

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee** held in **The Glass Room, Kingussie Court House, Kingussie /Remotely** on **27 April 2026 at 9.00am.**

Present:

Mr J Bruce
Ms M Cockburn

Mr R Jones
Mr B Lobban

In attendance:

Mr L Hannah – Community Development Manager
Ms M Maguire – Principal Planner
Mr J MacLean – Bereavement Services Project Manager
Ms R Robertson, Amenities Officer
Ms C MacKenzie – Principal Housing Officer
Ms A Tanner – Community Heritage Officer
Ms R Ross – Committee Officer

Also in attendance:

Ms K Stevenson – Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Mr K Rodgers – District Manager, NHS Highland

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Leisgeulan

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/ Aithris Fhollaiseachd

There were no declarations of interest or transparency statements.

3. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Area Committee Performance Report Aithisg Seirbheis Smàlaidh is Teasairginn na h-Alba

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/08/26 by the Local Senior Officer for Highland.

The Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, provided an introduction, highlighting the key areas of the report, including accidental dwelling fires, which were below the three year average; the downward trend in deliberate fires; home fire safety visits; and community engagement at stations and in schools.

During discussion the following main points were raised:-

- following several recent wildfires in Highland, including one near the Strathspey Steam Railway, information was sought, and provided on what resources were available for dealing with wildfires in Badenoch and Strathspey;
- the community engagement around fire safety was commended and it was queried whether there were sufficient resources available to continue to build on this; and
- an update was sought, and provided, on the Community assent register and the Group Commander undertook to ensure that a further update was included in the next report.

The Committee **NOTED** the Area Performance Report.

4. **Post 2 Year Review of the Ward 20 Badenoch and Strathspey Short Term Let Control Area**

Ùrachadh Sgìrean Smachd Màil Gheàrr-Ùine

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/09/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- the amount of detail included in the report was commended;
- the data provided showed the reasons why a Short Term Let Control Area had been introduced in Badenoch and Strathspey as there was still sufficient Short Term Let capacity while there was an increase in housing available for local people;
- it was important to continue with a high level of data gathering and was refreshing to know that the data gathered would be built on; and further reports would need to come to future committees; and
- information was sought, and provided, on the different pathways for enforcement of the Short Term Let Control Area; and the action being taken to address the number of empty houses

The Committee to:-

- i. **NOTED** the evidence presented regarding the local housing market within Badenoch and Strathspey in the period pre-designation and post-designation of the STLCA;
- ii. **NOTED** the early signs that the STLCA had slowed down the growth of secondary letting short term lets within Badenoch and Strathspey in the period post-designation;
- iii. **NOTED** that limited data was available covering the period post-designation, but once available would provide a stronger basis to assess how the local housing market was performing, and the role of the STLCA within this; and
- iv. **AGREED** that future monitoring reports would be made to the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee, as set out at paragraph 10.4 of the report.

5. Bereavement Services - Project Updates **Aithisg Seirbheisean Bàis**

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/10/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- in response to a question, it was explained that unused lairs were rarely given back to the Council but due to new legislation, lairs would now only be able to be purchased for a 25 year period. The Project Manager – Bereavement Services undertook to provide Mr Lobban with the number of returned lairs;
- on the point being raised, it was confirmed that trends in burials and cremations were regularly monitored and that burials were still more popular in Highland;
- information was sought, and provided, on the safety and maintenance of burial grounds, including how unsafe monuments were secured; who was responsible for monument repairs; and how dangerous overhanging trees were managed; and
- it was important to recognise community assistance with the upkeep of burial grounds;

The Committee **NOTED** the:-

- i. progress of burial ground extensions in the Badenoch and Strathspey area; and
- ii. challenges with identifying and developing suitable land for burial ground development.

6. NHS District Plan update **Ùrachadh Plana Sgìre SNS**

There was a verbal update from the Interim District Manager, Badenoch and Strathspey District, NHS Highland.

The main points covered in the update included:-

- although Health and Social Care Services had remained pressured and the demand had not reduced following the winter, services in Badenoch and Strathspey were responding well due to having sufficient capacity in Community Hospitals and Care Homes;
- the Community Hospital had 45 beds occupied, approximately 45% of which were community admissions with the remaining 55% being Raigmore transfers;
- there were currently no delayed discharges from Raigmore from Badenoch and Strathspey and two delayed discharges from Badenoch and Strathspey Community which was low compared to other Community Hospitals in Highland;
- the Care at Home service had recently been awarded three Grade Fives by the Care Inspectorate;
- there were approximately six people currently waiting for Care at Home services within the community;

- recruitment had been successful with relatively high numbers of applicants for vacant posts;
- the waiting time for a place in a Care Home was between two and three months depending on preference; and
- District Nurses were providing increasingly complex care at home, including to an increasing number of patients with diabetic care needs, which had put pressure on the district nursing system.

During discussion the following main points were raised:

- information was sought, and provided, on community transport to the Glen Centre; the possibility of converting the unmet care need into Self-Directed Support; and the provision of diabetes care; and
- in response to a question about whether the increased levels of recruitment were due to an increase in the availability of accommodation in the area, it was confirmed that some staff had been able to secure blue-light accommodation.

The Committee **NOTED** the update.

7. Housing Management Performance Report 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 **Aithisg Dèanadais Stiùireadh Taigheadais – 1 Giblean 2025 gu 31 Màrt 2026**

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/11/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion the following main points were raised:-

- information was sought, and provided, on the national trends in homeless presentations and the possible causes of the increase; and new-build social housing becoming available in the area, particularly in Newtonmore and Grantown on Spey; and
- in response to a question, it was clarified that housing officers were continuing to engage with residents concerning antisocial behaviour.

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

8. Community Regeneration Funding Application **Iarrtas Maoineachaidh Ath-nuadhachadh Coimhearsnachd**

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/12/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- the importance of communities raising money for themselves rather than only relying on funding was emphasised and it was highlighted that the Hall Committee had been fundraising through a Just Giving page and approaching private organisations for further funding;
- it was hoped that the introduction of the new Be Connected website would lead to an increase in applications in the future;

- it was important for the Council to work closely with the Cairngorm National Park Authority regarding the funding of community projects.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Community Regeneration Funds currently available in Badenoch and Strathspey; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the CRF grant award of £60,242 to Newtonmore Village Hall.

9. Minutes **Geàrr-chunntas**

There had been circulated and **NOTED** Minutes of Meeting of the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee held on Monday 19 January 2026, which were approved by the Council on Thursday 26 March 2026.

The meeting concluded at 10.05am.