



**Cromar Community Council
Online Meeting
8th October 2025 at 19.30**

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: David Ellis, Sandra Van Heusden, Nigel Healey, Alastair Scott, John Rogie, Pamela Clark, Janet Urquhart, Stuart Urquhart

Guests: Sgt Allan Masson, Chris Redmond, Anthony McKillop

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Anouk Kloppert, Cllr Sarah Brown

Additional Agenda item. Community Council voted on co-opting Anthony McKillop as a Community Councillor. This was proposed by Dave Ellis and universally agreed by the other Councillors. Notice had previously been given to both Councillor's and the Area Office.

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** Acceptance of the draft Minutes for the Meeting on the 10th September was proposed by John Rogie and seconded by Sandra Van Heusden

3. **Police Report**

Upper Deeside Police Report – Q3 2025

Sergeant Masson reviewed the crime statistics for Q3 and the updated statistics from Q2. This looked to be a long list. However, Sgt Masson explained that the vast majority of incidents reported in Tarland are related to two or three individuals, so the impact on the wider community is minimal. Sgt Masson also highlighted a higher number of reported traffic incidents in Dinnet. This should be seen as positive and reflects the increased Police presence in identifying speeding offenders and dangerous drivers.

There were two events regarding fires. At Ballater no local firefighters were available, and the responding appliance had to come from Tomintoul. This raised concerns regarding response time. A deliberate fire occurred in the woodland near Coull House. The response to this fire was excellent. Three appliances were already on the scene when Sgt Masson arrived. The incident required a significant response from Scottish Fire and Rescue. Fortunately, there were no high winds, and the fire was contained to a rugby pitched sized patch of clear fell. A male was quickly identified as allegedly responsible, and he has been reported to the court pending trial.

Mountain Biking Safety became an issue during the Thrive festival at Ballater and there has been an effort to increase safety awareness. Cannabis cultivation discovered at Glen Tannar. There was a request to report similar incidents to the police.

John Rogie and Sandra Van Heusden reported the theft of wood from Corrachree and Migvie Crossroads.

Alastair Scott reported fly tipping at the top of “The Slack”, which contained a label with the property owner’s address. Sgt Masson requested a photograph be submitted to him, with the address label. While it is unlikely the owner of the furniture is responsible, it will allow the police to follow up and identify the culprit. Alastair also agreed to report the matter to the Aberdeenshire Council, to request removal of the tipped items. Nigel requested clarification of the legal position regarding the 20mph speed limit. The signage is still confusing in Tarland, with both 30mph and 20 mph in existence. Sgt Allan Masson confirmed the signage needs to be accurate and clear, before a prosecution will be brought. The hope is that behaviour will be modified with the new 20 mph signs.

4. Councillor Reports – Cllr Sarah Brown

Tarland Flood Study

With regards to recent flooding issues experienced, officers have requested that Flood Group representatives/residents contact the Flood Teams mailbox - flooding@aberdeenshire.gov.uk, and include information on any properties flooded, depths, dates, times, photographs etc. This information will inform studies and discussions with partner agencies (Scottish Water and SEPA). Council Officers advised that the flood study for Tarland, as detailed in the North East Local Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-2028 (Cycle 2), is due to start at the end of the year. Sarah advised that there have been some issues related to the Scotland Excel Framework for procurement. As a result, the service cannot proceed with the procurement process or award a new contract to consultants for further flood studies until this issue is resolved. Initially, it was hoped that this would be addressed by September 2025; however, delays are affecting all local authorities, not just Aberdeenshire.

Despite these challenges, officers in the Flood Team have confirmed that they still plan to complete all the intended Cycle 2 Flood Studies within the six-year Local Flood Risk Management Plan Cycle, which means the flood studies are expected to be completed by 2028.

