

DRAFT Minutes of Aultbea Community Council Meeting

Monday 25th May 2026, 7pm, the Crows Nest, Aultbea Hall, Aultbea

1. **Present:** Peter Davison (PD) (Chair), Susan MacLean (SM) (Treasurer), Colin Bell (CB), Philip McLachlan (PM), Roddie MacKenzie (RM), Murdo MacLean (MM), Rebecca Morgan (Secretary) (RAM), Liz Kraft (LK) (via Zoom).
In attendance: Five members of the public (MotP).
Apologies: Gail Bellamy has made the decision to step down due to health reasons. PD thanked Gail for her contribution.
Declarations of interest: None.
2. **Minutes of meeting 20th April 2026:** Approved by PD and seconded by PM.
3. **Financial Report:** SM reported nil income for April, expenditure was £300 for defib costs, leaving the bank balance at £4013.49, of which £1440 is ring-fenced for defib maintenance. SM will be submitting accounts over to Highland Council, so we can then get our grant for this year. PM flagged that we will need to spend another £300 for a battery on a defib this month or next
4. **Ongoing items of business:**
 - **Roads:** LK spoke with Kevin Fulton is new Manager of HC Roads Team (who has taken over from Andy) – and Kevin has agreed for us to have his direct contact details to enable ACC to receive updates more quickly, plus he is likely to do a visit. MM mentioned the white lining work on south side of Loch Carron – LK reports that the white lining vehicle doubles up as another machine so we have to wait for it to be available. **Action:** LK to share Kevin Fulton’s details via email. PD to create a full list of road issues from previous minutes to send to Kevin, and then invite Kevin up to see the state of the roads and potentially attend a meeting.
 - **Local Schools:** No updates. Jennifer not in attended. Community would like an update re: Aultbea Nursery – and it coming up to a year since it was mothballed. **Action:** LK to get an update for us and/or ask at the area meeting (given the new policy/manifesto on childcare from nine months, something locally will need to be in situ).
 - **Local Deer Management:** No update. **Action:** PD to chase and CC NatureScot.
 - **Laide 30mph Speed Limit:** No update. LK reports it is worth speaking to Kevin Fulton and he can pass to relevant team. PD mentioned Scott Hunter was going to do an assessment, but LK unaware. **Action:** PD to add to the road email for Kevin Fulton.
 - **HVDC/A832 Road Closures:** There is a community drop-in session on 8 June 4-6 at Aultbea Hall, anyone can attend. RM reports issues with traffic lights at Garve, LK aware and mentions that the MSP is also aware. **Action:** RM to share with ACC council members latest email regarding road closures and works.
 - **Wind Farms Investment:** ACC members confirmed they were happy with Scott Maclean’s initial letter/email (encompassing the agreed amendments). Scott Maclean sent email in again with additional updates. **Action:** PD to follow up.
 - **Aultbea Public Toilets:** Kate Gearing from GALE attended the meeting with a breakdown of costs of toilet maintenance from January 2026 and reports that they have applied for funding via a Ward 5 grant. GALE toilets currently in negative balance £409.21. It costs between £300-320 p/m for the cleaning of the toilet. The repair of the door when broken was £846. There is a £10 monthly charge to NAYAX (card reader) plus processing fees of £2 a month. Kate reports that Loch Broom didn’t give them any funding but LK said Loch Broom have said it is under discussion to fund again. PD confirmed that with the door income and comfort allowance each month it isn’t too bad financially.
 - **Himalayan Balsam Control:** PD and RAM reports that Katie shared an email late on Monday. PD confirmed we do have funding sat at Highland Council, but if we don’t use it we lose it and there is an October deadline. PD suggests that perhaps we conduct a survey in Aultbea, as it is bad, so we understand the scale of issue, even if removal at a larger scale is next year. The window to deal with removal of it is now. **Action:** RAM to circulate email with everyone. PD to speak to Katie regarding next steps.

- **ACC Post:** RAM co-opted on to the ACC at meeting and will take on the ACC Secretary duties. Thanks extended to RAM for taking on the role. SM and RAM only two co-opted members, until election in November 2027 when it can increase again.
- **Aultbea Resilience Plan:** SM confirmed that Garve have a resilience plan. SM has created a skeleton to develop further with the sub-group. Sub-group members, SM, PD and RAM. ACC will work together with GAMs/Aultbea Hall etc. **Action:** SM to organise a meeting to discuss with PD and RAM.

