



STONEHAVEN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

19:00– 21:00 Tuesday 12 August 2025

Meeting held in the Sheriff Court Buildings, Stonehaven

Community Council Members:

Alistair Lawrie (AL), Brian Menzies (BM), Daniel Veltman (DV), David Lawman, *Chairman* (DL), Ian Hunter (IH), James Morrison (JM), James Stephen (JS), Rachel Frame (RF), Steve McQueen (SMcQ)

Aberdeenshire Council Elected Members:

, Cllr Sarah Dickinson (Cllr D)

In Attendance -

Fiona Malcolm, *Minutes Secretary*, Lesley Robinson, *Aberdeenshire Council via Zoom*, Jane Cruickshank (Jane C) *The Bellman*, John Cruickshank (John C) *Horizon Group*, Julie Lindeman, Hugh Ramsay, Alan Sutherland & Kay Wood.
TD Gordon, Stonehaven Talking Newspaper and Wendy Agnew **via Zoom**

1& 2	Chairperson's Welcome and Rollcall	Action
	DL welcomed everyone to the meeting, including those joining via Zoom.	
3	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
	Apologies were received from Andrew McArdle, Caroline Duguid, Fiona Tavindale, Norman McKay, Philip Mills-Bishop, Raymond Christie, Cllr Alan Turner, Cllr Dawn Black	
7	Mackie Academy Catchment (Stonehaven area) Place Planning / Aberdeenshire Council LDP Call for Bids (Aberdeenshire Council issues Call for Ideas and Sites to inform next Local Development Plan)	
	DL introduced Lesley Robinson (LR), Community Planning Officer, Aberdeenshire Council and invited her to address the meeting. LR explained Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership must follow Scottish Government revised Local Development Planning guidance, moving to a settlement rather than area basis.	

	<p>(Settlements are based on secondary school catchment areas.) She acknowledged the work already done by SDCC to prepare the Local Place Plan (LPP), she emphasised the need for the Local Development Plan (LDP) to complement this, and in particular focus on areas/people/communities whose views had not been captured. The CPP is working with partner organisations and bodies (e.g. Pillar, Citizens Advice Scotland, local libraries, Alcohol and Drugs Partnership), and was keen to identify any local groups/communities whose views should be sought, for example young families. She was keen to learn from any feedback from the LPP consultation process.</p> <p>RF confirmed that many of the LPP responses were made on behalf of households rather than individuals, and suggested contacting local primary schools to engage with young families.</p> <p>DL recalled that leaflets had been delivered to all households during the LPP consultation.</p> <p>RF asked if a stall might be available at the forthcoming Stonehaven Harbour Festival, DL agreed to check.</p> <p>BM asked LR if future housing provision, in particular affordable homes, was within the scope of the CPP?</p> <p>LR clarified housing provision is not within the remit of the CPP, however the LDP will include proposed sites where houses might be built.</p> <p>AL suggested contacting Stonehaven After School Club and nurseries (school and private) to engage with young families.</p> <p>JS was concerned about the projections for falling primary school rolls.</p> <p>DL asked how the LPP might feed into and complement this work, and invited LR to come back to SDCC if necessary, as it was important to deliver the things people want.</p> <p>LR thanked DL for giving her the opportunity to contribute to the meeting.</p>	DL
4	Approval of Previous Minutes	
	The minutes of the previous meeting (10 June 2025) were approved by SMCQ and seconded by AL.	

5	Election of replacement SDCC Secretary	
	<p>Audrey Malcolm had regrettably resigned as SDCC Secretary due to increased work commitments, DL asked for any nominations for a replacement.</p> <p>BM proposed RF, IH seconded, RF agreed to accept.</p>	
6	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	
	<p>a) Update from Special Internal Meeting on 8th May 2025 – DL we had received feedback from the Area Manager which would be covered ‘in camera’ following the main business meeting.</p> <p>b) Education and Children’s Services – Facilities Hire Arrangements</p> <p>IH had issued a paper (copy attached Appendix 1) and raised his concerns at a recent CPP meeting (about the increased requirements and costs for community groups wishing to use Aberdeenshire Council premises and facilities).</p> <p>He felt there is a need for a developmental group, like the Friends of the Open Air Pool or the Tolbooth Museum, perhaps called a Neighbourhood Development and Management Group.</p> <p>Cllr D explained the aim (of the changed policy for Facilities Hire) was never intended to exclude small groups. She agreed the application form needs to be revised, and wondered if a community group could raise the profile of the availability of facilities. She suggested contacting Alan Rae (Aberdeenshire Council).</p> <p>AL said the system had been poorly designed, and there is no information about who to contact for assistance. He understood all community groups now require Public Liability Insurance.</p> <p>Cllr D agreed there should be information about how to get support (with applying) if needed, and the form does need to be revised. She offered to take this forward.</p> <p>JS suggested Aberdeenshire Council does not want the community to access its facilities, and cited Rhythm Nation and Stonehaven Lions Den who both pay for private premises.</p> <p>RF added that Stonehaven Rugby Club had paid £10.5k for the hire of Mackie Academy playing fields, the Club now uses Forest Road Park which has no toilet facilities.</p>	Cllr D

