



SLAINS & COLLIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

4th June 2025

Present: Roddy Junor, Trish Davidson, Sally Sheehan, Roger Berl, Chris Hovey, Julie Swan, Sheena Junor, Ian Law, Nora Harper, Lesley Wilson, Councillor John Crawley

Apologies: Gill Moir, Beth Thomson, Marley Twine

In Attendance: Anne and Anthony Craig, Mike Earlam

ITEM	DISCUSSION
Approve 2024 Minutes	Proposed: Chris Hovey Second: Trish Davidson
Matters arising from 2024 Minutes	There were no matters arising
Annual Report	<p>The Chairperson Roddy Junor gave the annual report –</p> <p>Welcome to our 16th Annual General Meeting since we became a Community Council, and our 67th from the original Amenities Committee.</p> <p>First of all, I would ask everyone to please stand while we have a minute's silence for friends we have lost this year. We also think about those who are unwell or in hospital and wish them a speedy recovery.</p> <p>To begin - in our area of Aberdeenshire – Slains and Collieston Community Council is the smallest in Formartine with 441 registered electors - compared to Ellon's 9000 plus - but our Community Council may very possibly be one of the busiest with everything the Community Council does.</p> <p>Looking back over the past year, and as in every year, the Community Council has continued to work for the community in many and different ways. Trish will give you the financial details of what was done in her report but this is a snapshot of what's been happening over the past twelve months.</p> <p>A huge blow to the community, and one we are still coming to terms with, was the sudden closure of Slains School after the gym roof collapsed. We believe the school will be mothballed – perhaps partially demolished - at the end of term. Given the Council's current financial situation it is very likely to be closed permanently. Collieston and Slains has had a school since the middle of the 19th Century. This building, the Community Centre, opened as the village school in 1877, so lose something that has been at the heart of community life has come as a huge blow. The pupils currently at the school have been going to Port Erroll school in Cruden Bay but have been given the choice to move to different schools next year. A huge change and a great loss to the whole community.</p> <p>Despite the Community Centre's age, it is still the hub of community life. The community payback team were a great help in repainting all the rooms, and the facilities manager at the Campus has been very responsive in replacing and repairing any breakages or damage. We have installed the wall panel with a verse of John Robertson's "Collieston Calling" poem, which typifies how people feel about this part of the "Costa Buchan" – as John himself would have called it.</p>

We are very grateful to have received the original clock from Slains School which will have pride of place in the community centre. The mechanism had not been used for many many years but has now been repaired by the late Queen's horologist - no less.

We now have a copy of Steve Ritchie's book "No Day Too Long" in the Heritage Room while Roger gifted us a copy of an old Admiralty map of the area.

Many events have taken place in the hall over the last twelve months. Several groups use the facility for classes and training while the Community Council hold the very successful fortnightly coffee mornings over the winter months. Huge thanks must go to Sheena and her team of volunteers for their work to make it possible. Although free to attend, generous donations have allowed us to support different causes such as the Princess Trust, Homestart, the RNLI, International Rescue, Brain Tumour Trust, Ellon Food bank, Charlie House and an inclusive swing at the Duthie park.

There have been four performances from North East Arts Touring during the year. We are incredibly lucky at having professional performances coming here at minimal cost, but we do need them to be supported by the local community if they are to continue.

We have run first aid refresher training, suicide awareness training and a preventing fraud and scams workshop.

The Community Council do not organise the very popular Family Craft Nights run Fiona Bell, but we are very pleased to support them by paying the booking charge. A new art club for primary school pupils is starting soon, and will be supported in the same way.

Going through the year – other events have included supporting the Collieston Multi Terrain Challenge, our Gala of course, D-Day and VE Day commemorations, Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day, the Senior Citizens Christmas Party and the Burns Supper. There is not time here to mention all the individual events in detail but sufficient to say they are they life blood of the community, keeping it active and involved.

This year's CMTC is taking place on Sunday June 29th. We are very fortunate that Irene Jamieson, the event's main organiser donates virtually all the profit for the benefit of the local community. Someone else to thank is Sarah Macpherson who produced this year's ever popular Collieston Calendar, again raising funds for the community.

We have continued to develop our community resilience. A successful grant application allowed us to buy a satellite phone system and a portable power supply – meaning we should be able to manage in the event of a major power outage or other event. The school was successful in obtaining a defibrillator and the Community Council was pleased to purchase an outdoor cabinet to house it. We did not expect that only a few months later the defibrillator would have to be removed following the school's unexpected closure. However, the Jamieson family have offered to house the defibrillator at the Mains of Leask farm shop providing an additional resource in central Slains. Thanks to the Jamieson family and to Carol Allan for the weekly checks made on the defibrillators.

Other Community Council business over the last year included holding a public meeting about the offer of land from Slains Estate. An outcome from the meeting was that the Estate would fund a survey of the land they still own. As you probably know, the survey has been published and the Community Council will

discuss the next steps at the meeting following the AGM, and we will be reporting back to the Community very soon.

