

**Minutes of the meeting of Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust held at  
The Wildside Centre, Whitebridge and via MS Teams.**

**Wednesday 3 December 2025 at 7pm**

<b>Present</b>	Peter Faye (PF); Ken Sinclair (KS); Maire Brown (MB); Chris Gehrke (CG); Mark Sutherland; Graham Bain (GB); Sorin Bogdan (SB); Neil Farnham (NF).
<b>Apologies</b>	Lewis Fraser (LF); Stewart MacPherson (SM)
<b>Non-attendance</b>	
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Faye (PF)
<b>In attendance</b>	Jewels Lang (JL) - SFCT CEO; Kirsteen Campbell (KC) - SFCT Administration and HR Officer; Craig Lightbody (CL) - Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council (SFCC) Representative.
<b>Minutes</b>	Kirsteen Campbell (KC)
<b>Declarations of interest</b>	Neil Farnham – BCC Graham Bain – Foyers Stores and Cafe

## INTRODUCTION

PF welcomed the Board and Staff members to the meeting which commenced at 19.02.

Discussions began with introductions around the table to help familiarise the new directors with the Board and Staff members present. PF then introduced Craig Lightbody (CL), who was in attendance to communicate the views of the SFCC. PF gave an overview of the history of the relationship between SFCC and SFCT to new Directors.

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATE

CL brought the following items to the Board from the SFCC:

1. What is the Board's opinion on the success or otherwise of the AGM?
  - a. The overall view of the Board was that the AGM was a success with positive discussions taking place. However, an investigation is currently underway regarding a comment made in relation to SFCT staff. The outcome of this will be made available once complete.
  - b. CL outlined some of the anonymous comments from SFCC members which included PF being unsupportive of SFCT Staff; blaming past directors for current issues; and not reading the room correctly.
  - c. The Board members agreed that a meeting between SFCT and SFCC would be prudent to discuss the comments made and to dispel any misconceptions regarding the Staff.
2. Concerns were raised by one SFCC member about the grant procedures.

- a. JL responded that the grant procedures are in the process of being updated and are under constant review.
3. Concerns were raised as to why the purchase of Foyers Primary School was brought up at the AGM.
  - a. PF acknowledged that this, in hindsight, was perhaps the wrong time to bring the subject up, and it could have been approached differently. However, as PF made clear at the time this was to try and gauge general opinion given the number of members present.
4. The AGM could have been an opportunity for SFCT Staff to talk about their work etc.
  - a. JL and PF pointed out that an AGM is a formal meeting to hear the chairs report, receive the financial report, and for the election of members.
  - b. The AGM is not the correct place to highlight or showcase the work of the Staff.
5. Would the Trust consider more open meetings increasing openness and visibility?
  - a. PF responded that the meetings are for Board members. However, JL is available at the Wildside should community members wish to discuss any matters. The open-door policy is regularly highlighted through social media and members correspondence.
  - b. JL noted that SFCT will be revisiting the Community Action Plan (CAP) in the new year and this would be an opportune time for collaboration between SFCC and SFCT where ideas and plans could then be shared with the community through open meetings and events.
6. Do the Board think this session is worthwhile?
  - a. The consensus from the Board was that this meeting is a positive interaction between SFCC and SFCT.

**Action: JL to arrange a meeting with the SFCC and SFCT Directors to address issues raised regarding the AGM.**

PF thanked CL who left at 20.00.

## MINUTES

1. MS **PROPOSED** and CG **SECONDED** the Minutes from the Board meeting held on 5 November 2025 and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present as a correct record and were **APPROVED** by the Chair.
2. CG suggested that the Investment Fund, which as of 29 October 2025 is valued at £1,792,946.00 should be added to the November draft minutes. This Board members present **AGREED** and KC to amend these accordingly.
3. This brought about a wider discussion about investments and GB agreed to join the sub-group of Directors, including KS and LF, who will meet to discuss strategy for the fund and in general.