	<p>IH wanted to be able to speak face-to-face with people (Aberdeenshire Council staff?)</p> <p>Cllr D will try to get a meeting with Aberdeenshire Council officials so they can hear about these concerns.</p> <p>c) Tourism Facilities (Toilet Provision & Coach Parking etc.) DL said the feedback from the SDCC team who attended the meeting with the Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager (Tim Stephens) and others about the Beach Toilets in June was very positive.</p> <p>BM said TS had suggested SDCC prepares a paper outlining the potential for a community-run toilet, including some guidance about toilet facilities – Allan Clark (Aberdeenshire Council) will provide additional information.</p> <p>RF noted outline costs of £13,500 do not include consumables. A Community Transfer (of the Beach Toilets building) may be a possibility.</p> <p>BM suggested it would be preferable to have a trial for the first year, and research possible grants for capital and revenue costs.</p> <p>RF asked if Aberdeenshire Council could provide a disposal facility for motor home toilet cassettes as there is nothing available at present.</p> <p>DL considered that more work needs to be done before taking this forward.</p> <p>BL suggested a mini feasibility study.</p> <p>DV agreed there were a number of ideas to be explored.</p> <p>The meeting agreed to support further exploration of opportunities and options.</p> <p>JC added that , following a recent event at the allotments, one of two portaloos was vandalised and overturned.</p> <p>JS said that Aberdeenshire Council cannot turn its back on tourism, a community group should not be responsible for providing basic facilities.</p> <p>Alan Sutherland recalled when the Beach Toilets were reopened in 2011, when someone donated £4k. He added that 48 camper vans</p>	<p>Cllr D</p>
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	<p>had been parked around the town the previous weekend, and 70 cars in Baird Park earlier in the day</p> <p>d) Stonehaven Schools Roll Forecast and Estate Upgrade / Replacement Plans Request</p> <p>DL had received information from Cllr D about the Stonehaven 2025-26 P1 intake - 125 children, the equivalent of 4 classes.</p> <p>JS said the public need to know schools are not bursting at the seams, as there is no affordable housing, the town is in trouble, house prices are high, he was afraid there were insufficient numbers to sustain 3 primary schools.</p> <p>Cllr D clarified that a local authority cannot close a schools unless there is educational benefit., nor will a school be 'mothballed' unless there are fewer than 8 pupils. She saw no immediate problem or threat to Stonehaven's 3 primary schools.</p> <p>JS suggested a housing developer is needed in Stonehaven.</p> <p>DL said there are plans in place for Hillcrest Housing Association to build affordable and social housing, the delay has been due to the lack of a link road on the estate, he understood the Estate now has the capital in place to do this.</p>	
8	Aberdeenshire Council – Grit Bin Removal Programme	
	<p>DL noted Aberdeenshire Council had approved in its February 2025 Budget to cut the grit bins availability across Aberdeenshire. He wondered if it was possible to save some that are due to be removed.</p> <p>Cllr D suggested SDCC writes to Kincardine and Mearns Roads Department as it is possible to challenge the removal of specific grit bins if you felt the policy criteria was met at those locations. Cllr D explained she had done that successfully with the proposed removal of the grit bins at the White and Green Bridges. If the SDCC or anyone else want to challenge the overarching principle of their removal then this is categorised by the council as a complaint and treated accordingly.</p> <p>The Snow Wardens scheme will continue, Cllr D she later confirmed Snow Wardens will still have access to grit.</p> <p>DL wished to encourage the community to challenge this decision if they had concerns.</p>	

