

Meeting of the Kirkhill & Bunchrew Community Council

Minute of Meeting, Tuesday 9th December 2025

Community Councillors present:

Cameron Kemp, Inglis Lyon, Judith Rumbold, Jayne Macmillan and Lindsey Stout.

In attendance:

Councillor Emma Knox.

The meeting was held in person at Kirkhill Community Centre and also online via Zoom.

1. Apologies	ACTIONS
Apologies were received from Community Councillor Éamon Doorley and George Hogg of Aird Community Trust.	
2. Minutes of the Meeting of 2025	
The minutes of the meeting were circulated online. The minutes were proposed for acceptance by Inglis Lyon and seconded by Jayne Macmillan.	
3. Matters Arising:	
<p>Noticeboard</p> <p>Cameron Kemp and the other Community Councillors support Lindsey Stout in submitting a funding application to Belladrum Community Trust for part funding of £1000 for the noticeboard. If this funding is approved (we shall hear in January), a Ward Discretionary Fund application for £500 will be made. If this is also received, Kirkhill & Bunchrew Community Council and Aird Community Trust, working together, will go ahead with the quote from Acorn Signs and the Community Council will pay any remaining balance from their budget. The quote from Acorn Signs was £1980 including V.A.T., with the price held from the quote received in January 2024. Lindsey Stout said that with the larger issues we were discussing, it would be good to provide something smaller and local, which would benefit the local area. Discussions about a new noticeboard have been going on for some years.</p> <p>Community Shop</p> <p>A meeting was held on 2nd December 2025. Grant Stewart was apologetic that he couldn't make it. He has assured Jayne Macmillan that he will be at any other meetings.</p> <p>Elizabeth Shiach provided a thorough history of the last time the shop issue was explored. Inglis Lyon said that there should be an event in March 2020 and people will be invited to the Community Centre to become involved in a shop working group. This will be a joint Community Council and A.C.T. initiative, with a working group to take the issue forward. There are plans to design and issue a leaflet and to use social media and advertise in March's Crannog.</p> <p>Innes and Struan Macdonald attended and they said that the population catchment for the Kinmylies</p>	

and Cromarty Spar shops was broadly similar. The main issue seemed to be the provision of the shop premises. In choosing a site, it must be considered that articulated delivery lorries will need to be able to access it early in the morning. The shop premises could also be a community hub or provide a footprint for other small businesses such as a hairdresser if there was an upstairs level.	
4. S.S.E.N./Community Interaction Cameron Kemp said that there has been no feedback from S.S.E.N. Cameron Kemp is to pass on to Ross McKillop, Community Support Officer for Renewable Energy, any concerns about the S.S.E.N. Liaison Group. Cameron will also get in touch with Ross McKillop to ask him more about his role and his remit. It is assumed that he won't be able to assist with any of the S.S.E.N. planning applications.	C. Kemp
5. Finance Inglis Lyon reported £4685 in the bank, less the invoice discussed below for £1400, would leave the Community Council account in a good state of financial health at £3200.	
6. Police/Rural Watch Report No police report was received.	
7. Road Safety Inglis Lyon asked Councillor Knox if we were any closer to getting the speed monitoring through Kirkhill. Councillor Knox to review.	C. Knox
8. Planning Issues The objection to the Beaully to Peterhead planning application; an invoice for £1400 for the Planning Consultant, Ian Kelly's invoice has been received. Inglis Lyon said that the crowd funder has raised £1029, which is ringfenced for Planning Consultant assistance in the Kirkhill & Bunchrew Community Council account. A contribution has been offered from Communities B4 Power Companies. £250 remains to be provided by Kirkhill & Bunchrew Community Council. Cameron Kemp and Inglis Lyon are to go ahead and pay the invoice and to request the balance remaining from Communities B4 Power Companies. Cameron Kemp said that the Fanellan Hearing was held on 18 th December. The Senior Planning Officer had notice of third party speakers. There would be a co-ordinated approach because each speaker only had fifteen minutes to speak. Councillor Knox asked to speak as a local Ward Member. She can co-ordinate with local community groups but she cannot ask questions. There was concern that the hearing was scheduled for the last Council planning meeting before Christmas. Objectors will get to speak and there will be a full debate. The site visit is now set to after New Year and the committee will reconvene and proceedings will continue after the site visit. There is potential that all Councillors may ask to visit the site.	
9. Any Other Business Lindsey Stout to book the Williamson Room for the 2026 dates.	L.S.

Lynn and Darren Redfern from Dornoch Caravan and Camping Park visited to represent Highland Caravan and Campsites Association, which has 32 campsite members and 3000 pitches. They aired concerns about the effects of the proposed Highland Visitor Levy on the Caravan and Camping site industry in the Highland area. They provided a detailed presentation, excerpts of which are below. If you would like to read the full presentation, which is on PDF, please get in touch with the Secretary, Lindsey Stout, on kandbcommunitycouncil@gmail.com.

