The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee** held in **The Glass Room, Kingussie Courthouse, Kingussie/Remotely** on 31 August 2026 at 10.30am.

Present:

Mr J Bruce
Ms M Cockburn
Mr R Jones
Mr B Lobban

In attendance:

Mr L Hannah, Community Development Manager
Mr A Lawrie, Principal Repairs Officer
Mr S Grant, Roads Operations Manager
Ms P Sheldon, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Mr R Murdoch, Environmental Health Officer
Ms A Tanner, Project Officer
Ms R Ross, Committee Officer
Mr C Ross, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:

Inspector C Johnstone, Area Inspector (Badenoch, Strathspey and Nairn)

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

Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, the Chair acknowledged the impact of the recent Cairngorm Wildfire on local communities and expressed sincere thanks to the emergency workers and community volunteers for their contributions to the response.

1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/ Aithrisean Fhollaiseachd

There were no Declarations of Interest or Transparency Statements.

3. Recess Powers
Cumhachdan Fosaidh

The Committee **NOTED** that the recess powers granted by the Council at its meeting on 25 June 2026 did not require to be exercised in relation to the business of the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee.

4. Police - Area Performance Report
Poileas - Geàrr-chunntas air Coileanadh Sgìreil

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/13/26 by the Area Commander (South Highland Area Command), Police Scotland.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- in response to a question, it was confirmed that there was a concerted effort all year round to tackle drug driving offences. It was highlighted that the statistical increase in these offences was in part due to the increased number of appropriately trained officers and an improvement in the ability to detect drug driving. Although not all police officers were trained in drug testing, the vast majority of road policing officers were and training provision for this continued to increase;
- in response to a request, it was advised that an update on house break-ins in Kingussie and Kincraig would be provided to the Chair;
- concerns were raised regarding anti-social behaviour, and it was requested that there be more patrols dedicated to tackling the issue. In response, the Inspector advised that he would facilitate officers to look at issues of this nature;
- attention was drawn to the success of the Harm Prevention Officer, a post funded by the Highland Drug and Alcohol Partnership. However, the risk of being reliant on one person was highlighted and it was queried whether there was any opportunity for cascading training and information sharing with local teams. In response, it was clarified that the Harm Prevention Officer worked closely with the Preventions and Interventions team and that there was appropriate absence cover available for the Harm Prevention Officer, when needed;
- it was confirmed that there was sufficient resource available to facilitate presentations in schools with officers having dedicated high schools and availability for primary school visits where necessary;
- information was sought on the percentage of 101 calls that came to a complete resolution, and it was advised that this information would be provided in due course;
- it was highlighted that the statistics in the report were too geographically widespread, and failed to provide an accurate picture of the Badenoch and Strathspey area; and
- thanks were extended to all officers for their work during the recent wildfires, and it was confirmed that Police Scotland had been very proud of the evacuations of Glenmore and Nethy Bridge.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023–2026 Year 1 attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

5. Housing Repairs and Capital Report – 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026
Aithisg Chàraidhean is Calpa Taigheadais – 1 Gearran 2026 gu 30 Ògmhios 2026

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/14/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- Members passed on thanks for the hard work of the team and highlighted the improved performance;
- updates on the investment in heating upgrades, solar panels and batteries were sought and provided; and
- it was queried whether the reduction in the price of solar panels and changes in legislation would allow further upgrades to properties.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2026 – 30 June 2026.

6. Winter Service Plan 2026/27
Plana Seirbheis Gheamhraidh 2026/27

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/15/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- Members welcomed the hiring of gritters for the winter meaning replacement vehicles would be available if needed. It was queried and confirmed that footpath gritters were also hired. Confirmation was provided that hiring of new gritters had been costed and was cost efficient and that the routine servicing of hired gritter vehicles could be carried out by Council employees;
- confirmation was provided that there was a sufficient number of contractors available to help with the winter challenges;
- the need to ensure safe routes to schools for walking and cycling was highlighted;
- it was confirmed that refilling grit bins could create a drain on resources. To limit this, efforts had been made to make the public aware that a small amount of salt could cover a larger area than commonly expected;
- responding to a question, it was explained that the Capital Plan of summer maintenance would be circulated to Members by the end of the week; and
- it was confirmed that there had been a full programme of verge maintenance and grass cutting carried out in the Badenoch and Strathspey area during the summer.

Thereafter, the Committee **APPROVED** the Winter Service Plan for 2026/27.

7. Environmental Health – Annual Report & Activity 2025/26
Slainte Àrainneachdail – Aithisg Bhliadhnail & Gnìomhachd 2025/26

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/16/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- the report was welcomed for its high level of detail and clarity;
- it was questioned whether there was a timeline for new animal health enforcement powers and if there was sufficient resource available to use these powers;
- it was confirmed that there were no businesses that required Fish/Shellfish Export Health Certificates in the Badenoch and Strathspey area; and

- information was sought, and provided, regarding the reporting of abandoned vehicles, and it was highlighted that a report on this had been presented to the Communities and Place Committee.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED**:-

i. the scope and volume of work currently being delivered in the local area;
ii. local issues and current operational priorities;
iii. Highland wide issues impacting Environmental Health services; and
iv. the format and content of the report.

8. Community Regeneration Fund Assessment of Application
Measadh air larrtas airson Maoin Ath-bheothachadh Coimhearsnachd

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/17/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the importance of sport clubs and facilities to the community was highlighted.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the Community Regeneration Funds currently available in Badenoch and Strathspey;
ii. **AGREED** to approve the application of £27,500 for the Newtonmore Tennis Club.

9. Minutes
Geàrr-chunntas

There had been circulated for noting Minutes of Meeting of the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee held on Monday 27 April 2026 which were approved by the Council on Thursday 14 May 2026 which were **NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 11.25am.