



Minutes of a meeting held on 25th September 2025, 7.00 pm

1. Welcome and apologies

- Apologies from Cllr Steven Malcolm and Cllr Martin Harrower
- Alan Rankin of Carrbridge Ahead was welcomed as an Associate Member who will work on the road safety issues in the Main Street, and especially around the build-out. The appointment will be until such times as the issues are satisfactorily resolved – hopefully within six months.

2. Update on Balnespick Windfarm from Cris Thacker, Communications Manager and Kelly Wyness, Senior Project manager at Fred.Olsen Renewables

Speakers outlined plans for the development which is north-west of Carrbridge and north-east of Tomatin. The public consultation phase is now complete but following multiple design iterations, the wind farm will comprise 9 turbines, each 200 metres to tip height, with battery storage of 10MW capacity. They will generate 64.8MW. Speakers stated that the 22km access track includes existing track used for Tom Nan Clach windfarm (the access point for Balnespick) and that roads will not need to be enhanced to accommodate vehicles transporting turbines and blades. Transportation via Inverness will involve the A9 and A95 then the A938 from Dulnain Bridge and B9007 from Duthil. They suggested there would be some, but minimum, visibility of the turbines from Carrbridge. (CCC notes viewpoint from Carr Road across the playing field.) A community benefit of £324,000 per annum will be available to share across four community councils: Strathdearn, Cawdor, East Nairnshire and Carrbridge. Environmental improvements that may be achieved by the development include peatland restoration and natural flood management bringing benefits to the Findhorn catchment. Water stored could be used to supply the local distillery.

Fred Olsen is an owner operator, remaining with the project from construction through its lifespan to decommissioning. The company has 25 years' experience in Scotland and prides itself on good community engagement.

In response to questions from councillors, speakers indicated that there was complete flexibility over funding arrangements. Arrangements could include a new fund holder to allocate funding to local projects, an existing agency, or a funding panel comprising all the community councils and the operator. All of that could be decided by local communities, as could any division between direct funding for community benefit and an

allocation for an electricity discount scheme. Speakers pointed out that discounted electricity could encourage greater consumption which was not seen as desirable. In response to question from the secretary, they said the renewables projects were not about offsetting heavy petro-chemical use by Fred Olsen cruise ships.

3. Minutes of the last meeting: motion to adopt proposed by Stephen Richter, seconded by David Johnston.

4. Matters arising

- Chair noted that painting has been carried out on some **road signs** and that speed limits and warning signs on the ground are now clearer.
- Secretary reported positive response from letter to THC's project manager for EV infrastructure and Sustainable Transport. It has been confirmed that an **EV charging point** will be installed in Carrbridge during the Pathfinder 1 phase of EV infrastructure development from March 2026-27. No site agreed but will be 'in a Highland Council-owned car park.' Currently proposal is for 1 x 7 kW unit, but this is flexible, and Community Council will be able to engage with THC to determine the best number and combination of chargers.
- Secretary noted **Police Scotland's response** to our request for incident reports. Incident reports are not produced routinely, but Neil Richards is the designated police officer who will deal with any issues raised by the Community Council.
- As requested from the floor at the previous meeting, the situation regarding **tree surveys** was investigated. Secretary reported that Grant Stuart, THC officer from the Environment Department had responded to say that private landowners such as Seafield Estate and the Woodland Trust are aware of liability and carry out regular tree surveys. Alastair Stewart of THC has the trees in Ellanwood regularly surveyed. A newly appointed Senior Arboricultural Officer, Jason Simpson, should be the point of contact for trees on Highland Council land. Individual householders are advised to have their own trees independently surveyed as the need arises. From the floor, the CC's attention was drawn to the condition of trees above the orchard.

Action: secretary to contact Jason Simpson about these trees

- Secretary reported difficulty in completing response to **CNPA's development plan survey** which contained several lengthy documents and a few questions which invited ratification or notification of what was missing from the plan. She felt it was not a user-friendly survey nor one that a lay person could easily complete. This view was endorsed from the floor and by Cllr Lobban who said that other community councils felt the same. A further phase of consultation is planned.