- There will be an increase in roadside and carpark parking, littering and dumping of rubbish and grey waste in verges and in toilets instead of designated areas in campsites following the introduction of the Visitor Levy.
- With numbers of tourists increasing because of the North Coast 500 route, it would be expected to see a growth in use of caravan and campsites but there has been a sharp decrease since Lockdown. Motorhome owners who feel they don't need the facilities of a campsite park in laybys, passing places and in car parks or even outside a camping or caravan site and expect to use the facilities, using the waste, toilets and water for nothing.
- The Association feel that Highland Council is encouraging this behaviour by allocating spaces for motorhomes in Council-run car parks. In Durness, motorhomes can use the car park and not pay. The campsite is £30/night.
- The Visitor Levy will increase the cost of using a caravan or campsite to an average of £25/night across all the Association's membership sites. This will increase costs in each caravan and campsite and the customers who use the site will pay more. Carpark and roadside campers don't have to pay this cost.
- Across Highland environmental issues are being caused by littering and waste disposal in laybys and litter and waste exceeding Council car parks' bin capacity and collection frequency. On campsites this is managed and covered by business waste and recycling at a collection cost of £30 per bin. Dornoch campsite put in an extra waste and water point at a cost of £8500 to install (before running costs).
- The Highland Council Ranger service picked up 8,264 bags of rubbish this year which was not put into a Council bin. There were 5,468 recorded instances of human toileting outside. There were 207 instances of chemical and grey waste discharge. Signs have been erected at extra cost in laybys to say don't use this area as a toilet. This is paid by the taxpayer. The Visitor Levy is to cover the extra costs incurred. In fact, only the campers who use a caravan or camping site will pay the levy – those campers camping outside the campsites won't. The Visitor Levy will make campsites more expensive and push more people into using laybys, passing places and car parks.
- The Council run car parks would need to install waste water points and bins, introducing maintenance and collection costs. There would be no on-site and overnight supervision, fire safety or first aid when someone is camping outside of a campsite and there is an increased risk of fire to Council and private buildings in or beside car parks.
- Vehicle tires chew up the roadside, increasing costs of road and verge maintenance and wild camping damages rare habitats. Wild camping can also cause issues when it is directly opposite or outside houses and businesses. Passing places are blocked by tourists parking, affecting traffic flow and safety.
- Visit Scotland survey reports that 25% of all overnight stays are currently in a campsite (more than bed and breakfasts). Tourists spend on average £100 per day, £40 of which in the campsite and £60 off site. Other local businesses are supported by tourists asking the caravan or campsite owners where to visit and where to eat. In our local campsite in Dornoch, tourists spend £2 million per annum in the local economy. If the visitor is not spending in the

campsite, they are less likely to visit local businesses such as shops and pubs. They will stock up before they visit the area.

- The Association membership feel that there is no political will to change the plans for the Visitor Levy so that it does not adversely affect caravan and camping sites.

Lynn and Darren Redfern said that Highland Caravan and Campsites Association ask Kirkhill and Bunchrew Community Council to support local businesses and to encourage people to use campsites.

Inglis Lyon said that in the Cairngorm area Highland Council had put 11 to 12 parking machines in the space of 3 to 4 miles. The aim is to move parking from the side of the road to designated bays. The Cairngorm resort has added yellow lines to both sides of the access road, enforced it and this has been successful. He said that there is a need to localise the solution, to approach local Councillors and their MSP and target hotspots. The money from the Visitor Levy should be spent transparently. A body will be created to adjudicate how the money will be spent.

Councillor Knox said that she has been to Beaulieu Holiday Park and has also spoken to Lynn and Darren Redfern. Pushing camper vans away from campsites does not make sense. We need to re-examine and revisit the issue. Council run carparks cannot offer camping with no facilities. There will be a meeting on 11th December 2025 with the full Council. The Scottish Government is to re-examine the issue and provide more flexibility and more exemptions. Councillor Knox said that she would support campsite exemptions but that is her personal view.

Cameron Kemp thanked the Redferns for their presentation. Kirkhill and Bunchrew Community Council has not been contacted often about irresponsible camping (Lindsey Stout mentioned a camper van owner setting a fire in Reelig Glen carpark during a dry Summer, risking the trees in the glen and local homes). There is only one campsite in our area and a proposed glamping pod site.

Future Meetings in 2026:

Tuesdays at 7.30pm to 9pm, The Williamson Room, Kirkhill Community Centre:

13th January
10th February
10th March
12th May
9th June
18th August
8th September
10th November
8th December

If you would like to attend a meeting,
please contact us on kandbcommunitycouncil@gmail.com

Kirkhill & Bunchrew Community Council's Minutes, Data Protection Policy Statement
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