

BENHOLM & JOHNHAVEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&JCC) Minutes of Meeting
Business Meeting No 482 Wednesday 14th January 2026 7.00pm – In Person Meeting at the Village Hall

Present: Michael Bennett (MB) Chair, Charis Duthie (CD) Treasurer, Chris Greene (CG), Susan Madden (SM), Myles Beattie (MyB), Maureen Sangster (MS), Carol Hutton (CH)

Aberdeenshire Councillors: Cllr George Carr (GC)

Members of the public: 1 attended meeting

Agenda Item		Action
1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS	MB welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2. APOLOGIES	David Neill, Adele Westwood, Linda Duncan, Cllr Alison Evison	
3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING No 478	MB went through Minutes of last meeting for accuracy. One amendment to be made in section 9 regarding the agreement of B&JCC members that a voucher was to be purchased as a thank you gesture.	(SM)
4. MATTERS ARISING	<p>a) Update on actions from Minutes 481 that are not on the agenda:</p> <p>Community Payback Team – MB & MS met with Lance Darling at Johnshaven Cemetery and discussed work that could be carried out by Community Payback there and then MB showed Mr Darling other areas in the village where work needed to take place. These included clearing weeds and debris from Rights of Way around the village and painting the railings at the War Memorial. Mr Darling said these jobs would be added to their list of projects but could not give any dates of when the work could be carried out. B&JCC agreed that MB should wait until end of February and then chase up further if nothing has happened by then.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council Funding Share – MB was to attend a meeting in November 2025, but the meeting was cancelled. The organisers still think this is an important issue and still want to push for change. B&JCC agreed that this should be supported and MB will attend any future meetings planned.</p> <p>Coastal Erosion – Olly McLeod met with MB and Coastal Erosion sub-group and walked from one end of the village to the other pointing out all of the areas affected by coastal erosion. Mr McLeod was to report back views of B&JCC and Coastal Erosion group to Aberdeenshire Council and then get back in touch with MB to follow up. MB has still not heard anything back. Meanwhile there have been several high tides and further erosion and the rising sea levels are a concern for the village. MB to wait until mid-February and then chase up if nothing has been heard back by then.</p> <p>Railway Path Steps – the steps from the end of Herd Crescent down to the Railway Path have now also been completed by Caspar Lampkin and his team of workers. Again, there has been positive feedback from the residents on the work done and appreciation of the improvements made in the village. The fence along Herd Crescent is still to be done.</p> <p>Bus Stop Improvements At Benholm Road End/Mill of Benholm – the plans for new bus stops to provide public transport access for the Mill of Benholm and surrounding area have been approved by Aberdeenshire Council. They are to be situated on</p>	<p>(MB)</p> <p>(MB)</p> <p>(MB)</p> <p>(CD)</p>

the A92, roughly 260m south of the Benholm junction. The new stops will also serve the X7 bus service. Work is expected to commence late January 2026, weather permitting.

Incorrect speed limit at Wairds Park/Baron's Pade – MB has spoken to Jack McKay at Aberdeenshire Council following the removal of signs and the response was that they will look into this in due course. Concerns were expressed by B&JCC that there were now two housing estates which both had exits on to this road thus more traffic using the road; children from Lathallan Grange need to cross this road to go to school; the exit from Lathallan School joins this road and buses from Lathallan cross this road to join Cemetery Road to exit the village; pupils from Lathallan use this road to go in to the village and now that the Railway Path steps have been put in place more people are walking this way and children are using this path to go to Wairds Park. Therefore, for all of these safety reasons the speed limit needs to be reduced. MB to follow this up. Cllr GC suggested also contacting John Bruce.

(MB)

Grit Bin Adoption Update – B&JCC took on board the comments made at our last meeting in November 2025. A public meeting to further discuss the adoption of grit bins was arranged by B&JCC and took place on Wednesday 3rd December in the small hall in Johnshaven. Only two people attended along with 3 members of B&JCC. It was further agreed that we should not adopt the grit bins. The final decision agreed by all was that the grit bins will not be adopted by B&JCC. MB has also spoken to Tim Stephen regarding the grit bin situation in Johnshaven and the adverse effect it will have on the residents in these areas if the grit bins are removed. The recent snowy weather highlighted the need for grit bins so that communities can at least try to clear safe pathways to help residents get about safely.