9	Aberdeenshire Council – Discretionary Parking Levy (Stonehaven Promenade)/Parking Management – Deregulation?	
	<p>DL suggested Aberdeenshire Council needs to review the whole traffic management system, including 45 minute waiting periods and double parking.</p> <p>SMcQ said the policy (for discretionary payment for parking) makes no sense, it is only possible to pay at the promenade.</p> <p>RF reflected that, with the correct messaging, the levy could be used to support specific projects, she was concerned the policy had ‘come out of the blue’ despite SDCC’s conversations with Aberdeenshire Council.</p> <p>JS understood all money raised from parking charges goes into one big pot at Aberdeenshire Council. He also noted that, as the Crown Estate owns the land at the Backies car park, they will expect their proportion of money raised. At this time, discretionary payment for parking it is only available on promenade.</p> <p>RF felt in spite of all the consultations undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council there is little evidence of any follow through.</p> <p>Cllr D explained Aberdeenshire Council has a list of things it wishes to take forward, if they can apply for external funding to support these, they will do so. The Discretionary Parking Charge is meant to be an invitation to pay, she has already asked officials to provide more information about the policy and the lack of PR and communication.</p> <p>Alan Sutherland wondered about the availability of money from Coastal Funds, and suggested preparing a paper about what might be done to make a difference.</p> <p>BM suggested providing a Park and Ride Facility next to the AWPR by-pass, could this piggy-back on an existing development, for example the proposed Fuel Station and Tesco supermarket, and asked if this had this been considered.</p> <p>DL said space on the proposed site was limited.</p> <p>JC noted a Park and Ride facility was included in Aberdeenshire Council’s Tourism Strategy document.</p> <p>Cllr D said the issue of a Park and Ride facility was not raised in planning application, but agreed this was a good idea.</p>	

	<p>JS said signage for and communication with motorists was needed for parking at Baird Park.</p> <p>Cllr D confirmed there are signs in place beside the allotments regarding cars.</p> <p>SMcQ asked if Aberdeenshire Council is reviewing the decriminalisation of illegal parking?</p> <p>Cllr D said Cllr Turner as Chair of Infrastructure Services would be able to provide more information than she could at that moment, but if/when DPE was taken forward then it would be traffic wardens who would enforce the on street parking orders.</p> <p>AL asked if anyone wished to support Alan Sutherland and his proposal. He invited Alan to e-mail his suggestion to DL who will circulate to all members, this was agreed unanimously.</p>	DL
10	Kincardine Community Hospital – Removal of X-Ray Facility	
	<p>DL advised that AMcA had drafted a paper about this, and asked if other service would also be removed, due to the x-Ray Facility being removed.</p> <p>AL was concerned about the impact on patients who cannot drive, and the increase in demand for Patient Transport.</p> <p>DL suggested writing to Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) asking for an explanation, AL and DV agreed, this proposal was supported unanimously.</p>	DL
11	Plastic Free Stonehaven	
	<p>DL had circulated a paper prior to the meeting (copy attached at Appendix 2). It was agreed by everyone to continue to support this initiative, Cllr D intimated her thanks for this.</p> <p>A motion proposed by AL seeking volunteers from SDCC to participate in a Litter Pick event in September, was seconded by SMcQ, and supported by the meeting. DL, RF and SMcQ agreed to attend.</p>	DL, RF, SMcQ
12	Increase in Street Furniture/Advertising Boards on Pavements	
	<p>A member of the public had raised this with DL after tripping over on the pavement. DL noted the increase in street furniture, signs and bins etc. outside businesses in the town. There needs to be a</p>	

	<p>balance between supporting local business and ensuring the safety of the public.</p> <p>JS said there are regulations about what businesses have outside their premises, and suggested a communication from Aberdeenshire Council might be required.</p> <p>DL agreed to take this issue to the next TCIG meeting.</p>	DL
13	Police Scotland Report	
	The July report had been circulated, August report not yet received.	
14	Planning	
	<p>APP/2024/0962 – Erection of Retail Store, Electric Vehicle Charging Hub and Class 3 Café/Restaurant with Associated Car Parking, Servicing, Landscaping and Access</p> <p>DL suggested SDCC continues to support this application as it goes forward for consideration by Aberdeenshire Council’s Planning Committee, everyone was in agreement.</p>	
15	SDCC Committees / Sub-Groups/Projects	
	<p>a) SSEN Kintore -Tealing 400kV Connection and Hurlie DL felt that SDCC was ‘snowed under’ with numerous updates on this development, and asked how SDCC should respond?</p> <p>Cllr D said this application was subject to all normal planning requirements, including the consultation process.</p> <p>IH asked if there is anyone at Aberdeenshire Council who has expertise on the proposals, and Alan Sutherland suggested co-opting some of the pressure groups on behalf of SDCC, DL flagged the issue of potential conflict of interest as some of these groups have their own agenda, and therefore are not impartial. He noted the Scottish Government’s policy in support of renewable energy.</p> <p>AL suggested having a standard letter that can be used each time a response is required, RF and BM agreed.</p> <p>DL agreed to review the original SDCC original letter and circulate for comment.</p> <p>b) Community Resilience Group DL said generator equipment had been used at Woodcot during a power outage following the recent Storm Floris. He noted that the outage did not appear on SSEN’s “Power Tracker” app.</p>	DL