John Rogie highlighted studies have been completed previously and hoped the data was not being duplicated. Dave Ellis commented that the study is forward looking will build on pre-existing information.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

From Monday 6 October, Aberdeenshire Council will introduce a daily closure at all household recycling centres between 12:30pm and 1pm. This daily lunchtime closure is being introduced to support the well-being of site operatives and ensure consistent service throughout the rest of the day. Appropriate signage will be displayed at each location to reflect the change in opening times. The change will not affect the pedestrian access times that are available at some sites.

Use of winter tyres on school bus transport

Marr Area Committee were petitioned to look at fitting of winter, or all season, tyres as a requirement of fulfilling a rural school bus contract in winter. Originally the petition covered the catchments of Towie, Strathdon, Ballater, Crathie and Braemar for both primary and secondary schools. Reference was made to the cold temperatures and high road altitudes in the area; roads not being regularly gritted and school buses being out before snowploughs; incidents where buses had slipped off the road or routes that could not be completed, with parents having to use their own vehicles; and that safety should be the deciding factor. The committee requested that the scope of be broadened to encompass the whole of the Marr Area and instructed a report from the Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, to cover the whole Marr Area. This is expected to be presented to the committee on 4th November 2025.

New 20mph speed limits live from 22d September 2025

Roads Officers have confirmed they would re-assess roads where communities had requested

additional 20mph limits (either extensions of 20mph limits or 30mph roads that had not been changed) with a view to a further report being presented to the Committee in early autumn. Where these changes are not supported by officers, the committee will have the opportunity to consider these and refer them to the Infrastructure Services Committee, who are authorised to consider such a departure from policy. A report will be considered by Area Committee on 4th November.

Aberdeenshire Community Hospital Review

Aberdeenshire Integrated Joint Board (IJB) have committed to undertaking a Strategic Review of Aberdeenshire Community Hospitals. As part of this, the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) will be holding local drop-in sessions:

Banchory: Town Hall, Wednesday 8th October 3-7pm

Aboyne: Community Centre & Swimming Pool, Wednesday 5th November 3-7pm

Next Steps - Once the engagement program has been completed, the information will be analysed and AHSCP / IJB will develop a paper to be presented in early 2026, with recommendations on how to progress with a Strategic Delivery Plan for Aberdeenshire Community Hospitals and linked Community health and care.

Councillors' Report - Cllr Anouk Kloppert

Cllr Anouk's report also contained information and benefits regarding the new 20 MPH speed limit. The new speed limits with maps and information can be found here:

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/20mph>

Grit Bins A decision was taken by majority a majority of councillors on the 27th February 2025 (Saving: £380,000) to stop the filling of grit bins that no longer met the bin provision criteria. This decision has been suspended due to requests to leave the bins on the understanding they would be funded/managed by residents. The council will commence a six week engagement process, via Area Managers and Community Councils. An engagement pack is currently being finalised. The Roads Service will commence the filling of grit bins in the coming weeks to ensure that they are ready for winter. Filling will be restricted to grit bins that meet the criteria, as agreed by Full Council on 27th February 2025.

John Rogie proposed retaining the grit bins, marked for removal. This was endorsed by the Community Council and should form part of a broader resilience plan e.g. Snow Wardens. The Community Council agreed that we need to understand the process and costs of keeping the bins filled, before a final decision is made.

The new E11 Ember electric bus route between Royal Deeside and Aberdeen has been online since 23rd July. The route has been running one daily return between Aberdeen and Dundee, with stops including Braemar, Banchory, Blairgowrie, and Aberdeen Airport. From 1st October, the "Cairngorms service" will be getting more stops, including Peterculter, Aboyne, Ballater, Glenshee and Coupar Angus and gives a direct link from Deeside to Aberdeen Airport, and from Aberdeen and Dundee also stopping at Glenshee Ski Centre. The Ember live map shows the new stops on both routes. Bicycles may be carried in the luggage holds. Tickets are available by pre-booking online only.

