

Meeting of the Blackburn and Kinellar Community Council

Wednesday 8 October at 7.45pm

Kinellar Community Centre

Present: Doug Grant, Martin Hunter (Chair), Emma Morrison (Secretary) & Peter Robinson

Councillors: Cllr Mason, and Cllr Reid (attended from 8.15 pm onwards)

In attendance: Karen Thomson

Apologies: Jim Ogg, Alex Lamb, and Cllrs Gifford and Lonchay

1. Welcome and Apologies

Martin Hunter (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Alex Lamb and Cllrs Gifford and Lonchay.

Martin Hunter expressed thanks to Isabel Townsend on behalf of the Community Council for all that she has done in the last 12 months and wished her good luck for her future endeavours.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of meeting held 10 September 2025

Approved as an accurate record by Peter Robinson and Doug Grant.

4. Matters arising:

- Traffic issues outside Kinellar Primary School
At the previous meeting issues with traffic outside the school at drop off and pick up times, presenting dangers for pedestrians and drivers, were discussed. Martin Hunter reported a small improvement in the situation, so as yet he has not contacted Roads regarding a possible request for both the zebra crossings at the entrance and exit to the school car park and for the pelican crossing.
- Update regarding Public Liability Insurance
Emma Morrison has submitted a request to Zurich's business team for a quote to increase the Community Council's Public Liability Insurance – response pending.
- Donations
Martin Hunter shared that, following his sponsored beard shave at the Gala, he and Peter Robinson have met with the beneficiaries to pass over the funds raised. On behalf of Kinellar Cuppa, Helen Wright accepted £330 which they will use for new tablecloths for their round tables, tea and coffee supplies, and towards a Christmas tea for the volunteers. On behalf of Kinellar Stars, Gill Mclean and Sharon Mearns accepted £330 which they will use for new equipment for both inside and out.

Martin Hunetr will send photos to Emma Morrison for inclusion in the next issue of the Blackie Banter and for social media.

5. Treasurers' report

Peter Robinson advised that the mandate on the bank account requires amendment as currently only Emma Morrison and Martin Hunter are recorded as corporate administrators. The documentation signed at the September meeting was not accepted by the bank as Emma Morrison's signature was required. Peter Robinson requested a new set of signatures from the Community Council members in order to amend the account so that he too could obtain Corporate Administration rights and access the account. As a requirement to do this, Peter Robinson shared the documentation about such amendments, during the meeting. Emma Morrison (Secretary) continues to be the only person with access to the Community Council's bank account.

Emma Morrison sought approval to action the payment for the hire of the Kinellar Community Centre's meeting room for September (£30) and October's meeting (£30). This spend was approved by Doug Grant and Peter Robinson.

6. Police Scotland report

No report received.

7. Invitation to attend a Convention of Community Councils representing the North-East of Scotland to discuss concerns over renewable energy projects and major energy infrastructure in Aberdeenshire, Angus and Aberdeen City (to be held 11 October, Stonehaven)

The purpose of the convention is to discuss growing concerns about the scale and coordination of renewable energy and major energy infrastructure developments across Aberdeenshire, Angus, and Aberdeen City. These include an increase in planning applications for wind farms, solar parks, battery storage facilities, and transmission projects.

The organisers note that Community Councils in the Highlands have already held similar conventions and agreed a Unified Statement expressing shared community concerns. The North-East event aims to explore whether local Community Councils wish to take a comparable, collective approach and engage MSPs and MPs in dialogue about planning, cumulative impact, and strategic coordination of renewable developments.

Community Councils are asked to consider: Whether to support and attend the Convention; Whether to endorse or adapt the Highland Unified Statement; and What key issues or questions should be raised with elected representatives.

There was consensus amongst the Community Council that a representative(s) would attend the meeting in Stonehaven on 11 October to learn more. As appropriate an update will be shared with the community via the Community Council's communication channels (e.g. social media, Blackie Banter, etc) following the meeting.

8. Aberdeenshire Funding Shortfall – Coordinated Community Council Response

David Ritchie, Secretary of Westhill & Elrick Community Council, has written to all 71 Community Councils in the Aberdeenshire Council area highlighting growing concerns about the level of funding received by Aberdeenshire Council compared to other local authorities. They note that reduced funding is increasingly affecting the delivery of local services.

They propose that Community Councils across Aberdeenshire work together on a non-political, collective approach to raise these concerns with MSPs representing the area. The intention is to organise a summit later in 2025 involving Community Council representatives and both constituency and regional MSPs. The aim would be to seek political support for securing a fairer financial settlement for Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian.

Community Councils are being asked to indicate whether they wish to support and participate in this initiative, and to share examples from their own areas of how reduced funding is impacting local services.

There was consensus amongst the Community Council that a representative(s) would attend the proposed meeting (details tbc) to learn more.

9. Co-opting new members to the Community Council

The Community Council discussed the need to co-opt additional members to increase capacity and ensure the council's ongoing sustainability. Members agreed to consider individuals within the community who may have an interest in joining and to invite them to attend a future meeting to observe and learn more about the council's work.

10. Aberdeenshire Councillors' update

Updates from Cllr Mason

- The removal of grit bins is on hold, and a scheme will be launched to allow Community Councils to adopt grit bins in their area, plus there is an on-going opportunity for volunteers to serve as community snow wardens.
- There is a new app, *Fix My Street*, available in Aberdeenshire, which allows residents to report local issues such as potholes, broken streetlights, or other maintenance concerns directly to the council for action.
- Newmacher has received planning permission for two new football pitches.

Updates from Cllr Reid

- Marcus 'Place' Play Park survey is live and presents an opportunity for the community to submit their views.
- Aberdeen City Council are exploring a possible re-zoning of Dyce Academy to City only pupils. Should the City choose to change the boundary there will be further consultation with affected communities.

11. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Blackburn & Kinellar Community Council will take place on **Wednesday 12 November 2025** at 7.45 pm, Kinellar Community Hall.