There have also been meetings with Council officials regarding coastal path improvements and the possibility of an “active travel hub” which is a mini park and ride at the Crossroads. Again, we will report back on any developments. Council budget cuts have resulted in an increased number of potholes. They are gradually being repaired

The sink hole at the top of the harbour road was repaired last year, only for it to open again but at the moment all is well.

Last year we were waiting to hear when the old beach shelter will be re-opening - and we are still waiting! However, we believe the business will start up soon and will be run by the couple who own the shop at Port Errol. Another new business is for a paddleboarding and sauna to be based at Cransdale. James Walker told a Community Council meeting what his plans were, and we wish him well.

The Community Council receive an annual grant from the Council to operate the toilets next to the shelter, and we are very grateful to Mick Sheehan for doing his daily checking and cleaning. We would rather not be in this position and feel the Council should take on the responsibility for the toilets as Collieston is such a popular visitor destination. We believe that there has been a proposal by the Council that the toilets should have a major refurbishment, but the Community Council would far prefer that proper internal and external painting is done instead.

One of our roles is to protect and preserve the character and amenities of Collieston and Slains. This includes grass and path maintenance and planting flowers. Our regular grass cutters are Ollie Davidson and George Hitchcock. It is good to see two local young people making the village look so good.

The Council are no longer able to supply bedding plants but this has been offset by planting perennial plants instead in planters and in the schoolhouse garden. Thanks must go to Chris Hovey for the hours of volunteer work he has put in making the garden look better than ever while also planting wild flower seeds on the Rivie. The robot mower which was funded by a lotter grant is quietly working away in the schoolhouse garden to great effect.

The play park has had an addition of a pirate play boat. Unfortunately, part of the frame of the swings broke and we intend to replace it very soon. The annual inspection of the equipment will take place in July.

Day-to-day administrative tasks continue to be done – consultations and communications, licences, wellbeing cards and gifts, hall bookings, event safety plans, risk assessments, funding applications and so on. We are represented on the Forvie advisory panel while the Treasurer’s job ensures that bills and expenses paid and financial records kept.

The Facebook page Collieston and Slains Blether is an effective way of putting out news although we appreciate that not everyone is online so we also make use of the noticeboards. We also produce The Blether newsletter as a paper copy or online. The Collieston Noticeboard page is a new Facebook page for people who want to know what is happening but who cannot access the closed group.

All Community Councils across Aberdeenshire now have a standardised process for elections and constitutions. Last September all Community Councillors were elected at the same time. A lot of our own members remained

	<p>the same, but we welcomed Beth Thomson and Ian Law as new members. Later in the year, Marley Twine was coopted as a member and I am pleased to say that in line with the new system he is now a full member after serving for six months. Further elections will take place in September when the remaining vacancies will be advertised.</p> <p>The Community Council is a member of Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action and several Community Councillors received long service awards last year. This year it is Roger Berl's turn to receive his certificate, and I am happy to present him with it now.</p> <p>In closing, I would like to thanks fellow Community Councillors and other volunteers for all the invaluable work that has been done this year.</p> <p>Before I hand over to Trish Davidson for her financial update – are there any questions?</p> <p>Anthony Craig asked about the concept of the “mini park and ride” at the Crossroads. The Scottish Government may provide funding to build a small area of parking space near the bus stop at the Crossroads. The aim is to encourage increased use of public transport.</p> <p>Another question was to ask if there was a maximum length of term a Community Councillor could serve. Procedures for all Aberdeenshire Community Councils was standardised in 2024 which meant that the Slains and Collieston election no longer took place at the same time as the AGM in June, but in September. In 2024 all serving Community Councillors were required to stand down but could apply to be re- elected for a three-year term. Any subsequent vacancies would be advertised with an election in September if required.</p>
<p>Treasurer's Report including annual accounts</p>	<p>Trish Davidson gave the following report –</p> <p>This is the Treasurer's Report for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The Accounts Summary gives details of the financial position for the Community Council across both the Bank of Scotland and Virgin Money accounts. Most of the money has now been transferred into the Bank of Scotland account but we have kept £99.40 in the Virgin Money account. For this report, we will focus on the Bank of Scotland account where the balance at 1 April 2024, was £12, 326.43. Income over the 2024-2025 year was £31,251.99 and expenditure totalled £24, 313.72 giving a final balance at 31 March 2025 of £19, 264.70.</p> <p>The accounts are reported in three main categories – Events, Maintenance and Administration. I've given some detail on the sort of purchases, costs, income, etc. so will just try and give a bit more background or information which hopefully will be of interest.</p> <p>1. EVENTS</p> <p>The Bonfire Night was another big success last year. Usually, the donations at the event go to the Slains School Parents Forum but last year they suggested that the community council should just keep this money so this has off-set the cost of the fireworks.</p> <p>The Burns Supper has not traditionally been viewed as a fund-raising event but this year made a sizeable profit of £304, largely due to fewer expenses and good attendance.</p>

