

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

Wednesday 4th February 2026 at 7pm

Present	Peter Faye (PF); Lewis Fraser (LF); Graham Bain (GB); Sorin Bogdan (SB); Neil Farnham (NF); Lewis Fraser (LF); Chris Gehrke (CG); Ken Sinclair (KS); Maire Brown (MB).
Apologies	Mark Sutherland (MS); Stuart MacPherson (SM).
Non-attendance	
Chair	Peter Faye (PF)
In attendance	Jewels Lang (JL) - SFCT CEO; Kirsteen Campbell (KC) - SFCT Administration and HR Officer; Gary McGowan (GM)
Minutes	Kirsteen Campbell (KC)
Declarations of interest	Graham Bain – BCC/Foyers Stores acquisition grant application Neil Farnham – Kathleen Farnham grant application

1) INTRODUCTION

- 1) PF welcomed the Board and Staff members to the meeting which commenced at 19.03. He welcomed Gary McGowan (GM), who was in attendance to communicate the views of the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council (SFCC).

2) COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATE

- 1) GM: In relation to the Foyers Stores acquisition grant application, could SFCT improve how information is communicated to the community, particularly in relation to progress since the public meeting and the due processes that have taken place? Discussion around possible ways to deliver information in general, other than social media and the SFCT website, included using the community notice boards to display information.
- 2) PF and JL noted that there is always someone at the Wildside Centre should any member of the community want information face to face, plus SFCT Directors and Staff email addresses are available on the website.
- 3) JL requested an update on the renewable schemes.
GM: Public enquiries are ramping up with Mark Hindley (MH), SFCC Chair, being the Ambassador for Loch Kemp. It's looking more difficult for Loch Kemp to get through. There are delays going on almost everywhere: Aberarder; Corriegarth 2; Loch na Cathrach; Dell; and Glen Markie, although there is potential that everything will happen at one time. A

representative from SFCC will be attending a meeting in Edinburgh to discuss the industrialisation of the Highlands, and GM is attending a meeting with the John Muir Trust.

- 4) KS asked if SFCC were any further forward in employing a planning consultant who could be funded partially by SFCT. GM will raise this at the next Community Council meeting.
- 5) PF noted that it was disappointing that a meeting to discuss the anonymous comments made about himself at the SFCT AGM had not yet taken place. Any comments made at an SFCC Meeting should surely be minuted and attributed to the speaker. GM will raise this with MH at the next SFCC meeting.

All parties in attendance agreed that the meeting between SFCT and SFCC is worthwhile.

3) MINUTES

- 1) PF **PROPOSED** and CG **SECONDED** the Minutes from the Board meeting held on 3 December 2025 and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.
- 2) CG **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** the Minutes from the Annual General Meeting held on 27 November 2025 and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.
- 3) LF **PROPOSED** and CG **SECONDED** the Minutes from the Post-AGM held on 27 November 2025 and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.

4) 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 and are now closed:
 - Action: JL to contact Firewood Group and request suggestions on how best to process the wood offered by community members.
 - 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.
 - Action: JL to follow up with THC regarding the Building Warrant for Errogie Church.

5) FINANCE REPORT

- 1) GB **PROPOSED** and CG **SECONDED** the Finance papers, and these were **APPROVED** by all Board members present.

6) **GRANTS**

1) **Large Group Grants**

- I) Boleskine Community Care - £180,000.00 to match fund purchasing the Foyers Stores as a community acquisition - £100,000 to match fund purchase of the building, £60,000 to purchase business goodwill and up to £20,000 for stock.
- II) The following conditions apply (prepayment conditions are in bold and must be met before any fund are released):
 - i) **Standard Security/Clawback Provision: The funder should retain a Standard Security or clawback over the property for fifteen years. If the property is sold, transferred, or ceases to be used for the approved purpose within this period, the grant of £160,000 becomes repayable. SFCT to arrange this. Any agreement in conjunction with SLF.**
 - ii) **Final confirmation to be provided of Lease terms between BCC and the CBS (Foyers Stores Ltd).**
 - iii) **Prior to the release of any grant funding for the Business, please provide a copy of the final share offer.**
 - iv) **Prior to the release of any grant funding for initial stock, the applicant must provide a satisfactory independent valuation of the proposed stock to be acquired.**
 - v) Title and Ownership Conditions: Evidence of title; Confirmation that the applicant is the registered owner; No undisclosed charges, securities, or restrictive covenants that would undermine use.
 - vi) The grant award represents SFCT's full and final contribution towards the acquisition of the building, the currently identified repair condition-related works and future running costs.
 - vii) Any conditions of the grants relating to the operation of the business must be transferred to the CBS and included within the MOU/business transfer documentation.

