



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST
HELD AT WILDSIDE, WHITEBRIDGE AND VIA MS TEAMS**

At 7pm on WEDNESDAY 2 JULY 2025

Present Peter Faye (PF); Maire Brown (MB); Stewart MacPherson (SM);
Mark Sutherland (MS); Ken Sinclair (KS); Susan Greer (SG); Craig
Lightbody (CL); Michael White (MW); Lewis Fraser (LF).

Apologies Malcom Stewart (MMS); Chris Gehrke (CG).

Non-attendance

Chair Peter Faye (PF)

In Attendance Jewels Lang (JL) - SFCT CEO; Kirsteen Campbell (KC) - SFCT
Administrator.

Minutes Kirsteen Campbell (KC)

Declarations of interest:

CL - SFCC grant application.

1. INTRODUCTION

PF welcomed the Board and staff members to the meeting. PF notified the Board that Maureen McGuire, Vice Chair, has stepped down. PF thanked her for her hard work and service to SFCT.

2. MINUTES

CL **PROPOSED** and LF **SECONDED** the Minutes from the Board Meeting held on 4 June 2025 and these were **AGREED** as a correct record and **APPROVED** by the Chair.

3. ACTIONS

The Trust Action list was circulated prior to the Board Meeting and items from previous Minutes that remain 'open' were discussed and updates provided. The following actions were marked as closed and completed:

- KC to remove closed actions from Trust Action List.
- KC to send grant award letters to all approved recipients and other applicants.
- JL to meet with the SLNHG to discuss options for funding from other sources.
- PF to request Highland Council extend the time given to SFCT to make a decision re the license of Foyers Primary School by an additional month.
- PF to investigate further the high historical energy costs for Foyers Primary School.
- KC to recirculate the CEO interface document with all Directors for comment prior to the next Board Meeting.
- JL to ask SFCT Director Stewart McPherson to join the steering group as SFCT representative, along with Mark Sutherland. Next meeting of group will be held on 17 June 2025.
- JL to contact an appropriate Engineering firm to undertake investigations into the septic tank and heating system at Errogie church.
- JL to circulate CLD role description and directors to respond prior to next SFCC meeting (24 June 2025).

4. FINANCE REPORT

LF presented the updated budget for 2025/26, prepared by the Finance Officer, Fiona Mustarde (FM), and incorporating the amendments made at the previous Board meeting. This was **proposed** by KS and **seconded** by SM.

LF then gave a brief overview of the Finance Report prepared by the FM, and this was **proposed** by KS and **seconded** by SM. LF then said he would look at developing a concise one-pager report specifically for the Board meeting and will write to Directors to request their input on format and detail etc.

The Board **AGREED** to continue with a contribution of 20 per cent paid into the legacy fund (currently approximately £12,500.00 per month) and will not in the interim be reduced,

pending a further review of likely growth in the fund, and the contributions necessary to maintain a satisfactory performance.

Action: LF to prepare a monthly report for Board meetings and will circulate a proposed format for Directors to review and discuss.

5. RIVERSIDE FIELD

JL: The project is still ongoing. However, it was put on hold at the Board meeting held on 8 January 2025, and the planning lapsed in June. The Community will be advised of the plans in due course. JL to engage with Community Groups, including the Health and Wellbeing group in relation to potential uses for Riverside Field.

6. ERROGIE CHURCH

MW noted that some trees at the church require maintenance. JL to approach Higher Ground, who maintain landscaping at other Trust properties, although it was noted that trees and hedges cannot be felled at the moment due to nesting birds.

The septic tank is due to be inspected on Friday 4 July and the results will be made known immediately thereafter.

Following the investigations into the septic tank, assuming the report on the tank will be positive, the next step will be to investigate options for the provision of heating in the building. MW/PF offered to contact the relevant heating engineer in order to speed up the process. JL to liaise with MW/PF on this matter.

MW raised the question of insurance and if SFCTs current providers will cover a diesel heating system. The system remains de-commissioned and out of use at present. KC to contact SFCTs insurance broker and will respond to MW in due course.

7. FOYERS BAY

Scottish Canals have been in contact with SFCT to ascertain when the project will be finalised. JL highlighted that all projects should have a start and end date and need to be signed off in a timely manner.

A report was submitted by MMS and Caroline Tucker (CT), Project Co-Ordinator following the Steering Group meeting last week. This was submitted too close to the Board meeting for Directors to hold meaningful discussions. It was therefore decided to move this item to the next Board meeting.

8. FOYERS SHOP

MS provided an update to the Board following the Steering Group meetings he recently attended. He noted that these were both positive and productive.

Prior to any discussions being held in relation to the shop, the Board took the decision to wait until the results of the Feasibility Study, expected in the very near future, are available. The need for a clear and robust Business Plan will also be required.