5. Finance: Treasurer's Report

In the past month we have spent a total of £261.10 as follows:

Bank charges - £4.25

Hall rental for meetings - £60

Stationery (paper and laminating pouches) - £26.96

Banner for Showcase and CC Banner for ongoing use - £116.40

Paint & materials for toilet block and bridge viewing platform - £53.49

Balance is now £1346.04

6. Planning applications: Proposed construction of Kyllachy Windfarm – consultation request from THC. Members have been circulated with details of the proposal with Steven Malcolm has supplied a map and is of the opinion that this appears to be an extension of the already existing Glen Kyllachy wind farm and will not be visible from the village.

Action: members to notify secretary of their views by 15th October.

7. Discussion of Current Issues

- **Repair and Restoration at the Packhorse Bridge**

Chair reported tidy-up, repainting and gardening work had been very successful and viewing area now greatly improved. Fourteen volunteers had turned up to help under the banner slogan of 'Take a pride in Carrbridge', a rallying cry for projects, not a separate organisation. A follow up planting of heather planned for 27th September in conjunction with work at the war memorial. Discussions with THC (Alastair Stewart) have taken place about improving lighting at the bridge. It was stressed that the CC is aware of safety issues involved and contractors will be employed by THC to carry out the major works. It was noted that low water levels had revealed some erosion to the pillars of the bridge. Alastair Stewart due to carry out inspection of bridge at the beginning of October. He will also be invited to look at the war memorial and the trees obscuring its view. It was noted that the cemetery road improvements have been agreed. CC wished to record a constructive relationship with THC on all these issues. The chair expressed his frustration that the CC's further work on the viewing area and surrounds had been halted by a single resident objecting to work being carried out and expressed the view that an individual should not be able to derail work being carried out on behalf of the whole community.

- **Reinstatement of roads**

Chair reported that a meeting had taken place with the Roads Department and that a further meeting was planned. No response as yet from THC on the road safety paper that CC had submitted. Question from the floor addressed the buildout and the safety issues involved, particularly for residents making a right turn opposite it. Their grave concern about safety issues was stressed. Cllr Lobban noted the concern and offered to pursue a response on the road safety paper.

Action: Cllr Lobban to follow up

- **Memorandum of Understanding between Carrbridge Ahead and Carrbridge Community Council.**

Wording of this document has been agreed but funding arrangements to be agreed prior to signing of the MoU.

Action: further meeting with CBA

- **Short term lets**

Cllr Richter outlined the position that will be adopted by the Community Council in relation to applications for short term let licences. First-time applications for planning permission and STL licences will not be opposed and new landlords given the chance to prove themselves good landlords. However, the three-yearly licence renewals which will begin

in 2026 will be subject to scrutiny. (Planning permission for use as a letting concern, once granted, remains with the building and is not subject to renewal.) If the CC is asked to support objections to renewal, it will seek evidence that the reasons for objection have been already raised with the property owner and reported to THC or – where appropriate – to the police. Based on this evidence, the CC will decide whether to support the objection. It was noted that the CC is not a statutory consultee for this type of licence and will not automatically be consulted. Cllr Richter asked Cllr Lobban about the balance of housing stock and rental properties. Cllr Lobban replied that THC had to keep in mind the economic significance in the region of tourism and therefore, of rental accommodation. Residential stock protected by policy of granting new permissions to properties with four or more bedrooms.

- **War memorial**

Chair reported that volunteers would be asked to help with preparing the war memorial for Remembrance Day.

- **Memorial to David Ritchie**

Chair expressed CC's gratitude to the board of the village hall for agreeing that a memorial plaque may be affixed to the building on the anniversary of David Ritchie's death.

7. Any other business

- In response to a letter received from a resident, the Chair stated for the sake of clarity that the Landmark roller coaster application was a pre-application and not a full planning application. It was to this investigative first stage that the CC has given its approval and the project is far from certain. There will be a public meeting prior to planning being approved. Chair expressed disappointment that the pre-application had been submitted within days of Landmark's presentation to the CCC. This created the impression that plans were further advanced than had been suggested. Secretary suggested that plans would already have taken some time to prepare and perhaps as a courtesy that Landmark had waited to submit them only after they had notified the community of their intention.

Action: Chair to meet with Ross Coulter of Landmark

- Plans to review the Community Action Plan are in hand and Alice Fogg of Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey has been invited to chair a meeting of CC and CBA to measure progress to date and what might be identified as priorities for the next plan so that it is more than a wish list and some delivery mechanisms explored.

8. Date of next meeting: 30th October 2025

Please note: items for the agenda should be sent to councilsecretary@carrbridge.com ten days in advance of a meeting.