

Minutes of meeting
Tuesday, 18th February, 2025
At Brora Community Centre

Present: Russell Rekhy RR (Chair), David Andrews DA, Gina Stewart GS (Secretary), Robbie MacLennan RM, Ruwan Uduwera-Perera RUP, Peter Fassen de Heer PDH (Treasurer)
& Dawn DeHavilland DDH (Minute Secretary)

Also Attending: 9 members of public.

Apologies: Becky Clay BC, Richard Gale (Councillor)

Welcome: The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

Police Update:
2 Traffic, 1 Domestic

Minutes meeting 21st January 2025:

The minutes of last meeting were circulated and accepted on the proposal of Robbie MacLennan RM and seconded by Gina Stewart GS

Matters arising:

Ongoing from September: Diana Royce DR the red barriers at the bridge are an eyesore, who is responsible for the repair work? Becky Clay BC to contact BEAR & SSE to find a resolution.

18.02.25 Russell RR has emailed SSE again no response, therefore he will call into the SSE office in Inverness & speak to the Community Engagement Officer directly.

21.01.25 Becky BC has emailed both BEAR & SSE three times with no response, in addition Diana Royce has also tried to contact both BEAR & SSE in vain. Russell may have a contact he can try to get some information from.

Action: Face to face visit with SSE **Member:** Russell Rekhy **Review Date:** 18.03.25

Ongoing from September: Handrails opposite the Royal Marine Hotel are dangerous Becky BC will contact the Hotel to resolve the issue. No response from Royal Marine Becky BC to chase.

21.01.25 Billy the manager from The Royal Marine Hotel has advised Becky BC that he is awaiting information from head office, Becky BC will telephone 22.01.25 for an update.

18.02.25 Gina GS will visit the Royal Marine to get an update.

Action: Visit Hotel **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.25

Ongoing from October: A member of the public has asked if the Jackie MacLennan memorial stone can be cleaned? Becky BC has contacted the stonemason and is waiting on a response.

18.02.25 Russell RR has spoken to Sutherland Stonework who maybe be able to carry out the work, although they are at Skibo at present.

Action: Update information from stonemason **Member:** Russell Rekhy **Review Date:** 18.03.25 Stonemason contacted – awaiting date & cost

Ongoing from September: Fountain Square repairs are still to be carried out. 21.01.25 Becky BC to chase.

18.02.25 Still awaiting a response Gina GS will now chase up the repair work.

Action: Chase up repair work **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.25

Ongoing from October: Reports of a dog attacking other dogs and wildlife has been received, 21.01.24 Becky has emailed the Police no reply Becky BC will chase.

18.02.25 Gina GS to chase.

Action: Pass information on to the police **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.25

Ongoing from September: Clyne Kirkton, Old Parish Church and churchyard 40m N of Balranald, Ellen Lindsay reiterated that Clyne Kirkton is a listed building & the tress are now dangerous, other members confirmed the area has been taped off & safety notices put up, Richard Gale RG will take this up with the Highland Council.
18.02.25 Gina GS has emailed Richard RG who has replied stating he will give an update at the next meeting.
Action: Update on Highland Council Response **Member:** Richard Gale not in attendance 18.02.25
Review Date: 18.03.25

Ongoing from August: Russell RR asked Leslie-Anne if the budget cuts would impact Brora Primary School, no answer could be given at this time, Leslie-Anne LN will ask for more information to feed back to Brora Community Council. BC to contact for information. 21.01.25 Becky BC has advised Leslie-Anne will respond shortly.
Action: Update on Primary School **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** Ongoing

Ongoing from September: A road off Cemetery Road (does not have a name) Mosshill, is rarely gritted & has no yellow salt bin. BCC to ask Richard Gale RC to deal with the issue.
From the floor, graffiti on signs at the top of Academy Street, BCC to ask Richard Gale RC to deal with the issue.
18.02.25 Gina GS has emailed Richard RG who has replied stating he will give an update at the next meeting.
Action: Update on Highland Council Response **Member:** Richard Gale not in attendance 18.02.25
Review Date: 18.03.25