(MB)

Cllr GC stated that Aberdeenshire Council have pushed the cutbacks too far in certain areas and this is causing problems. The grit bins and supplies of grit being just one example. Further cutbacks are planned such as not replacing lamp posts which are needing upgraded or repaired and the possibility of turning off street lighting in certain areas late at night. These moves will also not be welcomed by communities and the infrastructure is being adversely affected by cutbacks. It was pointed out that this had been attempted before but was knocked back because of safety issues in open harbour areas and public safety in unlit areas.

Road Signs at Johnshaven reinstated – the road signs knocked down following an accident in 2025 have finally been reinstated however the sign for the Johnshaven Heritage Museum has not been put back up. Don Marr, chairman of Benholm & Johnshaven Heritage Society & Susan Madden, vice-chair asked why this had not been put back yet the Starfish Studio sign had been put back up. MB will investigate further. Cllr GC suggested getting in touch with Philip Leiper.

(MB)

Handrail at Cauld Well Steps – MB spoke to Aberdeenshire Council about this but there is no money in the budget for work like this so nothing will happen. SM pointed out there had never been a handrail at the top sections but CH said it was a safety issue and needed to be addressed.

Faded Road Signs – CH asked if these were going to be replaced. This has already been reported to Aberdeenshire Council by MB and it is recorded online but it is not a priority and will be looked at later due to budget constraints.