- viii) Reporting: Quarterly reports covering: Management accounts; Use of the building; Community benefit delivered; Any income generated; Maintenance undertaken or planned.
 - ix) That the grant to meet the above purpose will be spent within twelve months of the date of grant award.
 - x) The group to return any unspent funds at the end of the period.
 - xi) Article(s) and photographs to be made available for Stratherrick and Foyers News during the construction and at the completion of the project.
 - xii) All promotional/advertising material, signs and correspondence to acknowledge the funding received from SFCT. The SFCT logo to appear on all such documentation with the words “Funded and supported by Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Limited” clearly legible.
 - xiii) A plaque to be displayed on the building will be supplied.
 - xiv) That the organisation will comply with all reasonable requests for participation in publicity, provision of photographs, etc, in connection with this grant award.
 - xv) Any assets bought with the Grant will not be sold, disposed of, or given away to any other group or individual within the appropriate financial life of the asset without prior approval in writing to SFCT. In the event of sale or disposal of the asset purchased with the SFCT funding, SFCT would enter into a discussion as to the percentage of repayment of the award.
 - xvi) That you will return a completion report to the Trust after the grant is spent.
- III) In relation to the additional £35,000.00 requested by BCC in their grant application, further discussion between the SFCT Board and both SSE and BCC is required.

2) Constituted Groups for Community Benefit

- I) Aldourie Primary Parent Council - £558.00 to assist with the cost to send two P7 pupils and 1 staff member to Loch Insh for an outdoor learning residential trip with pupils from Farr and Stratherrick Primary Schools.
- II) Stratherrick Nursery and Primary School Parent Council - £9596.00 to support essential enrichment opportunities for pupils by funding transport for swimming lessons, sporting events, training and trips; upgrading learning resources; providing after-school clubs and activities; covering educational subscriptions; bringing in external specialist visitors; enhancing musical education; and helping families meet the cost of the P7 residential trip. **Special conditions:**
 - i) Before this grant will be paid, the unspent funds from the grant awarded in December 2024 must be returned to SFCT.

- ii) That the grant to meet the above purpose will be spent within twelve months of the date of grant award.
- iii) Group to return any unspent funds at the end of the period.
- iv) A spreadsheet, that will be provided by SFCT, to be completed to log the spend of the grant and all receipts/invoices to be provided with the completed spreadsheet at the end of the year.

3) Non-Constituted Groups/Individuals for Community Benefit

- I) Kathleen Farnham - £1000.00 to subsidise arts and crafts workshops for community members. **Special conditions:**
 - i) That the grant to meet the above purpose will be spent within twelve months of the date of grant award.
 - ii) Applicant to fill out and return the spend tracker spreadsheet provided at the end of the period.
 - iii) Applicant to return any unspent funds at the end of the period.

4) Student Grants

- I) Rowan Main - £500.00 towards course costs.
- II) Daisy Ferguson - £500.00 towards course costs.

5) Driving/Motorcycle Lessons

- I) Joey Burton - £300.00 towards the cost of driving lessons.
- II) Scott Simpson - £300.00 towards the cost of driving lessons.

PF **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** all grants, and these were **APPROVED** by all Board members present.

Action: JL to revert back to SSE with the Board's concerns regarding BCC's proposed Development Manager post.

7) HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 1) In relation to the proposal made by CG to subsidise gym membership at the December Board meeting, JL referred to the health and wellbeing survey that was recently carried out. This highlighted the need for a local facility. However, asking about gym membership was not included in the survey and therefore no data surrounding need could be provided.
- 2) JL suggested that SFCT should be encouraging people to stay in the community rather than go to Inverness for gym facilities. CG to report back to the Board in March regarding his proposal.

8) COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

- 1) KS questioned the value of the community transport currently provided by SFCT given that the uptake has been low. JL reminded the Board that a report had previously been circulated regarding community transport. She also noted that this is funded by a grant from the Highland Council.

Action: JL to recirculate the Community Transport report to Board members.

9) UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

- 1) JL raised the issue of SFCTs Unacceptable Behaviour policy following incidences relating to unacceptable behaviour towards Staff and Directors. The general consensus around the table was that full investigations should take place into any incidents that occur against SFCT Staff or Directors, and that these actions will not go without consequences where applicable.

Action: JL to contact BCC in relation to the comments made at the AGM.

10) AOCB

- 1) Sorin Bogdan (SB) resigned as a Board member as he has taken up the position of SFCT Project Co-Ordinator which he will commence on Monday 9th February 2026. The Board members present congratulated Sorin on his appointment.
- 2) NF asked about the solar panels for the Wildside Centre and requested to meet with Sharon Ferguson (SF), SFCT Funding and Development Officer.
- 3) PF reminded the Board of the upcoming Pie and Oddly Shaped Balls event showing the Rugby match on 14th February.
- 4) The Board welcomed one new Ordinary Member.

Action: NF to arrange a mutually agreeable time with SF to discuss solar panels.

11) DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- 1) SFCT Strategy Group Meeting 25th February 2026
- 2) SFCT Board Meeting 4th March 2026

Meeting ended at 22:02