John Rogie asked if the connection between the Aberdeen bus and shuttle bus in Torphins could be investigated? It appears that the two buses don't communicate and if the Aberdeen bus is late, the Torphins bus does not wait, leaving commuters stranded. John was asked if he could find out specific dates, so this matter could be reported to Aberdeenshire Council for follow up.

5. Hail Storm and Flooding – Update

Simon Langan (experience of water management and catchment issues) and Steve Redpath (impacted resident and Flood Group lead) met with the MacRobert Trust, to discuss the following flooding issues. A written report had been received covering the meeting with the Trust and the agreed follow up actions.

Anthony McKillop confirmed the Viewfield Wetlands pond was recently cleared and waste material taken away. Community Council wanted to thank the MacRobert Trust for taking these measures and hoped that this might continue regularly.

Community Council comments on the report from the meeting

a) The Community Council strongly supported the planned meeting of the MacRobert Estate with local farmers and those with knowledge of drainage approaches used in earlier times.

b) The Community Council would contact landowners upstream of the village together with Aberdeenshire Council and SEPA to seek a meeting to discuss the flooding that has previously over topped the main Tarland Burn channel in the village.

c) Having an active flood forum/action group to increase resilience to flooding and other extreme events was very helpful. The individuals and organisations who had volunteered was encouraging.

6. Next steps from Joint Facilitated Meeting. The Tarland “Have Your Say” has been renamed Tarland “Community Day”. Possible Survey questions have been circulated to the Community Council and Chair of TDG. A list of potential groups who may want to exhibit and promote their clubs has been started, and TDG/CHG have been approached. Other groups not yet contacted are Brownies/Guides, Tennis Club, Curling Club, Golf Club, Cromar Future Group, Clubs that use the MacRobert Hall, e.g. Pickle Ball, Keep Fit, Patient Transport, First Responders, Art Group, Young at Heart, Creative Cromar. The timing of the event is now planned for the end of January. Incentives for attending the Community Day were brainstormed e.g. Pop Up food waste, free teas, coffees and cakes, events like Tyred n Cranky, a Repair Workshop as well as showcasing various organizations and future projects.

7. Cromar Report

A. Bridges & Roads – There was no sign of any work on the bottom of Burnside Road, during closures. This raised the question of why the road was closed. The bridge at the Boddam end had had stones knocked out of it again. Although the fallen tree at Tarland Bridge has been removed, John Rogie raised concerns over the remaining trees near the bridge. This has been discussed at earlier meetings and the request to see the actual report from the bridge survey was repeated. Sandra Van Heusden to raise the matter again with Cllr Sarah Brown. The watching brief on the sinking road outside the Papershop was queried. Sandra Van Heusden agreed to try and find out how big the hole needs to become before it is classed for remedial work. Pamela Clark reported the quick response to the blocked drain on the B9119 outside Cath Hannaford’s house. The blocked drain is already on a work schedule.

B. Bedding Plants. It was agreed it was time to remove the hanging baskets. Sandra Van Heusden to co-ordinate the removal and transport to the Community Garden with Dave Ellis and Sheila Williams.

C. Social Media The number of views has increased by 70.5%. largely driven by posts regarding road closures and the removal of the tree at Tarland Bridge.



D. Tarland Paths The feedback on the walking map will be considered at the TDG meeting on the 9th of October. Ken Webb was recognized and thanked for this work on the paths and for sourcing new way markers.

E. Coull Kirk – The project now has HMRC approval and can reclaim gift aid. A number of potential donors have asked to be contacted following the HMRC recognition. The weekly open sessions at the Kirk have now stopped and will restart in the spring.

8. MacRobert Trust – 10 Year Plan. The link to the website and video was circulated prior to the meeting. The scope of the funding for community projects was confirmed as Tarland and Cromar. A panel of people will decide which projects will be awarded funding. The challenge will be to obtain a representative panel who are not linked to any local projects.