5. Any other business:

- **Police Reports:** SM to attend next quarterly meeting, date TBA. LK reports police aware of stones being thrown at cars in Contin, and LK flagged a rise in anti-social behaviour in area, but will await full police reports.
- **Aultbea Bus Shelter:** LK reports that she followed this up, but Dave Summers was cutting down hours, so has just forwarded it on to Laura Carpenter (during meeting), LK recommends we raise with Kevin when we email. **Action:** PD to add to email to Kevin and about the missing perspex at Harbour building (previously been raised with Harbour Council).
- **Royal Visit to Aultbea Hall:** Princess Anne was welcomed to Aultbea on Tuesday 12 May 2026. HRH spoke to all the groups and we are very gracious for her time. HRH unveiled a plaque at the Hall. HRH also visited the Arctic Convoy Museum.

6. Correspondence

- **Proposal to Designate the Highland Rural Short Term Let Control Area (STLCA):** **Action:** RAM to resend to everyone.
- **Wester Ross Arts Drama Group funding:** PD reports he has shared information surrounding funding for meetings and venues etc.
- **Gairloch Recycling Centre:** RAM flagged that there had been concerns of the Recycling Centre closing due to parts being unavailable. Parts had been sourced and it is open.
- **Local area access removed to the shore - Area at bottom of Mellondale / Attadale etc.**
Private/Keep Out signs: CB and RM confirmed this is public land and people can walk from the shore up the road etc. **Action:** CB to take a look as paint on floor telling people to keep out/private.
- **Local area picking up after their dogs:** Boom is very bad for this, as our many of the grass verges. CB will tick some signs up. MotP confirmed Laide now has got one dog poo bin at Laide Woods. CB currently empties the dog waste bin himself, but should get a red council bin. LC confirmed that we should be able to get one, especially as there is not a general waste bin. If we did get one, the Council would empty it. **Action:** CB to stick some signs up, LK to speak to council about a bin at Maclennan Park and one by Cemetery.
- **Isle View Nursing Home request – update on use of Peter’s comments:** PD reports that the Manager had written to Jamie Stone, he hadn’t replied – so she sent our whole email on. They are currently going through inspection by Care Inspectorate.
- **Household Electrical Recycling Collection Service:** Aultbea - Monday 29th June 2026.
- **Play park funding:** Given the letter from HC regarding the new play park co-ordinator for funding SM and RM to meet at playpark to evaluate what needs doing repair wise, tidying up and to explore any funding. LC can be emailed with any items needing an upgrade. RM asked LC where Applecross get their funding for their new play park and LC confirmed that they received the last of Scottish Government funding. **Action:** SM and RAM to meet.
- **Trees at the Tops –** CB flagged that three people have asked him about the trees, and PD confirmed this has been pushed back a number of times. It was not completed in Jan or March, and needs to be done before winter sets in. **Action:** PD to email Munro’s in Dingwall and ask for an update – and SM requested that they need to confirm it will be made safe once the trees or all the trees are removed, as significant drop.
- **TORC overnight loading:** RAM reports that Jon at Torc would like to make the area aware that there will be overnight loading operations going on at out site at The Boom. This will start 01:00 of Tuesday 16th of June and will involve extra lighting and vehicle movements at the site, with 4 articulated lorries leaving from 05:00 at 45-minute intervals from the site heading for Ardersier port. These will be transporting live animals to meet with a vessel docking at the port. 2 lorries will be

returning later in the day but time for this is flexible. Jon can be contacted if anyone has any questions or concerns.

7. Planning: No updates.

8. Questions/Contributions from Members of the Public:

- After the suggestion by a MotP, PD expressed the Community's gratitude to their local M&H delivery driver, George MacKay, for the excellent service he has consistently provided. M&H confirmed that George MacKay was awarded Employee of the Month and given a £50 bonus.
- MotP asked LK if there was an update regarding Assynt Depopulation Officer. LK reports that she has not followed up as she was trying to find someone more relevant to reach out to. **Action:** LK will now try and find a NW45 contact.

9. Date of the Next Meeting: Monday 15th June 2026.