

BENHOLM & JOHNHAVEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&JCC) Minutes of Meeting
Business Meeting No 478 Wednesday 14th May 2025 7.00pm – In Person Meeting at the Village Hall

Present: Michael Bennett (MB) Chair, Charis Duthie (CD) Treasurer, Linda Duncan (LD), Carol Hutton (CH), Maureen Sangster (MS), Susan Madden (SM)

Aberdeenshire Councillors: Cllr George Carr (GC), Cllr Alison Evison (AE)

Members of the public: 4 attended meeting

Agenda Item		Action
1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS	All CC members introduced themselves. MB welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2. APOLOGIES	Joann Beattie (JB) Secretary, Cllr Tracey Smith (TS), Alison Millard (AM), Craig Simpson (CS)	
3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING No 476	MB went through Minutes of last meeting for accuracy. LD proposed approval of Minutes & CH seconded.	
4. MATTERS ARISING	<p>Abandoned cars on South Street and other areas of village – MB asked if these were still there and the response was that they were. One now had a notice on it. Cllr GC stated there was an Aberdeenshire Council officer in charge of dealing with this and he would pass on details of how to contact him.</p> <p>Trees on New Road – the owner of the bungalow has cut back the trees which are within his garden. The rest of them have still not been cut back and it is now bird nesting time, so they won't be cut back just now. Cllr GC said that letters were in the process of being sent out to landowners regarding the overgrown trees.</p> <p>Polytunnel & shed at allotments – MB asked Cllr GC if there was any feedback regarding approach by B&JCC to move these on to area of land owned by the Council adjacent to the allotments being rejected with no explanation. SM stated that the area of land in question is not being utilised by residents for growing anything and it is a very large area for the four flats which occupy the site. A suggestion was made to approach the tenants to ask their opinions on the possibility of using that area.</p>	(MB)
5. PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION ON COASTAL TRAIL	James Ferrier gave an update on the ongoing work being carried out by the Coastal Trail Group (MERCHAT) to create a coastal path around Aberdeenshire from St Cyrus to Cullen. He spoke about progress in setting up the North East Scotland Coastal Trust and forming a board of trustees who will be responsible for development, management and sustainability of the project. He put forward a suggestion of a name for the path – The Doric Way – and asked what B&JCC thought of that suggestion. It was agreed this was a good suggestion. CD is involved in trying to get funding for the project from Tullo & potentially from SSEN. There are areas along the path where negotiations are still being made with landowners or where they have to establish exactly who owns the land. James asked if B&JCC could write a letter of approval about the plans and the work of the NESCT. MB to discuss this with JB and to draft a letter.	(JB)
6. SOS – SAVE OUR SHIP	There was a very well attended meeting on 24 th April 2025 in the Village Hall regarding trying to save the Ship Inn/Hotel and the possibility of it becoming a Community Pub. Over 80 people attended, and Caspar Lampkin spoke to the public about the idea of taking over the Ship as a Community Pub. There is an organisation called Plunkett UK which helps with this sort of project but there must be a committee formed first – by the end of the meeting 12 people had come forward to volunteer to form a committee. A sheet went around to collect names and email addresses to create a mailing list and questionnaires were to be made available in the local shop to gauge interest and to see what people would like to happen to the Ship. First Committee Meeting to take place in May. Craig Simpson (CS) is on the committee, but he was unable to attend tonight but will give update later.	(CS)

