



Torphins Community Council

Serving the Electoral Districts of Torphins, Campfield and Tornaveen
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| Minutes of Ordinary Meeting Thursday 2 nd April 2026 at 7:30 pm Meeting online on Zoom | | |
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| Item No. | Description | Owner |
| 1. | <p>Present: Peter Argyle (PA) (Chair); Andrew Brazier (AB); Eric Day (ED); Iain Firth (IF); John Lucas (JL); Will Maclean (WM); Andrew Macpherson (AM); Colin Rouse (CR)</p> <p>In Attendance: Cllr. Anouk Kloppert (AK)</p> <p>Apologies: Cllr. Geva Blackett (GB); Cllr. Sarah Brown (SB)</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Intimation of noted interests: None</p> | |
| 3. | <p>Confirm adoption of minutes of meeting 5th March 2025 previously by email: Adopted as proposed by email without changes. Proposed: Eric Day Seconded: Colin Rouse</p> | TCC |
| 4. | <p>Police Report Policy Update: Community Councils of Police Scotland North East Division have received a letter from the Superintendent who is Commanding Officer for Operational Policing. The Police wish to maintain visibility to the community councils, however due to operational demands and the fact there are over 100 CCs in the area it is not possible to attend all meetings. The new arrangements provide a framework to improve communication. The specifics of attendance will be arranged by the local Community Policing Teams. We are advised the conclusion of the review of communications with community councils was to commit Local Area Commanders to ensure the following: 1. Attendance at every Community Council meeting at least once every 6 months 2. Creation and distribution of a localised police report, specific to the Community Council area once a quarter. TCC appreciates this initiative to improve communication and thanks the Superintendent.</p> | Supt. JC |
| 5. | <p>Finance Report: The bank balance at 31 January 2026 is £11,187.50, plus £100.00 in cash as float. The bank balance comprises TCC funds £1,094.90, following payment of £43.20 website annual fee, which is a significant saving with the new website. Other balances are: Christmas Lights £10.98; TORCH £7,406.62, after £26.75 for a tarpaulin; the new Village Flower Tub Fund £675.00; and Hardship Fund received with thanks from Robertson Trust £2,000.00, disposition of this being finalised.</p> | ED |
| 6. | <p>Planning: No new activity to report.</p> | ED |

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| 7. | <p>New and Focus Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resignation: Stephen Salter resigned from TCC following the March meeting. The Chair has written to thank Stephen for his work on the CC and express his regret for losing Stephen from the CC, a view endorsed by members. The Chair will contact Stephen for an update on the projects he had been pursuing, particularly the interaction with Walkers Shortbread regarding the Bread of Life unit, which was Walker’s first shop before relocating, and related matters, to enable TCC to progress matters. • Party Political Matters: A communication had been received from Cllr AK highlighting the importance of community councils including TCC maintaining their non-party-political status. TCC expressed its view we have always been non-party-political and will remain so while continuing to freely express our views. • Hill of Fare Wind Farm Application – Request from Reporter: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recent Court of Session Judgement Renshaw Farms Limited v Scottish Ministers and Energiekantor 2. Planning Guidance Battery Energy Storage Systems <p>TCC Action: TCC expressed support for the outcome of the judicial review. Noting HoFWIG will engage the KC again on this matter, it was agreed that to maintain support for the community opposition to the development, TCC will donate £100 to HoFWIG toward KC fees, aligning with the other community councils in the area. Following further review on both matters, PA will draft a response for consideration by TCC before submission by the due date. The applicant has until 9 April 2026 to submit to DPEA and all notice parties, and Community Councils and HoFWIG will then have 14 days to comment, with copy to DPEA and all notice parties.</p> • Concerns Regarding Council Tax Increases, Service Reductions and the Need to Strengthen Aberdeenshire’s Local Economy: AM has drafted a statement on this matter which he reviewed with members. All agreed with the principles and endorsed the statement. A copy is attached as an appendix to these minutes at page 4. | <p>SS</p> <p>PA</p> <p>Cllr AK</p> <p>TCC</p> <p>PA</p> <p>PA</p> <p>AM</p> |
| 8. | <p>Open Action Log: The Open Action Log is an appendix integral to the minutes of meeting. All items were reviewed and updated as detailed in the log, which is available online with the minutes at www.torphins.net</p> | TCC |
| 9. | <p>Correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All general correspondence received has been distributed by email to all members for review and action as appropriate or desired, including discussion as necessary at TCC Ordinary Meetings. Some specific items: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We received further communication from the campaign to increase powers for Scotland’s Local Authorities, which is now supported by 21 community councils. We decided to review the material to make a decision at the TCC meeting on 7th May 2026. 2. The Public Inquiry into proposed electricity pylons is noted as communicated by HoFWIG for all residents. 3. TCC recently received notice of the draft Aberdeenshire Nature Network map and proposals. Noted there is no mention of wind farms in the material. The draft is open for consultation until 1st May 2026. Please go to: https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/aberdeenshire-nature-network 4. A few additional services for Easter are operated on the 202 bus route. | TCC |

Appendix:

Statement prepared by AM and endorsed by TCC regarding Aberdeenshire Council and the Local Economy

Aberdeenshire Council needs to do more to strengthen the local economy, particularly after two consecutive 10% council tax rises while services continue to be reduced.

The current approach appears neither sustainable nor fair. Since 2013, Aberdeenshire's provisional revenue allocation has increased by 12%, compared with Scotland's average of 5%. Funding per head remains around £200 less than Scotland's average but at the same time Aberdeenshire's council tax is towards the upper end e.g. it's Band D is now more than £100 higher than the national average.

Residents are entitled to ask whether these increases are being matched by an acceptable level of service. Recent years have seen the withdrawal or reduction of early learning settings, school crossing patrols, supported bus services and stand-alone library buildings. Many of these services helped people access work, training and daily support. The concern is that the Council appears to be relying too heavily on higher taxation and Government settlement, rather than pursuing a stronger economic strategy. A more resilient approach would focus on growing the local economy, development, supporting local businesses, retaining more public spending within Aberdeenshire and broadening the local revenue base.

Procurement is part of that. The 4-year Construction Design Services framework awarded in March, valued at more than £20 million, appears to show that only one Aberdeenshire-based business was appointed among 20 successful firms. Residents should not be expected to pay more while services are withdrawn and local economic opportunities continue to leak out of the area.