Ongoing from October: Diana Royce reported the handrail at Manse Park is in need of urgent repair.
18.02.25 Gina GS has emailed Richard RG who has replied stating he will give an update at the next meeting.
Action: Request Repair **Member:** Richard Gale not in attendance 18.02.25 **Review Date:** 18.03.25

Ongoing from August: Callum to investigate the possibility of providing an email address for members of the public to use for non-emergency issues. Becky BC to chase for information.
Ongoing from January
Action: Police Email Address **Responsible Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.25

Ongoing from October: Nick Lindsay there are no AGM minutes & Accounts for the last two years, Russell RR will investigate this as they should be available.
Action: Update Facebook **Member:** Russell Rekhy & Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.25

Ongoing from January: Nick Lindsay as the Pylons route has been confirmed which will be directly in front of Carrol Rock asked if the BCC will make representation against this? Russell RR confirmed this would be actioned by the BCC, in addition the BCC is working with other Community Councils such as Strathpeffer. BCC will also allocate members to attend the consultation meeting on 6th March 15.00 - 19.00 Brora Scout & Guide Hall.
John McMorran advised the area was the subject of a windfarm application at Balnacoil & planning permission was refused by Highland Council as the windfarm would have a severely adverse impact because of proximity to areas of high landscape value, which he felt would support a case for underground cabling.
Action: Make representations **Member:** Russell Rekhy & BCC **Review Date:** Ongoing 18.03.25

Councillor Update:

Richard Gale not in attendance.

Ongoing from September: Robbie Maclennan RM reported that a manhole cover has not been repaired, Richard Gale RG apologised for the delay & will ensure the work is carried out.
Becky Clay reported a broken lamppost at 16 Johnstone place, Richard Gale RG will chase.
18.02.25 Gina GS has emailed Richard RG who has replied stating he will give an update at the next meeting.
Action: Highland Council Repairs **Member:** Richard Gale not in attendance 18.02.25
Review Date: 18.03.25

Correspondence:

All correspondence has been circulated & discussed with the whole committee by email.

With regard to the proposed Pollie Hill Wind Farm, following discussion it was agreed BCC would join with Rogart Community Council & ensure all meetings with the developers are attended by both community Councils. A suitable date to be agreed Russell RR will contact Rogart CC to agree upon a date to meet with the developers & to also conduct a site visit, possibly a weekend before the end of March.

BCC to contact developers prior to 24.02.25 with regard to scoping, Ruwan RUP to contact Rogart CC to ask for a copy of their submission to share with BCC.

Action: Contact Rogart Community Council **Member:** Russell Rekhy **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Action: Contact Rogart CC copy of submission **Member:** Ruwan Uduwera-Perera **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Action: Contact Developers **Member:** BCC **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Planning Issues, BESS Sub Group Report: Brora Golf Club: Change of hours, Family Area, extend outside seating area. Discussed by BBC who all agreed there was nothing contentious in the application.

Bess Sub Group meeting:

Peter (PDH) advised that the BESS meetings will be held 8 days prior to the main BCC meeting.

All correspondence has been circulated & discussed with the by the BESS Sub Group.

Peter (PDH) has set up a newsletter that will be sent out by email to all interested parties (upon receipt of their email address)

Ongoing from October: Clynelish Distillery BCC to approach Diageo asking for an official response on the prospect of having a BESS so close to the Clynelish distillery.

Action: Contact Clynelish Distillery **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Ongoing from October: BCC to approach Golspie Fire Department for their view on the BESS proposal.

Action: Contact Fire Department **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Treasurers Report:

Treasurers Report circulated to BCC members, no issues arising.

Community Feedback

From the Floor: Where are the historical minutes held & are they available for viewing?

Response: Copies of the paper minutes may be held at the Highland Council offices in Inverness, the Ward Manager Phil Tomlinson, or past secretaries may have electronic copies. Peter (PDH) enquired what responsibilities does BCC have with regard to the storing & accessibility to the minutes?

