

# Meeting of the Gairloch Community Council 14 July 2025 – Draft Minutes

- Members present:** John Beck, Karen Buchanan (in chair), Alex Gray, Terry Hooper, Rachel Wareham, Bob Widdows.  
**Others present:** Corinna Annetts, Eilidh Smith, Allan Templeton, Darren Boa, Mary Gibson, Peter Buxton.  
**Apologies received:** Cllr Liz Kraft, Pat Gulliver, Luciana Maclean
- Approval of previous minutes** Draft minutes were approved with typo correction.
- Highland Access Ranger** – Newly-appointed Highland Access Ranger Darren Boa introduced himself and outlined the Access Ranger’s role and main issues faced. Local issues, such as beach boardwalk bridge, and installation of visitor counters were discussed – Peter Buxton volunteered to assist if wanted. Darren invited direct contact from any members with matters to report. **Action: AG to circulate contact details and add Darren and Peter to GCC general circulation list.**
- Gairloch Museum Roundhouse** – Corinna Annetts and Eilidh Smith presented the plan to build a replica roundhouse beside the outdoor museum. Members observed the potential merits of the project as a community endeavour, but were disappointed that the museum had not engaged earlier in development of the idea. Questions were raised, particularly regarding potential conflict with spatial policies in the Local Place Plan and Westplan. The museum agreed to erect a temporary mock-up that would give the community an opportunity to assess the likely visual impact.
- Matters arising**
  - **Glebe** – A response had finally been received from CoS, and the lease *should* now be progressed by CoS solicitor.
  - **Police report** – report for May received. In our area: some motoring offences, small amount of anti-social behaviour, no thefts, no serious/organised crime.
  - **Roads** – TH reported to HC pothole work needed on road to Kerrysdale. No response yet re faulty road signs reported by AG.
  - **Community resilience** – still pending.
  - **Access to Opinan Beach** – outcome of funding application not expected until Oct.
  - **Housing** – letter of support submitted for SSEN funding application which is also waiting on outcome of Hydro fund application. Next meeting rescheduled at late notice to 22<sup>nd</sup> July. Karen unable to attend. **Action: JB will attend.**
  - **First Responders** – full report submitted by Amy Orr noting excellent progress, including twelve people wanting to sign up as First Responders. Fundraising of up to £15k is now needed for their grab bags. **Action: AG to review funding opts.**
  - **RTS shutdown** – noted that the Radio Teleswitch signal is being phased out gradually, having started on 30 June.
  - No substantive response from the **Co-op** or its developers regarding our suggestions, including recycling soft plastics, coffee pods & batteries, and parking bay improvements. **Action: AG to contact press office re possibly publicising this.**
  - Karen related details received of the procedure for applications to the **Invitation to Pay** fund. The Area Committee had agreed a new scheme under which applications must be joint between CC and another local body. Funds available should be notified at the start of each financial year, but no notice has been received yet this year.
  - Alex attended Community Council Convention on **proposed new powerlines** and put a summary of meeting’s conclusions and a full report in the shared folder. We are invited to attend a further meeting with all MPs and MSPs for the affected areas on 12 August in Inverness. **Action: to be reviewed at next meeting.**
- Planning** – no new applications of concern. Regarding previous concerns over proposals for development on sea side of road west of the village – Local Development Plan confirmed to have a presumption against development there. **AG to check if response date has passed.**
- Treasurer’s report** – Alex reported current bank balance slightly up at £15,429.68. Unallocated reserve £9012.50. Highland Council admin grant received; Secretary honorarium paid; Karen has been very successfully collecting flower tub donations.
- Correspondence received** – the following items in the shared folder were noted:
  - Latest **DTAS Newsletter**
  - Fortnightly **Highland Council Community Briefings**
  - Latest **Gairloch High School** newsletterAlso noted with regret that **minutes of other CCs** are no longer being comprehensively received since retirement of Kenny Maclean who used to coordinate them.
- Any other competent business**
  - **Wester Ross Radio** asked for a renewed general letter of support in advance of an upcoming funding bid, but was not willing to share details of the application at this stage. Members felt the CC should not provide generic letters of support, but would be happy to consider requests for support of specific applications.
  - Concerns were raised about various actions of **grass cutting operators**. **Action: TH to find contact in Highland Council.**
  - John Beck reported success in getting agreement that cavity wall insulation should not be a blanket requirement to qualify for **Energy Saving Trust grants**. Cllr Liz Kraft and Maree Todd MSP have also agreed to follow up this matter more generally.
  - RW reported **Poolewe Pool** has received a £21k grant for essential refurbishment work which would now go ahead.
  - Alex reported no response to request for **GALE** to put forward a new liaison person. **Action: AG to repeat request.**
- Date of next meeting** – Monday 11 August