

Birse and Ballogie Community Council

Meeting at Birse Hall on 8 September 2026

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting

1. Attendees

Present: - Dave Bracegirdle (DB), Eryn Inglis (EI); Sam Colley (SC); Duncan Caird (DC)
Yvonne Allan (YA); David Williamson (DMW) (Chair)

Apologies:- Davie Winton (DW)

2. Minutes of Meeting on 15^h June 2026

These were proposed by SC and seconded by DC

3. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer DW was not present but had provided a report summarising the position through to 23rd August. The Balance in hand was £2284.27.

The annual Admin grant has been held up because we were unable to fulfil the requirement to have two signatories to the bank account on the committee. This situation has arisen because of the departure of two signatories in recent past. At the meeting DB, SC and DMW agreed to become bank signatories, and the process is underway to confirm this and thereafter release the Admin grant.

ACTION: DW/ DMW

4. Website

A WIX subscription has been taken out to enable development of a new website. The new website is still under development, but is nearing the point where it can be published as first pass. The content of the website will be minimal but will include the following elements:-

- Committee meetings, minutes and forward agenda
- Resilience Plan
- Aboyne Bridge Status
- Defibrillators
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Police Reports

DMW had made some progress on this but would be aided point forward by EI on content and presentation

ACTION DMW/ EI

5. Aboyne Bridge

DMW updated the committee on ABAC since the last meeting on 15th June. ABAC (Aboyne Bridge Action Committee) has been established in conjunction with MDCC (Mid Deeside CC), FAB (Fix Aboyne Bridge) and ABA (Aboyne Business Association) to provide a focal and communication point with Aberdeenshire Council for all issues relating to Aboyne Bridge. B2C2 has two potential slots on ABAC. DMW was willing to continue representing B2C2 on ABAC. Meetings were held with AC (Tim Stephen, Philip McKay) on 17 June, 28 July, and 25th August. The main topics discussed were progress on the two options including Surveys and Investigations, the Engagement Plan, ABA Survey (Aboyne Business Association), FAB (Fix Aboyne Bridge). DMW felt the process so far was working well. The next ABAC meeting will be on 5th October.

FAB set up a public meeting on 7th Sept in Aboyne in Victory Hall which was very well attended. DMW attended the meeting and felt it was useful in understanding the attitude within the Aboyne community. At the end of the meeting there was a show of hands in favour of repairing the bridge. DMW felt that the overwhelming support was understandable given the information presented. DMW personal reflection was that the devil lay in the inherent uncertainties and the risks with each option. He will request at the next ABAC meeting a greater articulation of the risks and mitigations with each option when the consultation occurs in November. There was very limited discussion on risks and unknowns and understandably the community favoured the better technical yet more expensive solution. This concern goes beyond the technical choice into how the final decision will be made.

6. Ballogie Nursery

Last year, the Council tried to “mothball” (effectively close) Ballogie Nursery as part of cost cutting measures. After a huge community effort, at the 11th hour the Nursery was reprieved. Whilst we do now understand that Ballogie nursery is not under immediate threat, the view shared with Finzean CC is that we can’t be complacent. The pressure on costs is unlikely to recede moving forward. Our shared belief is that the nursery can be placed on a more secure and sustainable footing if we can increase the numbers moving forward. Whilst we can’t influence birthrate, an increase can be achieved if the nursery offering was expanded and better met parental needs. The current forward plan, which is being worked with Finzean CC, is that we launch a survey in the next month or so designed to help us understand what parents want/need. This would enable us to explore possible solutions.

ACTION DMW/ SC/ Guy Haslam (Finzean)

7. Parking/ Congestion at Potarch

As discussed in previous meetings, on certain days during summer 2025 hot weather period, the Potarch area attracted a very large number of visitors. A meeting had been arranged with the Principal Landscape Services Officer in mid November. This meeting was called off due to snow. A second attempt was planned for 8th January but due to snow it was held online. The notes and actions from that meeting never arrived after several attempts. There may be no obvious solution to this problem but DMW felt that

the issue had not be satisfactorily explored. DMW will pursue a further meeting to discuss the way forward.

ACTION: DMW

8. Potarch Toilets

The provision of adequate toilet facilities is seen as an essential element for the Potarch green amenity. These are currently provided using a Portaloo. The permanent toilet block at Potarch has been closed since 2010. The issue was discussed again and it was agreed that we should look again at entry.

ACTION: DMW?DB

9. Emergency Resilience

There had been no major incidents in the previous period. A meeting of Resilience leads will take place before end September. Last November there was a drill to test out radio systems. In the event this test was not entirely successful. It was useful in highlighting deficiencies. It was agreed at the time that the drill be repeated but this has not happened. It was previously agreed that we need to test our systems in the “quiet” period. DB took an action to organise a repeat test, which will take place on Monday 14th September.

ACTION DB

10. Defibrillator Maintenance

B2C2 has three defibrillators in the community. B2C2 remain committed to finding the funding to maintain defibrillators. Aberdeenshire council have been clear that we should not use the Administrative Grant for maintenance of defibrillators. New pads and a new battery had however been purchased for the defibrillator at Birse Hall using funds already held in our account. Two sets of pads had also been purchased for Ballogie. B2C2 will continue to seek funding for these replacements.

ACTION DMW

11. Neighbourhood Watch

The WhatsApp group continues to mainly work well. Currently there are 79 subscribers and it has proved to be useful in engaging the community to provide action on areas of concern. There had been recent concerns that certain individuals were using this group to promote their own activities which were verging on an abuse of this system. SC has delivered guidance for the system use and the intent is to post this on the website which is under development.

ACTION: SC

12. Communications

a. Notice Boards

B2C2 now operates 3 notice boards:-

- Aboyne Bridge
- Ballogie Nursery
- Potarch green

b. Facebook

No new actions re Facebook. Helen Jackson continues to successfully operate B2C2 Facebook site on behalf of B2C2 committee. Helen's continuing support is much appreciated.

13. Police

B2C2 had received the Marr Community Policing Team spring 2026 report and this was distributed to the B2C2 committee email listing. The intent point forward is to make this report available through our website.

14. Next Meeting – Monday 2nd November 2026 at 1930 Birse Hall

15. Proposed Future Meeting Timetable – all 1930 at Birse Hall

- 2 Nov 2026
- 11 Jan 2027
- 1 Mar 2027
- 3 May 2027
- 28 Jun 2027