the finances.

AOCB

- Broadford Primary School Parent Council have asked us to share the details of the 50th anniversary of the Primary School celebrations. Tea and cakes in afternoon and a ceilidh in evening, Tuesday 26th April. To be shared on our Facebook page.
- Skye & Raasay Community Benefit Fund – online webinar on 7th May outlining how other communities have navigated the process. David will attend on behalf of CC. However, in-person meetings in Broadford and Portree 14 May for public to attend.
- Muirhall Energy coming on 28 April to discuss Glen Uillinish 2 – contact Calum Sydney for more info.
- Hermione - Elgol road – patching has been done but it is still in a bad state.
- Elgol & Strathaird Development Trust has secured lease with Highland Council to occupy the Elgol Primary School building while it is not being used. The Trust are applying for funding to help with the costs of upkeep.

Public Discussion

Sodexo / Torrin Road Workers Camp – Martyn Ayre has submitted a pre-action legal letter to Highland Council challenging their decision not to require an Environmental Impact Assessment on this application, citing legal failings and the presence of protected species. The letter highlighted the presence of protected species on the site, which were not identified in the preliminary ecological appraisal / biodiversity plan. Specifically, no mention of otters was made. The legal correspondence included evidence submitted by Ben Yoxon documenting protected species. No response has been received. The case may not go to North Area Planning Committee until mid-2025.

Meeting Closed

Date of next meeting: 19 May AGM 7PM / Ordinary Meeting 7.30PM