

Birse and Ballogie Community Council

Meeting in Birse Hall on 1st September 2025

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting

1. Attendees

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

Apologies: - Paul Montgomery (PM); Davie Winton (DW)

2. Minutes of Meeting on 2nd June 2025

These were proposed by YA and seconded by EI.

3. Co-option of Sam Colley

B2C2 has nine positions on the committee yet only 7 were filled in the September 2024 election. DMW put forward a proposal to co-opt Sam Colley onto the committee. In accordance with the constitution, notice of this proposed co-option was intimated to all of the Community Council's members and the Area Manager ahead of the meeting. This proposal required a two thirds majority of the Community Councillors present and voting. This proposal was unanimously approved by the five existing committee members. Sam Colley was welcomed to B2C2 committee. He now has full voting rights, will become a full member after a period of 6 months in position and will serve until the next round of elections.

4. Treasurer's Report

The treasurer was not present but provided his report ahead of the meeting. Funds at 31.08.25 stood at £3091.57. The Annual Administrative Grant of £696 was received on 18th July. On 29th August an email was sent to all community councils which places conditions on the use of this grant in this financial year. The general thrust of this email is that the administrative grant henceforth can only be used for administration and nothing else. If we don't spend the full grant Aberdeenshire Council will seek to recover the balance from us at the end of the period. This was not felt to be a welcome development which would have a negative impact on B2C2 activity.

DMW undertook to respond to the email and seek a retraction and/or clarification

ACTION DMW

5. Ballogie Nursery

The summer period has represented a hiatus in issues surrounding the continued operation of the nursery. Although this year's attempt to close the nursery had been thwarted at the eleventh hour the overall feeling was that the Education department

would return with the same proposition within the year. Sam Colley has put himself forward as chair of the PTA and it was envisaged that he will provide a key link to B2C2 on this issue. SC envisaged that they would undertake an aggressive campaign to market Ballogie nursery in the wider area, hold open days and coffee mornings to ensure higher numbers in the coming year. B2C2 would remain supportive. AR informed the meeting of the budget cycle which will lead to forthcoming budgets being set in February for schools and nurseries. DMW indicated that he would meet with Guy Haslam (Chair of Finzean CC) that week to maintain alignment on this issue.

ACTION DMW

6. Aboyne Bridge

It was felt that progress reporting on the Aboyne Bridge had not been at a level which satisfied community needs. What is clearly missing is a schedule of activities and key milestones. This will provide some transparency on progress. At the moment, we have informed only a very brief “anticipated programme”. A more detailed schedule is required. The other issue of concern is the recent retirement of Donald MacPherson who we understood was to be the individual who was accountable for the bridge repair. AR was requested to get clarification as to which individual in the organisation is now accountable for this project.

Action DMW to email request to AR, AR to follow up

Following the meeting this progress update was obtained by Ann Ross

General Update on Testing and Programme

The following testing, targeted to focus on the main areas of concern, has now been completed:-

- *ground penetrating radar (GPR) scan of the main span deck*
- *further investigations of the hinge on the main span and the Southern flood arches*
- *laboratory testing of reinforcement samples to confirm the yield strength*
- *following review of the data gathered from the GPR, trial pits were excavated to verify the results by examining the condition of the concrete and exposed reinforcement in key areas*

Our Consultants are continuing to progress with the design, supported by the outcome of the testing to minimise the interventions required.

The updated anticipated Programme:

Design and independent check – March – January 2025

Tender – February 2026 (Subject to Committee Approval and available funding) Award – April 2026

Construction – May 2026 – December 2027

7. Parking/ Congestion at Potarch

On certain days during this summer's hot weather period, the Potarch area attracted a very large number of visitors. Local resident Tracey Stanton raised the concern initially about the number of parked cars, which were blocking access to her property whilst also restricting access up the road to Shooting Greens. Tracey took a lot of photos to illustrate the problem. B2C2 committee member Eryn Inglis also witnessed one event where the police were involved. The police were attempting to get car owners to move the cars which were dangerously parked but were inhibited by the fact that car owners were not present to move their cars. There was a genuine fear that the parking would lead to a serious road traffic incident. It was clearly a situation which was fundamentally unsafe.

It was agreed that DMW would meet with Tracey Stanton and EI and report the concern to Ann Ross.

ACTION: DMW/ AR

8. Emergency Resilience

Resilience Team activity had been minimal in recent months. David Younie who was a Resilience Lead in the Marywell area has left the area and his position has been taken by Eryn Inglis. A Resilience Meeting is planned in October along with an Aberdeenshire wide resilience conference.

At the last meeting DMW mentioned that there was the possibility of back up power provision at Birse Hall to provide a local refuge during power cuts. This was under consideration at that time by Birse Association but has since been dropped due to anticipated cost.

9. Defibrillator Maintenance

David Younie has left the area. He previously took responsibility to check on the condition of the defibrillator at Ballogie Nursery. Duncan Caird volunteered to take on this role point forward.

ACTION DC

10. Neighbourhood Watch

The WhatsApp group seems to be working well. Currently there are 68 subscribers and it appears to be proving useful in engaging the community to provide action on areas of concern. The Cascade of information regarding the turning off of analogue phone lines was circulated to the community. Following a question raised in the community about the timing of this, it was established that the timetable for this depended on individual phone contracts.

11. Communications

a. Notice Boards

The old Ballogie notice board was recovered. DB is attempting refurbishment. The intent is to position this notice board in the Potarch area. This would give us 3 community notice boards.

ACTION DB

b. Website/ Facebook

Scottish Tech army are no longer providing website support. DC reported no concerns with this.

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.

12. Police & Road Safety

a. Police Report

Nothing to report. North East Crime alert August 2025 was circulated.

b. 20 mph Speed limit - the designated 20mph areas will come into play Sept 22nd. The notice to this effect was circulated to the full community by email.

13. Planters

The previous meeting agreed to remove existing planters with the exception of those planters adjacent to DB, DW and EI properties, where they will be maintained by DB, DW and EI respectively.

ACTION: DMW/ DB to visit and remove as appropriate.

14. Next Meeting – Monday 27th October at 1930 at Birse Hall

The next meeting was previously scheduled for 6th October. Due to the fact that this meeting has been put back two weeks from 18th August due to a lack of a quorum. It is proposed to move back the next meeting to 27th October at 1930 at Birse Hall.

15. Proposed Future Meetings – all 1930 at Birse Hall

- 27th October at 1930 at Birse Hall.
- 15th December
- 9th Feb 26
- 13th April 26
- 15th Jun **AGM**
- 31st Aug