MS hoped the Feasibility Study would be available prior to the next Board meeting and will be circulated with Directors asap.

9. GRANTS

The Board **APPROVED** the following Constituted Group Grants, following appropriate further clarification and quotations supplied by the applicants:

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council: **£9203.80** - Costs involved with running the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council.

Boleskine Biodiversity Group: **£1330.00** - To allow the group to run a series of educational talks, film screenings and workshops for the community to help raise awareness of biodiversity issues. The group originally applied for a grant of £2659.00 to run eight events. The Board approved a grant of £1330.00 for four events, as, given pressures on volunteers' time, it was felt that 8 events would be a lot to achieve in one year.

Inverfarigaig Residents Group: **£4263.94** - To add a solar-powered irrigation system to the Polycrub (underground tank to collect rainwater with pump has already been done by the group); To provide seating areas to allow older members of the community to rest as they walk around the fields, as well as create gathering spaces; To purchase topsoil to fill raised beds in the Polycrub and elsewhere to enable the group to grow crops for community use; To register the domains: Inverfarigaig.org and Inverfarigaig.org.uk. The group originally applied for a grant of £5043.94 which included the cost of developing a website. The Board did not approve the cost of developing a website and a grant of £4263.94 was awarded.

10. COMMUNITY LIAISON DIRECTOR REPORT

CL delivered his report which will be circulated with the Board in the coming days.

CL suggested that monthly surgeries are held for members of the community to attend.

CL noted that a joint response between Stratherrick and Foyers (SFCC), Strathdearn and Strathnairn Community Councils in relation to the Aberarder Windfarm Community Benefit

Fund will no longer go ahead as Strathdearn CC have accepted what SEE have offered. This leaves SFCC and Strathnairn Community Council making it unviable. SFCC are to consider how to proceed on this matter.

Discussions are ongoing between PF and Mark Hindley, SFCC Chair, in relation to the Community Liaison Director role.

11. AOCB

Fireworks: A request has come in for funding for the annual Fireworks display. CL notified the Board that SFCC are currently preparing a survey to be sent to all community members regarding the area being designated a fireworks free zone. The Board will await the outcome of this survey before making any decisions on funding, and it is hoped that this will be in the near future. It was requested that the question asked in the Survey be very succinct, as in requiring a straightforward “yes or no”.

Highland Gathering: JL notified the Board that funding totalling £11,500.00 has been secured from SSEN (£5000.00), BayWa (£5,000.00) and Glen Earrach Energy (£1,500.00). Other sponsorship, including competition prizes, have been generously donated by individuals and businesses. These funds significantly reduce the costs of the Gathering to the Community, and SFCT offer their sincere thanks to the donors.

Strategy Planning: Following Director training and discussion events earlier in the year provided by the Development Trusts Association of Scotland (DTAS), the need for a much clearer strategy within the Trust has been highlighted, as suggested by JL previously. PF has requested that LF, KS and CG meet with JL to discuss strategic planning. JL to make meeting arrangements, with the lessons and structure provided by DTAS as a basis, this is to be done with the cooperation of the whole Board.

Wildside security: PF noted that the entry code for the Wildside Centre has not been changed regularly, and that access has been gained to the building by unknown persons. A new combination will be installed every month, and Community Groups/regular users will be emailed the information. The Board **AGREED** to change the code monthly, and relevant parties will be notified each month.

MSP constituency meeting: JL notified the Board that representatives from SFCT have been invited to meet with Deputy First Minister, MSP Kate Forbes, at Stratherrick Public Hall on Friday 25 July 2025 at 13.00. Board members are invited to submit questions to JL by 9 July.

Foyers Primary School: Prior to the Board meeting, a majority of directors voted in favour of SFCT obtaining a license to occupy the school. This will now go ahead and will be on a trial-and-error basis with usage and costs being monitored closely. It was noted that the license is determinable by either party upon giving one month's notice.

Apprenticeships: PF informed the Board that an Apprentice has been sponsored by Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company with a company called SN Joinery.

SFCT/BCC Lease: CL raised the issue that there did not appear to be formal landlord consent from SFCT/SSE allowing BCC to make alterations to the Hub. PF has written to SFCT Solicitors, MacLeod and MacCallum, in relation to this matter and will update the Board in due course. It was stated that it is important to formally document such matters, for the protection of all parties.

Housing: The Board discussed the funds that had been previously awarded to the two new tenants of Dodd's Park. Clarity on the reasons for this one-off payment were provided by JL and PF, relating to the need to improve the basic specification of the properties. The need for clearer specifications for any future SFCT housing was also noted and will be discussed in the future.

Action: KC to notify regular users/community groups of the lock box code change on a monthly basis.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wildside Centre: 6 August 2025 at 7pm

Meeting closed at 22:05.

Signed by Chair (PF): _____

Date: _____