Russell advised recent minutes are available by emailing secretary.broracommunitycouncil@gmail.com

Also copies will be held in Brora Library & when the Website is live a section where the past & present minutes will be held for public perusal.

Action: Contact Highland Council to clarify the procedures for the storing & accessibility of minutes **Member:** Gina Stewart & Russell Rekhy **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Action: Contact past secretaries **Member:** BCC **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Action: Update on Website going live **Member:** Ruwan Uduwera-Perera **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

From the Floor: Can BCC take into account members of the public with hearing issues when discussing topics in a public form as it was felt BCC did not take into account they were also speaking to the public. Russell RR agreed that moving forward BCC members would face the public & ensure to speak clearly & check for understanding.

From the Floor: What if any other correspondence had been received?

Ruwan (RUP) advised Stewart Anderson has reported the Back Shore sewage pipe has yet another hole in it, he has reported it to Scottish Water, Gina GS to contact Richard Gale to chase Scottish Water as this is a health hazard. If no action is taken BCC to contact SEPA.

Correspondence has been received asking if the Lorry Park is designated for Lorries only, following a discussion it agreed although lorries do park there so do other forms of transport & at present this isn't causing any issues.

Action: Contact Richard Gale **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

From the Floor: What's happening with the Community Car & what is the criteria for booking? Following a lengthy discussion, Russell (RR) advised there is a shortage of volunteer drivers therefore if anyone knows of someone who could offer their service to please get in touch with Brora Community Enterprise.

The bookings are taken through the Brora Community Enterprise Facebook page at present.

David Andrews (DA) advised the car is not for emergency health issues 999 should be used, the car is for prebooked hospital appointments etc., as the drivers are not medically trained, the car is available as a community service as there is no official hospital transport available & the bus & train services are sadly lacking.

The car has a range of 220 miles on average, although this will be less in the winter months so a return trip to Raigmore Hospital may not be possible during the winter.

From the Floor: Robin (a member of the BESS sub group) advised he had been contacted by a Caithness resident with regard to the number of BESS & Substation applications in Caithness. The Loch Buidhe planning deadline is 02.03.25, it is felt that this will have an impact on the Pollie Hill Wind Farm. Robin, David Baines & John McMorran attended a session with MSP Maree Todd who told them she has been waiting for a response from OPDenergy for six months with regard to a face to face meeting. After a discussion it was felt that Maree Todd's response was vague, for example how many times has she contacted OPDenergy just the once or once a week?

From the Floor: What is the timeline for the Website & the Facebook page to be live? Ruwan (RUP) refused to be held to a timeline due to other commitments.

Action: Update on Website going live **Member:** Ruwan Uduwera-Perera **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

From the Floor: What is happening with the Brora Place Plan, Russell RR advised BCC is currently working on the Place Plan. An application for funding to assist with producing the Place Plan was refused by the Highland Council. Gina (GS) has contacted George Gunn to assist her with producing a Place Plan questionnaire which she will then circulating to local groups for feedback.

Action: Complete Place Plan **Member:** Brora Community Council **Date:** Review 18.03.25 - Ongoing

From the Floor: Can BCC please get action on the mounting number of Pot Holes specifically Academy Street, the Road with no name by the Cemetery & Gower Street? Gina (GS) will contact the Highland Council.

Can something be done about the 30 Mile sign when entering Brora from the North as it looks unsightly, due to the fact it has been stuck over the previous sign.

Action: Contact Highland Council **Member:** Gina Stewart **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

Peter (PDH) advised following a webinar with SSE he had received 11 questions, BCC will contact SSE to get a response to the queries.

Action: Contact SSE **Member:** BCC **Review Date:** 18.03.2025

From the Floor: Thanks was expressed to the Bess Sub group, it was felt all were welcome & everyone's opinion mattered.

Gina (GS) advised she is now a key holder for the community centre therefore meetings can be during school holiday.

Micro Grant Applications: Discussed in Follow on Meeting.

Date & Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 18.03.25 7PM, BESS Sub Group Monday 10th March.