	<p>c) Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) Cllr A had been trying to arrange a meeting with Jim Savege (Aberdeenshire Councils Chief Executive)</p> <p>d) Stonehaven 24 Hour Public Access Defibrillator Network DL said the Scottish Ambulance Service had referred members of the public to units recently.</p> <p>e) SDCC Communications – no update, defer to next meeting</p>	
16	Outside Bodies / Committees	
	<p>a) Transport Action Kincardine-shire (TRAK) – no update</p> <p>b) Town Centre Improvement Group – next meeting 26/08/2025</p> <p>c) Kincardine and Mearns Community Council Forum – next meeting 03/12/2025 (online)</p> <p>d) Stonehaven Patient Participation Group – RF said there is an interim Chairman in place at present. There is an event about the role of Advanced Nurse Practitioners at the end of August, and in October the topic will be Mental Health.</p> <p>e) Community Planning – no update</p>	
17	Treasurer's Report	
	<p>a) The Treasurer's Report was circulated to all members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>b) Consideration and approval of the independently verified 2024-25 Statement of Accounts – these were proposed by AL and seconded by JM, and supported unanimously.</p>	
18	Correspondence	
	None.	
19	AOCB	
	<p>DL intimated the Fire Service is hosting an Open Day on 23 August and asked for volunteers to represent SDCC, however no one was available.</p> <p>AL reminded the meeting about the annual Hannah Dyson and Community Awards. He thanked JL for her support last year, and asked if anyone else was willing to help with the assessment process JS agreed, SMcQ said this was a very positive experience.</p>	

	BM asked if SDCC was happy to engage with the proposed Glenskinnan Renewable Energy Park project to learn more about community benefit process, as he is happy to take this forward, this was agreed.	BM
20	Dates of Next Meetings	
	a) Agenda Discussion Meeting: Tuesday 2 September 2025 @ 7pm b) Business Meeting: Tuesday 9 September 2025 @ 7pm	

Appendix 1

Draft Possible Submission to Aberdeenshire Council: Concerns Regarding the “Education and Children’s Services Facilities Hire Agreement”

We wish to raise concerns about the newly introduced Education and Children’s Services Facilities Hire Agreement, which we believe is not fit for purpose in supporting sensible and inclusive community development across Aberdeenshire.

In particular, the requirement for each individual group to hold £5 million in Public Liability Insurance and to obtain their own performing rights licences creates unrealistic barriers for many local organisations. Other elements of the agreement are similarly onerous and risk deterring community use of these vital facilities.

One possible solution would be the creation of local Neighbourhood Facility Development Management Teams, made up of locally elected community representatives working in partnership with council officers. These teams would be accountable to their communities and could coordinate facility use, provide umbrella insurance cover, and offer a simplified, community-friendly application process.

We believe this approach would not only remove unnecessary barriers for local groups, but also lead to a more efficient use of community facilities. In turn, this is likely to increase overall usage and generate greater revenue—benefiting both the Council and the wider community.

Furthermore, if these local management teams are structured with sufficient independence from Aberdeenshire Council, they may also be eligible to attract external grant funding. This could unlock additional resources to support improvements, programming, and the long-term sustainability of community facilities.

We respectfully urge Aberdeenshire Council to review the current agreement, with a view to making public facilities more accessible, better utilised, and more financially resilient through community led, collaborative solutions.

Ian Hunter 06.08.2025

Appendix 2

PLASTIC FREE STONEHAVEN

Request for Support – Proposed Motion

However, although it is not a requirement, I would welcome the SDCC continuing to express its support as over time community councillors change and it would be good if the current community councillors had the opportunity to consider the issue. I had suggested the wording in the email below to Steve, but given the passage of time, I would update that as follows –

Stonehaven and District Community Council continues to support the projects and initiatives of the Plastic Free Stonehaven campaign including the monthly beach cleans, the Plastic Free Business Champions work and other occasional events aimed at raising awareness of the negative impact of single use plastic, as well as other avoidable single use items, on the environment and encouraging reuse options instead.

The SDCC will indicate this support through social media posts including –

- Avoiding the use of single use plastic at its meetings and events whenever possible
- Sharing information about the monthly beach cleans
- Highlighting the support from the local Plastic Free Business champions and those working towards the status
- Sharing information on social media about other Plastic Free Stonehaven events.
- Identifying a representative of Stonehaven and District Community Council to participate in the Stonehaven Plastic Free Community Steering Group which sits within the Stonehaven Town Centre Improvement Group.

In terms of background information, I was hoping I could attach the email I provided in February 2024 which explained the background to the campaign. The server will not let me do that as it is more than a year old, so I have cut and pasted it into a Word Document and added updates in red to give you the current picture. To be clear, we met all the objectives for the campaign detailed in that email and we now have Plastic Free Stonehaven status. However, the work continues!

I hope the SDCC will be happy to continue expressing its support for our efforts.

Kind regards Sarah