<p>7. TREASURER'S REPORT</p>	<p>At the end of the financial year B&JCC had £9470 in the account. This includes Tullo grant funds of £2,896.40 (Winter Lunches); £754.88 (Cemetery grant); and £124.39 (Junior Badminton grant). All the Christmas Lights money has now been spent, with the CC contributing £96.78 from its own funds. We received a total of £8,832.40 in grants and wish to give our thanks for these to the Tullo Wind Farm and the Mearns Area Partnership. The Accounts are currently being audited and will be presented at the AGM in June.</p>	<p>(CD)</p>
<p>8. PLANNING UPDATES</p>	<p>TRE/2025/0046 - 28 Main Street, Johnshaven, DD10 0HA - felling of two willow trees. No objection from B&JCC.</p>	<p>(LD) (CH)</p>
<p>9. ACTION POINTS & REPORTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>● 9a Village Tidiness SM expressed concern about the untidiness of several areas of the village and the overgrown and untidy state of many of the Rights of Way in the village. Despite promises that the Community Payback Team would come and clear the Rights of Way nothing has happened. Other areas are the land behind the James Glen Fountain on Castle Street next to the Ship Hotel and a large unsightly pile of wood that has been deposited at the rear of the Heritage Museum beside the Fire Exit. SM stated that the wood is nothing to do with the Heritage Society and that the Heritage Committee would like to see it removed as soon as possible. Many of the streets have weeds along the edges and as Aberdeenshire Council are not spraying weeds or sweeping streets then this is only going to get worse. SM said that with visitors now coming to the village again is this really what we want them to see – we need to take some pride in our community and try to get these areas tidied up. Cllr GC suggested getting in touch with Neil West at Aberdeenshire Council. MS asked about the availability of a street sweeper bucket on a trolley to try to get areas tidied up as the Council used to have these, but the Councillors did not know if such things were still available. It was suggested we ask SHARK for green waste bags and to find out if they would take away any weeds collected and if Aberdeenshire Council would take away rubbish. CD said she would ask Rebecca from SHARK.</p> <p>● 9b Inverbervie Medical Practice LD provided an update from Inverbervie Patient Participation Group (IPPG) who are creating a new area in the Waiting Room at the Surgery which will be a Community Information Point. This will be maintained by the IPPG and will provide information and details about social activities which people can participate in. The idea is to encourage people to be more active and involved and this will help improve general health and wellbeing. There is to be an event on Wednesday 25th June 2025 at the Inverbervie Practice from 6.15pm – 7.30pm. Further details will be posted on B&JCC Facebook page and on the public noticeboards.</p> <p>● 9c Dog Fouling Despite many new signs being put up this continues to be a problem in the village and in fact there has been an increase in some areas. MB spoke to the Headteacher of Johnshaven Primary School, AM, regarding the idea they had about fencing off an area on the railway path at the rear of the school, but it has been decided not to go ahead with this as it will most likely be a waste of money which neither the school nor B&JCC can afford. The hope is that dog owners will do the right thing and clean up after their pets. B&JCC will continue to monitor the situation.</p> 	<p>(CD)</p> <p>(LD)</p> <p>(CD)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9d Tullo Wind Farm Grant Applications CD has submitted three applications on behalf of B&JCC: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Steps from Herd Crescent to railway path and fence repairs on Herd Crescent & steps from railway path to end of Baron's Pade & Wairds Park entrance War Memorial repairs Village storage facilities The Tullo Committee Meeting is on 23rd May 2025 to discuss grant applications and to decide on grant awards. LD to attend. 9e Coastal Erosion MB reported that there was a public meeting for residents in the Village Hall on Friday 28th March – 26 people attended, and discussion took place regarding the problem of coastal erosion in our local area. Several ideas were put forward as to what the community could do next – look at areas where there was less erosion and try to establish why; get some drone footage of the area and take photographs to monitor the erosion and to have as evidence of disappearing coastline; proper surveys are needed to establish areas of particular concern; there is a need to protect sewage outlets at either end of the village and this will involve discussion with Scottish Water & SEPA. It was agreed that a small action group needed to be set up to look at more detailed planning of next steps. Cllr GC said that Catterline CC have a site which records photos and video footage of the impact of coastal erosion around the Catterline coastline and this is a very useful source of information and evidence of the changing coastline because of storms and high tides. (Catterline Braes Action Group – CBAG) There are also issues with movement of shingle in Inverbervie. Cllr GC also reported that he was aware of a disappointing attitude from council officers regarding the problem of coastal erosion and the impact on coastal communities. It is essential that coastal defences are maintained and that funding is unlocked to combat the effects of coastal erosion now – it is no good sitting back and blaming it all on climate change it is time to act now. 	<p>(CD)</p> <p>(MB)</p>
10. UPDATE FROM ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCILLORS	<p>Cllr GC reported that Aberdeenshire Council have been conducting a survey on the provision of toilet facilities in schools, leisure centres and council buildings to get feedback from pupils, staff and the wider community. It is looking at unisex toilets – a space anyone can use, regardless of their sex or gender as opposed to single sex toilets or separate sex toilets which offer a space for males or females.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council are also seeking public input on its Development Plan which will guide the future development of the region. They are looking for ideas from the public on what they want their communities to be like in the future. The focus is the “Call for Ideas” which is in two parts – a Call for Bids and a Call for Community Ideas. The “Bids” element identifies new housing developments and land use. The Call for Community Ideas is to collect information from communities and stakeholders on the content of the Local Development Plan.</p> <p>There is also a review of Sheltered Housing Provision and Maintenance taking place to discuss the financial and practical challenges around the future of Sheltered Housing Schemes.</p> <p>Cllr AE reported that because Aberdeenshire Council Budgets have been cut drastically there is no money, and it is therefore essential that we look at things differently. It is essential to support health and wellbeing and by doing so we can prevent people</p>	

