

# DALWHINNIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES

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Date: Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Time: 18.30

### **APOLOGIES and WELCOME**

MAC welcomed Colin Whitton from Community Connexions

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mike Chappell (MAC), Nicola Penny (NP), Lesley Carr (LC), Si Conroy (SC), Jen Dickinson (JD), David Haggarty (DH), Ian Philp (IP), Muriel Cockburn – HC (MC), Colin Whitton – Community Connexions (CW)

### **DECLARATION OF INTEREST/INTENTIONS**

No declarations

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting from 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025 were proposed by SC and seconded by DH

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

- Current Balance - £8,712.51
- The current balance includes all funds from the craft fair, a total of £400 which almost covers the cost of the grass cutting per year. The new gym equipment costs have also been paid for. Cost of the speeding sign is still to be taken out
- The Bank of Scotland charges are increasing and even charge if you deposit cash into one of their branches. It was agreed that if possible all payments are taken either by a card reader or paid in BACS moving forward to avoid incurring these costs. There have also been several issues with the bank so it was suggested that looking into an alternative may be an option although most banks now charge. MC suggested this is raised at the next community council forum as others are also having the same problems.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

- Community Connexions – Colin Whitton, Business Development Manager, shared information on the aims of the providing community transport to isolated areas. They currently operate from Cromdale/Tomatin to the north and Kingussie/Newtonmore to the south. The central office is based in Aviemore and recently the CEO Donald Hall attended the village craft fair to promote what they do. In addition to transporting people, which is carried out by their small minibuses or volunteers with private cars, they also hold social events such as curling, music and food. They employ an events co-ordinator who organizes these events. They currently have 75-80 volunteers and 240-250 regular users. In addition they also operate a be-friending scheme which is supported by Highland Hospice. They recognize an opportunity for providing transport to both Dalwhinnie and Laggan, and would look for volunteers (5 CC members offered their services straight away), they would start by organising some events and get busses here to take people. As a volunteer, the induction is done online and includes awareness on assisting people with wheelchairs and dementia. All costs are covered by Community Connexions and it could be as little as just 2 hrs per month volunteering. The plan would then be to create a section 22 bus route and again training would be given. We will look to move forward with this in the New Year.
- Village Speed Signs – The electronic signs have now arrived and need setting up. There have been offers of locations on private land to site these and we have various poles available to mount it on. The policemen cut outs also need to be reinstated once mounted on plywood to make them more sustainable to the weather. MAC requested that we get these both organized before our next meeting

- DCC Fund Raising - Craft Fair – MAC thanked JD for her hard work in pulling this together. JD mentioned a possible spring fair as some of the stall holders this time had asked if we have one. Feedback so far has been positive from the stallholders
- Website – MAC thanked JD for her feedback and has now passed on the information to the developer. An invoice has been passed to LC to look at possible funding. JD suggested that the Past & Present account be closed as no further books would be produced and the current balance be used towards the cost of the new website. LC to speak to Bill Carr who was the secretary for Past & Present to find out if this would be acceptable. Any further ideas for the website to be provided by the next meeting
- Village Energy Project – LC advised that the surveys are due to be carried out wc 17<sup>th</sup> November 25, not all properties will require a survey if they have had an EPC within the last 3 years this could be used. 29 houses and 6 businesses have signed up to be part of the project. This is to include the waiting rooms on the station platform and the possibility of installing an EV charging station. The distillery and looking at their visitor centre, managers house and offices. Ben Alder estate are including their workers cottage along the lane leading to the underpass. A working group has now been formed to move this forward.
- Acquisition of land in Dalwhinnie, Scottish Land Fund Application – LC advised slow progress on this. The DCDDT constitution requires to be rewritten, in order to move to tier 2 model with at least 20 members from the community. This will be completed with the assistance of VABS early next year. The DCDDT now has 20+ names as members
- EARBA Pump Storage – no further update at the meeting. SSEN are holding a meeting in Laggan on 27<sup>th</sup> November with regards the sub station location. There will be a meeting of the alliance to be held in Dalwhinnie in January.
- Community Action Plan – MAC has now emailed Alice Fogg of VABS (who is currently away), with 4 headline points for us to work from – Infrastructure, Communications, Development and Housing. Fiona Quirie AF assistance can be contacted regarding this currently. VABS are holding a meeting in Dalwhinnie on 26<sup>th</sup> November 25.
- Cycle Path – JD had a meeting with representatives of CNPA (Adam Streeter Smith), Wolftracks (Cristian) and Amanda Gallagher from Laggan to discuss the options for opening up a cycle route to provide a circular route to/from Dalwhinnie and connecting up with Laggan. It is understood the approximate current cost of creating a path (or cyclepath), is £200 per metre, therefore all avenues for funding need to be pursued.
- We will have to look at multiple options for Funding.
- It is thought SSEN in regards the location of the sub-station could help, along with assistance from the various estates including specifically Ardverike and Ben Alder, BEAR and the EARBA project. We would be looking at original drovers routes/paths being re-instated and we need to have major support locally. Investigations on the current state of some routes is to be done, and approaches to estates to float the idea.
- Quarry – blasting happened last Friday (7<sup>th</sup> Nov), this was felt/heard by some. MAC contacted Leiths who have advised the green water is due to algae. MAC has asked what they intend to do with the excess water but has had no response. LC suggested contacting CNPA environmental ecologists and SEPA over the concerns as to what the algae is

## PLANNING MATTERS

Nothing to report

## AOB

- NP asked how to establish who is responsible for/owns what land. MC can track. NP to send email
- MC (HC) advised that the HC finance budget plans have been published. NHS Highland annual review was held in Aviemore and our care homes are doing well
- LC advised attending a networking event where she met lady from NHS Highlands and discussed holding clinics/meetings in Dalwhinnie for people to attend if they need to discuss or get advice, possibly hold this one a month
- SC – thanks to DH for helping with the winter lights, we have 7 sets ready to go up, the street lights on Station Rd are not working at all and a fault has been logged.
- SC – asked if any update on the buildings on the station that could become available for use. LC advised she is waiting on more information

- JD – raised the issue of the abandoned car at the entrance to the village from the A9 northbound. This has been registered, but being sent round in circles, this is becoming an environmental hazzard. MC asked to be sent the case number given

#### **NEXT MEETING DATES**

- Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026 18.30 Dalwhinnie Village Hall
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2026 18.30 Dalwhinnie Village Hall