## ACTIONS

1. PF and JL went through the SFCT Action List, and all items from previous minutes that remain open were discussed and updates provided. The following actions were marked as completed:
  - a. Action: KC to follow up with insurers regarding the diesel heating system and, if this is not acceptable, what options would be?
  - b. Action: JL to speak to KW Firewood regarding the processing of fallen trees and the costs involved.
  - c. Action: JL/PF to action improving the floodlights at Wildside.
  - d. Action: MB to contact the former SOSA Treasurer to determine what funds remain.

- e. Action: JL to draft letter to be sent to the SOSA President and Treasurer.
- f. Action: CL, as a member of Foyers Stores Steering Group, to arrange a meeting between SFCT Directors, BCC Directors, and Carol Masheter (CM), Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE). CL to request BCC share the most recent business plan with attendees prior to the meeting.

New actions are as follows:

**Action: JL to contact Firewood Group and request suggestions on how best to process the wood offered by community members.**

**Action: PF to contact Calder Electricians in relation to moving the PIR to the carpark at the Wildside Centre.**

**Action: MB to meet with SOSA Chair in person to raise concerns that no communication has been received in relation to the unspent funds previously awarded.**

*NF and GB left the room at 20.30 due to conflict of interests.*

**Action: JL to draft letter to BCC outlining the processes and procedures to take place should a Large Group grant application be submitted. These include external constraints and third-party involvement which is out-with SFCT control; the very tight timeline dangers; and the due diligence that needs to take place before any final decision can be made by SFCT.**

*NF and GB joined the room at 21.15.*

## **FINANCE REPORT**

1. CG **PROPOSED** and PF **SECONDED** the Finance Report and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present. The report concluded that income/expenditure was all as expected.
2. CG raised two questions in relation to the cashflow which will be addressed by LF and JL and a response given at the next Board meeting.
3. PF **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** the Cashflow and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present, all as expected.

**Action: LF to schedule a meeting to provide an overview of financial procedures and policies with new Directors.**

## **GRANTS**

1. The following Student Grants of £500.00 to cover course costs were **APPROVED** by all Board members present:

Robbie Stuart  
Raine MacGruer  
Laud Le Sueur  
Casey Burton  
Susan Greer  
Abi Discombe

2. The following Driving/Motorcycle Lessons Grants of £300.00 were **APPROVED** by all Board members present:

Grahame Skinner  
Pippa Ferguson

3. Large Group grant proposal to increase annual income:

CG **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** that the current upper limit of annual income for Large Group grant applicants be raised from £250,000 to £1,000,000. All Board members present **AGREED**.

As the present upper limit would prevent local groups, such as BCC, making applications, this amendment will ensure their applicant status is maintained.

### **ERROGIE CHURCH TENDER**

1. JL: Tender received and work will commence in the new year upon receipt of the Building Warrant from the Highland Council (THC).
2. JL notified the Board that Project Co-Ordinator, Caroline Tucker, has stepped down and SB will be assisting with the Errogie Church project going forward. The Board wished CT well and commended her on the work she has undertaken during her time with SFCT.

**Action: JL to follow up with THC regarding the Building Warrant for Errogie Church.**

### **AOCB**

1. Event Management:
  - a. The news of CT stepping down from her role at SFCT sparked discussion about bringing in an Event Management organisation to oversee future events, or the potential to approach educational establishments offering Event Management course for students to assist with planning. This will be discussed further in the new year.
2. Health and Wellbeing:
  - a. GC proposed the approval and agreement of the Board to create a new form of grant to subsidise gym membership for the residents of the SFCT area. This was received well by the Board members present and the proposal was **AGREED** in principle. CG to undertake further investigations prior to full Board approval and will be discussed further at the January Board meeting.
3. Pathways Group:
  - a. The Board members present **AGREED** that SFCT would pay for the cost of a people counter on the South Loch Ness Trail and the spend of £344.24 was **APPROVED**.

### **MEMBERSHIPS**

1. The Board welcomed two new Ordinary Members.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

1. SSG Meeting – 7pm Wednesday 10 December 2025 at the Wildside Centre.
2. SFCT Board Meeting – 7pm Wednesday 7 January 2026 at the Wildside Centre/MS Teams.
3. SSG Meeting – 7pm Wednesday 28 January 2026 at the Wildside Centre.

Meeting closed at: 23.01