The Senior Citizens **Christmas** event again took the form of an afternoon tea with expenses for this event costing c£450. The Christmas tree and new tree lights cost over £200. We also gave selection boxes to the Slains School pupils. Thanks to Irene Jamieson and her team, the **Collieston Multi Terrain Challenge** was another very successful event, raising £1565.47 for Community Council funds, with some of this profit going towards the purchase of new playpark equipment. Donations were made to Newburgh Dunes Running Club and the WI to recognise their support with the event. Other expenses included the purchase of medals and prizes, provision of first aiders and hiring the hall. We received a grant of £2356.08 from Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action to pay expenses related to the **Drop-in Sessions** over the period October 2024 through to April 2026. These get-togethers are widely regarded by those who come - and the volunteer helpers - as having a significant impact on community well-being and we regularly welcome new faces. Expenses include baking costs, refreshments, remuneration, hall hire, napkins, children's activity sets, etc. **Gala 2024** made a profit of £3,853.30. Financial highlights of the Gala included the Raffle £815, Tombola £326, Cake & Candy £475, Sticky Toffee Puddings £254, Plants £121, Toys & Games £132, Take-away Teas £127. The Ceilidh made a profit of £977 (after expenses of £600 for the band were deducted), the Open-Mike event made £1188 between the door and bar and the Boules night made £149. I'd like to say a big thank-you to everyone who helps me with the money side of things at the Gala – I simply couldn't do it without you all. There were two **NEAT** events included in the 2024-25 accounts and these made a loss of -£197. There have been three events since 31 March so we'll have a better idea of overall costs, etc. for the NEAT events soon.

2. MAINTENANCE

We receive a Village Tidy grant from the council of £775 which we put towards **Grass Cutting / Flowers**. We spent quite a bit of this last year on timber, building materials, compost and planters for the schoolhouse garden, the playpark and the village entrance.

Regarding costs for **Hall Equipment**, over £500 was spent on replacement locks and we also needed new glasses, plates and mugs.

Under the **Miscellaneous Maintenance** section, I've included items like the Collieston Calling banner, dust for paths, paint, etc. and a new noticeboard, the cost of which was covered by a grant. Ollie Davidson completed a number of jobs around the village, particularly in relation to the steps and paths.

We also received a grant to buy communications equipment and a portable power station for the **Resilience Hub** and we had to spend some money on parts for repairing the generator.

We bought a new playboat for the **Playpark**, the cost of which was covered by grants from the Council and the Formartine Partnership. The ROSPA inspection for the playpark costs us £432 – this is an annual cost.

We received a grant of £1378 from the council to pay for **Toilet Cleaning** which Mick continues to do and we are very grateful to him for that. We also use this grant to buy toilet rolls, hand towels and other materials for the toilets.

I've mentioned the receipt of several grants in this report, many of which have been the result of the successful submission of applications by Sally and would like to say a very big thank-you to her for doing this.

	<p>3. S&CCC ADMINISTRATION</p> <p>The first section – Administration - includes income from the Council Admin grant and also from personal donations. Costs include £226 for insurance for the generator and other items. This section also includes costs relating to hall hires for events and meetings, wi-fi for the hall which is £42/month, stationery/printing items and postage costs.</p> <p>I separated out the cost of hall hires for the Craft/Youth Nights this year but will just amalgamate this into general administration from now on. We are also going to be paying the hall hire costs for the art classes for Slains School pupils which has had to find a new home.</p> <p>We have to thank Sarah Macpherson and her family for producing the 2025 Collieston Calendar which made a profit of £1762.</p> <p>The Miscellaneous section includes items like Remembrance Day wreaths, the hall hire and refreshments and hall hires for training, with the income here coming from some donations.</p> <p>We continue to acknowledge special events for members of the community and although the Wellbeing total is showing here as £70, this figure doesn't include many other cards, gifts and flowers which have been given but which have been included in other sections of the accounts.</p> <p>End of Treasurers Report Trish Davidson, Treasurer</p> <p>Sally Sheehan asked Councillor Crawley whether Aberdeenshire Council could offer some help with the cost of the annual playpark and Rivie exercise equipment inspections. Councillor Crawley was to investigate and asked for current costs.</p>
Election of Office Bearers	<p>Nominations were welcomed for the officer bearer positions.</p> <p>Chris Hovey proposed Roddy as Chair, which was seconded by Mike Earlam. Having accepted the position, Roddy was duly appointed as the Chair of Slains and Collieston Community Council.</p> <p>Roger Berl proposed Gill as Vice Chair, which was seconded by Anthony Craig. Having accepted the position, Gill was duly appointed as the Vice Chair of Slains and Collieston Community Council.</p> <p>Trish Davidson proposed Sally as Secretary, which was seconded by Lesley Wilson. Having accepted the position, Sally was duly appointed as the Secretary of Slains and Collieston Community Council.</p> <p>Sally proposed Trish as Treasurer, which was seconded by Julie Swan. Having accepted the position, Trish was duly appointed as the Treasurer of Slains and Collieston Community Council.</p>
Any Other Business	<p>Anne Craig gave a vote of thanks to the Community Council for everything that had taken place during the previous year.</p>

	<p>Thanks were expressed to Sheena Junor for providing the refreshments.</p> <p>There was no further business</p>
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