

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

Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 7pm

Present	Peter Faye (PF); Ken Sinclair (KS); Maire Brown (MB); Lewis Fraser (LF); Chris Gehrke (CG); Graham Bain (GB); Neil Farnham (NF).
Apologies	Stewart MacPherson (SM); Mark Sutherland (MS)
Non-attendance	
Chair	Peter Faye (PF)
In attendance	Jewels Lang (JL) - SFCT CEO; Kirsteen Campbell (KC) - SFCT Administration and HR Officer; Gary McGowan (GM) - SFCC Representative.
Minutes	Kirsteen Campbell (KC)
Declarations of interest	Graham Bain – BCC update

1) INTRODUCTION

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

2) COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATE

- 1) PF welcomed GM to the Board. GM notified the Board that he has been nominated by Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council (SFCC) as the representative at SFCT Board meetings going forward.
- 2) In relation to communication between SFCT and SFCC, everyone in attendance agreed that the meetings are both positive and worthwhile. A date is to be agreed for the forthcoming Community Action Plan (CAP) update meeting which is to be hosted jointly by SFCC and SFCT.
- 3) GM gave the Board an overview of his recent meeting at Holyrood where SFCC, along with other Community Councils from around Scotland met with Scottish Government Officials, including Gillian Martin MSP for Net Zero and Energy to demand a pause to the renewable energy developments in the pipeline. The workload placed on Community Councils to review and respond to renewable energy planning applications is out of control, and there is urgent need for a national plan to be put in place. GM commended the work that SFCC Chair, Mark Hindley (MH), has put into preparing reports on behalf of SFCC in relation to this.
- 4) GM notified the Board that a joint Dark Skies application has been submitted by SFCC, Strathdearn CC, and Strathnairn CC to the Highland Council (THC).

- 5) In relation to the meeting between PF and MH regarding comments made at the SFCT AGM, a mutually agreeable date has not yet been reached.

GM left at 19.34

Action: JL to liaise with Sharon Ferguson, SFCC Administrator in relation to the joint CAP meeting.

LF asked who gave the mandate to SFCC to apply for the Dark Skies zone and will this be detrimental to future funding for SFCT. JL will raise this at the next SFCC meeting.

3) MINUTES

- 1) CG **PROPOSED** and LF **SECONDED** the Minutes from the Board meeting held on the 4th February 2026 and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present as a correct record and were **APPROVED** by the Chair.

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:
 - PF to contact Calder Electricians in relation to moving the PIR to the carpark at the Wildside Centre.
 - JL to revert back to SSE with the Board's concerns regarding BCC's proposed Development Manager post
 - NF to arrange a mutually agreeable time with SF to discuss solar panels.
 - JL to recirculate the Community Transport report to Board members.
 - JL to contact BCC in relation to the comments made against a member of the SFCT staff at the AGM.

The following new action arose in relation to the previous minutes item relating to SOSA:

Action: JL to write to SOSA regarding the unspent funds from their SFCT grant which was awarded 2021.

5) FINANCE REPORT

- 1) LF gave an overview of the mid-year Finance report which was prepared by Fiona Mustarde (FM), SFCT Finance Officer.

LF **PROPOSED** and KS **SECONDED** the Finance report and these were **AGREED** by all Board members present.

- 2) The Board discussed how financial information is delivered to the community and the possibility of using publications such as the Spring Magazine to outline procedures etc in layman's terms.
- 3) The question was raised about how SFCT pay for electricity in their properties. JL to come back to the Board with information from the Funder Agreements.
- 4) The Board members present **AGREED** to an increase of £484.00 to £515.00 to the current rent paid by the residents of Dodds Park. This is in line with the Scottish Government grant received by SFCT which states rent must be in line with a social housing rate. CG questioned why this increase is not in line with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and JL to look into this.

Action: JL to find out why the rent increase for Dodds Park residents is not in line with the LHA.

Action: Sorin Bogdan (SB), SFCT Project Co-Ordinator, to produce a cyclical maintenance programme for Dodds Park, and to establish a sinking fund.

6) WILDSIDE PRICING

- 1) KC gave an overview of the paper prepared by SF in relation to the current pricing structure for hiring the Wildside Centre.

CG **PROPOSED** and GB **SECONDED** the new pricing structure and all Board members present **AGREED**.

- 2) It was also suggested that hours of availability should be displayed online and at the front door of the Wildside Centre, so community members know when to visit.

Action: KC to update existing Wildside booking pricing information.

Action: JL to liaise with Calum Martin (CM) SFCT Marketing and Media Officer to update hours of availability.

7) SFCT STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP (SPG) PROJECT PRIORITISATION

- 1) Concepts papers for the current projects are being worked on by SB and SF which will be presented to the Board in the coming months. The SPG has devised a prioritisation tool which will be used by the Board to evaluate existing projects. The Board are currently reviewing this document, and any amendments will be updated by JL.

8) CAP REVISIT

- 1) Nick Wright, Planner, is beginning the work on the revised CAP which will be completed by the end of September 2026.

9) VISIT TO MAKAR

- 1) KS, PF and SB visited Makar, who specialise in designing and developing homes and are locally based. The meeting was positive, and SFCT may contract Makar for future housing developments.

10) COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

- 1) JL notified the Board the the new fully funded van has been delivered to THC. Funding includes insurance costs.

11) COMMUNICATION

- 1) GB suggested that the work undertaken by SFCT is not communicated to the community effectively. JL agreed to discuss with staff ways to improve communication.

GB left at 21:56

12) BOLESKINE COMMUNITY CARE (BCC)

- 1) JL notified the Board that the Community Share Offer document has now been received from BCC, as per the conditions of the recently awarded SFCT grant of £180,000.00 to match fund purchasing the Foyers Stores as a community acquisition.
- 2) Standard Security can be taken against the £160,000.00 portion of the SFCT grant in relation to the purchase of the building.
- 3) In relation to the £35,000.00 grant requested to fund a Development Manager, JL has advised BCC that an assessment cannot be undertaken prior to a grant application being made.
- 4) During the discussion, it came to light that comments had been made by community members alleging that SFCT Chair, PF, had made decisions over and above the Board in relation to the shop project. This misinformation is untruthful, unhelpful, and malicious, and SFCT will review this as per the Unacceptable Behaviour policy.

PF left at 22:19

- 5) Prepayment conditions are in the process of being met by BCC. SFCTs solicitor is currently investigating the statutory process in relation to back-to-back TUPE. Until a formal TUPE process has taken place, and all other grant conditions fulfilled, no payment can be made.

13) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

SFCT Board Meeting – Wednesday 1st April 2026, 7pm.

Meeting closed at 22:40