	<p>b) Community Policing Report MB stated that there was no recent report to B&JCC. CG asked why not and MB replied that he did not know why but would get in touch to find out why not.</p> <p>c) Roads & Safety Reduction of Speed on A92 – B&JCC are keen to try again to push Aberdeenshire Council to look at reducing the speed limit to 40mph on the A92 at the top of the village from the Lathallan entrance to Johnshaven (a shorter area than discussed previously which was from Benholm Mill to Balandro Loan which after consideration was agreed to be too long a stretch of road). MB suggested updating a previous report that was done on the reasons why B&JCC want a reduced speed limit and SM suggested asking for a speed monitoring kit to be put in place to provide some new information. B&JCC agreed this was a good idea.</p> <p>White lines on New Road – MS asked why there were no white lines on New Road and asked if it might be possible for white lines to be put down from the corner at Rangoon Cottage as far as the village shop as people tended to drive more in the middle of the road and there had been a few near misses of cars running into each other as a result. There were also still no white lines further up the road. Cllr GC said that research showed that people tended to go faster if there were white lines and therefore it was better to have none in place. MB said he would ask someone from the Roads Department to come and take a look. Concerns were also expressed about pedestrian safety as there are no pavements. CD pointed out that once the new houses were built at the old mill site the steps down into the village were to be reinstated which would be a safer way to walk into the village.</p> <p>Snow wardens – David Neill is taking responsibility for this and as he wasn't in attendance tonight it was proposed that it should be carried over to the next meeting. B&JCC members present agreed.</p> <p>d) Transport LD had passed on information to MB which he read out at the meeting. LD attended the Transport Forum meeting online and there was a lot of discussion about the bus services in south Aberdeenshire. There have been a number of requests for an increased number of buses on the 107 route as there are quite long waiting times between the buses and especially for there to be more later buses. It was reported back that this was unlikely to change due to financial restraints. There have been complaints about the X7 bus app. not being reliable in informing of late buses and people have also missed buses as they have arrived too early and departed before scheduled times. The app. problems will be investigated. There have been complaints that the yellow X7 bus is extremely difficult to get on and off and this problem has been recognised and will be considered when purchasing new buses in the near future. These yellow buses are however popular with commuters who cycle from home to the bus stop and then put the bike in the bus to commute and then cycle from the bus stop to work. So this has to be considered also. Good news about the X7 stopping at Mill of Benholm and the repositioning of the bus stops as this will be great for both visitors to the Mill and residents of the Benholm area. It is good to think that B&JCC do have some say/power to affect change in our community.</p>	<p>(MB)</p> <p>(MB)</p> <p>(MB)</p> <p>(DN)</p> <p>(LD)</p>
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	<p>e) Finance & Grant Applications</p> <p>Treasurer's Report as follows: B&JCC's Current Account balance at the end of December was £939, and our Savings Account had £8162. Only around £3000 are CC funds, the rest being grant funds ring fenced for specific projects funded by Tullo.</p> <p>Winter Warmer Lunches: thanks to the Community Café group who put on these lunches over the winter on 24/25 until the summer. They decided not to continue into the current winter, therefore £1907 was refunded to Tullo along with a report of the activities and spending.</p> <p>Web Site: Myles is working on this, funded by Tullo. A logo designed by P7 pupils several years ago has been chosen and the pupils will be informed and thanked (minor changes to layout were suggested).</p> <p>Railway Path: Thanks to Caspar and Martin who have completed the steps at Wairds Park and at Herds Crescent. The post and rail fence remains to be reinstated. This work has been particularly appreciated by the users of the path.</p> <p>Junior Badminton: This grant has enabled young people to play badminton in the Village Hall. The remainder of the grant (around £40) will be used up, but the programme will continue funded by Fish Festival and profits from the Senior group. Thanks to David Pittendreigh and his team for organising this.</p> <p>September 2025 New Tullo Grants from the applications:</p> <p>Village Noticeboard (£2489): The noticeboard beside the Village Shop will be replaced. The old one will be recycled to another use.</p> <p>Village Storage Unit (£5734): This will enable the preparatory work including design, planning and sourcing quotes. Funding for the Unit will require further grant applications.</p> <p>War Memorial (£9842): Local builders will repair the existing walls at the back and side of the War Memorial and repoint it as necessary. A local gardening firm will remove the overgrown bushes from the border before work starts, and restore the ground afterwards using membrane and chuckies, as well as carrying out some planting, to be agreed.</p> <p>Bushes at Telephone Box: The gardening firm have also quoted for removing the bushes and restoring the ground afterwards using membrane and chuckies. If these jobs are combined, they will only require an extra £250 to do both jobs due to economies of scale. The CC committee agreed to use CC reserves to fund this extra £250. As well as making the phone box more accessible, it will increase the safety of children who run down the hill beside the phone box.</p> <p>We are very grateful to the Tullo and Twinshiels Community Benefit Fund for making all these projects happen to the great benefit of everyone in our community.</p> <p>f) Conservation & Infrastructure</p> <p>Northeast Convention of Community Councils – MB attended last meeting and a final unified statement has been agreed and will be sent out. B&JCC have unanimously agreed with the statement.</p> <p>Coastal Path Update – The MERCHAT autumn 2025 update and the Platinum Jubilee Coastal Path Kincardineshire Update for Autumn 2025 are available to read online. It was agreed that the Coastal Path survey should be put on the B&JCC Facebook page. CD said that information gathered from the survey provided useful information for grant applications.</p>	<p>(CD)</p> <p>(MyB)</p> <p>(CD)</p> <p>(SM) (CD)</p>
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	<p>No objection from B&JCC but concerns discussed about coastal erosion in this area of the village and future impact this could have. 22nd December 2025 APP/2025/2099 – Bracken Cottage, Benholm Siting of two holiday accommodation pods (Sui Generis) at Bracken Cottage, Benholm LD to be asked about this application as she lives nearby but no objection from B&JCC.</p> <p>There was also APP/2025/1952</p> <p>National Onshore Infrastructure associated with the proposed Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm including export cables, landfall & cable circuits, erection of substation & associated works.</p> <p>TWP – Thistle Wind Partners construction of substation at Fetteresso Forest, 250m north-east of SSEN Hurlie substation.</p> <p>No objections made from B&JCC – 7 voted no, 2 voted yes.</p>	(SM)
8. NEW BUSINESS	<p>Role of Secretary – MB spoke about the urgent need for someone to fill the vacant role of secretary for B&JCC as no one has agreed to take on this role. He has suggested leafletting the village to see if anyone is interested and he has spoken to some people from the Beeches who had shown an interest in B&JCC so potentially this might help us find a new secretary.</p> <p>Increase in number of CC members – MB put forward the idea of increasing the size of the membership of B&JCC to 12. It was thought this was a good idea and MB is to write to Aberdeenshire Council to see if this is possible.</p>	(MB)
9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<p>CG asked if there was any possibility that lighting could be put in place under the old railway bridge now that the railway path has been improved and more people are using it again. Cllr GC suggested perhaps underpass lights might be an idea but budget cuts might make this difficult to achieve.</p> <p>SM pointed out that bin collections in rural areas had been very unreliable since before Christmas with no bins being emptied in the Gateside/Bridgeton/Jackston stretch at all and this was before the snow came. It is understandable that access is difficult in bad weather as the bin lorry has difficulty coming up the hill but all bins have to be taken to the crossroads by residents and the service has been dreadful lately with no bins being emptied. These residents pay Council Tax but have no services such as streetlights, road maintenance and gritting in bad weather so the least Aberdeenshire Council can do is make sure the bins get emptied. Cllr GC said there had been problems with bin lorries and also again at the recycling centre in Aberdeen where all the refuse goes leading to problems with collections.</p>	
10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC	None	
11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Next Meeting: CC Business Meeting 482 - Wednesday 14th January 2026 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.	

Approved: Seconded: Date: