



HELDON Community Council

Date: 3 March 2026

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Birnie Community Hall

Chair: Andy Wallis

MINUTES

Attendees:

Community Councillors: Andy Wallis (Chair), Simon Williams (Treasurer), Lesley Lythgoe (Secretary), Neil Sutherland, Kenny Milne, Colin McCarthy, Steve Valentine, Angus Dixon, Grahame Davidson and Hilary Stewart.

Heldon Ward Members: Cllr Bridget Mustard

Apologies:

Community Councillors: Willie Duncan (Vice Chair), Colin Souter, Alex Lyons

Heldon Ward Members: Cllr John Cowe, Cllr Neil Cameron

1. Welcome

Welcome from Chair Andy Wallis and thanks to Birnie Hall for hosting the Heldon Community Council Meeting.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting Ratification

Proposed: C McCarthy

Seconded: S Valentine

Agreed

Minutes can be found on the Moray Council website

A summary of the last meeting's minutes can be found on the Heldon Community Council Facebook page.

3. Declaration of Interests

Angus Dixon declared an interest for item 5a as the forester responsible for the Castle Hill Woods.

4. Matters Arising from the Meeting of the 20 January 2026

a. Excess Courier Charges – update.

Chair had written to MPs and MSPs. Richard Lochhead MSP responded that this was a Westminster issue and also for the UK Consumer Protection Partnership.

Noted that the Scottish Government has an initiative '*Fairer deliveries for all*' and the community are encouraged to write to their MSPs and MPs.

Issued raised with the Joint Community Council

b. Fibre Broadband roll out – update

Chair had written to MPs and MSPs. Richard Lochhead MSP noted the Scottish Government commitment to provide high speed broadband (in excess of 30Mbps) to all through the R100 programme. He suggested anyone in the community who is not getting that through either issues with existing infrastructure or delays to new infrastructure should speak to Openreach first and then if no success, elevate the issue through him.

Issued raised with the Joint Community Council

c. Sign posting for pedestrians on A941 (nr Springfield development) – update

Cllr Neil Cameron had raised the issue with Moray Council Roads Department and Cllr Bridget Mustard highlighted the difficulty in finding a resolution as the roads in question had not yet been adopted by the Council. The issue would be discussed at the next meeting when the response from the Roads Department could be considered.

Post meeting note: Cllr Cameron has now confirmed that the Roads Dept had been working with the Glassgreen developer and would be including a condition for them to build a path adjacent to the western side of the carriageway all the way into Elgin and joining up with the existing crossing, as part of the planning approval for the next phase of the development.

d. Sunken graves at Birnie Kirk – Update

HCC received a written update from Cllr Neil Cameron – Moray Council were aware of the issues and would seek to address it in the coming weeks.

5. Correspondence Received

a. Castle Hill Felling request – advice submitted - update.

Update from Angus Dixon – a decision on the felling of Castle Hill woods was still pending with the Scottish Forestry Commission due to concerns that

adjacent forestry had not grown sufficiently since replanting. A proposal to leave a strip of mature trees to overcome the adjacency issue was under consideration and there were no objections to this proposal at the meeting.

b. Black Hills Estate Felling request – advice submitted - update.

Chair had submitted comments about keeping pathways clear and these comments had been noted by the local forester and Scottish Forestry.

6. Treasurers' Report

Income since last meeting: £0.00

Expenditure since last meeting: £4,137.46

Bank balances:

Heldon CC: £3,244.56

Roths I: £38,549.22

Roths II: £15,771.20

Total: £57,564.98

Reminder to the Community regarding deadline for Funding Bids of the 31 August 2026.

a. Update from Finance meeting.

We had four applications:

- Birnie Hall ramp
- Dallas Hall storage container
- Pluscarden Hall shed and other repairs
- Defibrillators

The Chair talked through the thinking behind the decisions for each proposal and noted that in principle all were supported but in some cases there were concerns that projects should fully comply with all relevant building regulations and should fit in with their locations.

Chair thanked all the applicants for answering all of the newly constituted community council's questions.

ACTION: Chair, Treasurer and Secretary to develop and issue instructions for the Grant Application process

b. Defibrillator Project

Chair is considering the project and will be in discussions with various providers, including from Keirans Legacy.

ACTION: Chair to report back at next meeting on costs and feasibility

c. Small Grant Scheme

The Chair and Treasurer met with a representative from Fred. Olsen Renewables who provide the community funding. Fred. Olsen Renewables are content with HCC's management of the community funding bids. HCC is looking at establishing a Small Grant Scheme of possibly less than £1000.

ACTION: Treasurer, Chair and Secretary to look at feasibility of Small Grant Scheme

7. Planning

a. Cloddach Bridge

The Moray Council have written back to HCC assuring us that the Cloddach Bridge is number 122 on their priority list.

The Moray Council wrote to the Department for Transport on the 5 2026 suggesting that the UK Government might want to consider refunding the £100000 which the HCC put towards the Business Case for the Cloddach Bridge. No response to date.

b. Moray Flow Park

Steve Valentine is the lead for HCC on coordinating our inputs to any statutory consultation on the Moray Flow Park and attended a meeting of the other affected Community Councils. No consultation at the moment.

The Moray Flow Park was raised as an issue at the Joint Community Council.

c. Birnie Quarry – Public Hearing – 16 March 2026

Chair has 15 minutes to put the HCC case at the Public Hearing and will be reinforcing the points made in the various letters that have been submitted by HCC.

There was a well-attended Public Meeting on 16 February 2026 in Thomshill about the hearing and the intent of many locals who had objected to speak at the hearing

d. Auchtertyre and Lochinver quarries

Chair noted that HCC was a statutory consultee for the Auchtertyre quarry extension planning application and encouraged the community to submit comments if they had any.

Chair also noted that the owners of the Auchtertyre quarry had been in contact about the proposal and also noted that they were considering an extension to the Lochinver quarry. The Chair had invited them to discuss the proposals for the Lochinver quarry at a future HCC meeting which they had expressed interest in doing.

e. Findrassie Development

Chair noted that the Findrassie development fell into the HCC area and that he and the Secretary had attended an open event to discuss the next phase of development.

The Chair had extended an invitation to the developers to come and present the proposals for the new development at an HCC meeting in due course.

Chair raised the point to Bridget Mustard that this would increase the population of the Heldon Ward and would affect our funding.

ACTION: Could Bridget Mustard raise this point with The Moray Council?

8. Reports

a. Local Councillor(s)

Cllr Bridget Mustard noted that the Moray Council Budget had been passed and that work was planned, albeit currently delayed, for the Alves School in May/June this year.

b. Community Councillors Ward Reports

Duffus

Community to continue raising awareness of Community Councils and that these are public meetings.

Alves and Roseisle

HS noted that the community bins for the Wester Buthill Community were constantly overflowing and asked for guidance on the number of bins that should be allocated for the number of houses.

ACTION: HS would email HCC and Cllr Mustard with details and would encourage the community to report overflowing bins using the Moray Council reporting portal, REPORT IT.

Milton Duff and Spynie

AD noted the increase in Fly Tipping on the road top Pluscarden.

ACTION: AD would email details of the fly tipping to HCC and Cllr Mustard. Also, encourage the community to use the Moray Council Anti-Social Behaviour reporting portal to report any fly tipping

Fogwatt and Birnie- Nothing to raise.

Dallas

NS gave thanks for the recent funding.

ACTION: Dallas to provide pictures to the HCC

NS also gave an invitation to the HCC to have a free stall at the Dallas Gala on the 5 July 2026. The aim is to promote the HCC and community councils generally.

ACTION: Community Councillors to consider who might support the Dallas Gala stand.

9. Community Feedback

Speeding

Community highlighted the issue of speeding through Thomshill. This has been a perennial issue which has not been resolved. Previous discussions with Cllrs about mounting signs/speed cameras had foundered on issues of ongoing maintenance costs and a reluctance by Moray Council to move signs or agree to additional signs being put up.

The company that usually manufactures the Smiley Face signs has gone into administration.

Roseisle has similar speeding problems which have been raised in the past and not resolved. See previous minutes.

ACTION: CM, SV and AW would try and come up with some solutions, working with Moray Council.

Bins

Community raised the issue of the public bin in the layby just outside Thomshill (on the C2E) was overflowing

ACTION: CM would attach a sign to the bin to encourage people to report when it was overflowing using the Moray Council Portal, REPORT IT.

10. The Joint Community Council of Moray

- Update from 12 February 2026 meeting.

HCC Chair raised broadband and courier charges with a view to writing a JCC letter on the issues -if there was sufficient interest – none so far

The JCC agreed to develop a joint statement on consultation on renewable projects in the JCC area and to work with the NECCC and Highland CCs to take a common view

to encourage Government to ensure local views were given appropriate weight in planning consultations; take account of local communities' views.

11. AOCB

First Aid Courses

Chair asked if there was an interest within the community of the HCC funding first aid courses at village halls – one session per hall

ACTION: CM and AW to investigate the feasibility of providing first aid training to local village halls and report back to the next meeting.

What's on in Heldon:

Chair proposed that a register of all village halls in Heldon could be compiled with contact details and that each month these halls would be asked to provide a list of community activities that were planned for the month ahead with a view to publishing a monthly (first of the month) What's on in Heldon post on the HCC Facebook Group.

ACTION: GD to compile a list of all halls and send a monthly request for any community activities planned at the hall that could be advertised.

12. Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

1900hrs, May 12 2026, Pluscarden Village Hall, IV30 8TZ

NOTE: This date has changed to 28 April 2026 still at Pluscarden Village Hall

Meeting ended at 8.14pm.