9. Treasurer's Report Current balance - £2488. Spend since the last meeting - £120. The spend was on Starlink subscription, fee for entry into the Church Magazine – Cromar Chronicles and for thank you gifts for watering volunteers. A meeting between the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer needs to be organised to understand the new rules on spending. The Community Council confirmed they would like to spend on flood defences (e.g. Sandbags), filling grit bins and compost for flowers.

10. Logie Coldstone Trust The Monthly Community Café continues to be a great success. Plans to open the upper hall as a communal hub for home workers are in progress.

11. Tarland Development Group

Food and Music Festival

The TDG Chair reported the TF&MF festival was a great success despite the geese induced power cut. A date for next year has been agreed 18th - 20th September 2026.

Tarland Trails Drummy Woods

Quotes are being gathered for reprofiling and regrading works to the trails at Drummy Woods. The aspiration to refresh the trails at Drummy with a milling machine has fallen through, therefore a contractor will be used. TDG will tell Drummy residents, CCC and MRT (Start date 27th Oct TBC) The work is only maintenance i.e. there will be no new trails, or further work to drainage bumps on track, or work to install a composting toilet. The noise level will be very minimal, one small mini digger and signage. Social media/signage will be used to inform residents/users. The Trails will be closed for the duration of work and settling, however walking routes will remain open.

Pavillion Draft Plan

The draft plan shared by Simon Langan on behalf of the steering group, will be discussed at the TDG meeting on the 9th of October. There will be further consultation and discussion with CCC/MRT etc. as appropriate.

Tarland Trails Award

The trails were awarded the 'Best Outdoor Adventure Tourism Award' at the Aberdeen City and Shire Thistle Awards. The winners go on to the national event in Glasgow in November.

Apple Pressing

The final dates for pressing and pasteurising have been advertised on social media. The first production has sold out and great feedback received regarding the quality of the juice this year.

Business Meeting

TDG confirmed they were happy to extend the business meeting invite to farmers if they feel they will benefit from meeting. Social Media posts confirm open invite.

Zipline - Updates have been posted on Social Media and a new volunteer will join TDG as a trustee, to lead the project.

12. Planning Applications

- New agricultural building – Home Farm in Coull
- New dwelling house in land adjacent to Balmuir
- Alterations and extension to dwelling on Aberdeen Road
- Widening access to a house in Melgum Road Tarland
- New drainage system being installed in Sunnyside Cottage in Logie Coldstone

13. Any Other Business

Christmas Lights – the provisional forms have been submitted to install the 2025 Christmas lights. A generous donation (£3k) has been received from Heather Chapman to help improve this year's show. The Community Council officially recognized and thanked Heather for the donation. There will be a Social Media Campaign thanking Heather and Gordon Ross for sponsoring this year's light show, when the new lights are in situ. The new decorations have still to be purchased. Sandra Van Heusden has outlined the new proposal to the Lighting Department for necessary pre-approval.

Bike Sign for bike rack. Following feedback that the flowers were obscuring the bike rack, the Community Council investigated different sign options. Alastair Scott created a mock-up of size and position of the sign. The recommendation based on Alastair's mock-up was approved and the approval given to buy the new signs.

Remembrance day. The roles in laying of the wreath need to be confirmed. Dave Ellis will check with Councillors.

Community Day – Alastair Scott reminded Councillors to submit head and shoulder shots to increase our profile.

King's Tree - along from the entrance to Doctors Surgery. The area surrounding the tree is very overgrown. Sandra Van Heusden to update Cllr Sarah Brown and request Landscape Services did some weeding.

14. Date of the Next Meeting

There was a request from John Rogie for in person meetings. This was approved following discussion. Nigel Healey also requested hosting some meetings in Logie Coldstone, despite the school being closed. Sandra Van Heusden agreed to look at the Logie Coldstone Hall and the Airedale as potential venues and make appropriate bookings. The proposed dates and locations were to be circulated till summer 2026.

Dates so far.

12th November - 7.30pm Tarland School

December meeting - 17th December (changed date) Logie Coldstone Hall