

BURTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the monthly meeting held in the Jubilee Hall, Houghton, and online via the Zoom videoconferencing platform, on Wednesday 1st October 2025, 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Robin Howells, Peter Griffiths, Derek Jones, Ian Thomas, Vicky White, Scott Sinclair, John Evans; C’llr Danny Young, Peter Horton (Clerk).

Apologies

C’llrs Fiona Hart, Laurence Price, Michelle Campbell.

Declaration of known interests

None.

Opportunity for public representation on tabled agenda items

None.

Approval of minutes of September 2025 monthly meeting

The minutes were approved (proposer C’llr Derek Jones, seconder C’llr John Evans).

Matters arising

Burton Ferry Community Garden. No change in situation regarding finding a new gardener.

Highway issues. The Clerk had still received no response to the repeated request for a site meeting to discuss ongoing concerns. C’llr Danny Young undertook to take up the matter in County Hall.

Ash tree, Main Road. A holding response had been received from P.C.C., to say they were checking on land ownership.

Information board, Houghton Green. Members were informed that the needed repairs were now complete.

Plans

Planning consents notified.

25/0230/PA - Alterations & extension, Fieldale, SARDIS, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, SA73 1LU.

Correspondence

01) P.C.C. – Response to message concerning speed data download from speed activated signage – P.C.C. had advised that there were problems with downloading the speed data, and arrangements were being made to carry out a speed survey instead, hopefully within the next month.

02) P.C.C. – Response to message re. Ash tree on main road – dealt with in ‘Matters Arising’ above.

03) P.C.C. – Response to enquiry about land ownership around Port Lion well – dealt with in agenda item below.

04) W.G. Democracy and Boundary Commission – Draft remuneration report – noted.

05) The Circuit – Reminder that defibrillator pads need renewal – Clerk to obtain replacement pads as necessary, at likely price of around £600 + VAT (proposer C’llr Robin Howells, seconder C’llr John Evans).

- 06) F.J. Groundworks – Quotation for repair of multi-play unit – Quotation approved (proposer C’llr Ian Thomas, seconder C’llr Robin Howells).
- 07) Quotation for verge / hedge cutting around Houghton Moor / Wild area – Quotation approved (proposer C’llr Ian Thomas, seconder C’llr Robin Howells).
- 08) Local resident – Concerns about alleged Planning breaches on construction site in Kiln Park – Clerk to write into P.C.C. Planning, to ask for their comments / advice on the situation, and their recommendations on anything that B.C.C. could do to assist with the situation. Members also noted that a number of future applications on other plots in this area were likely to be forthcoming, and that requests for on-site parking and offloading of construction vehicles / construction-related deliveries to be conditioned into any consents granted could be included in any consultation responses sent in for these applications.
- 09) P.C.C. – Notification of Tree Preservation Order placed on tree in Port Lion – noted.
- 10) Audit Wales – Notification of completion of audit of 2024/25 accounts – dealt with in ‘Accounts’ below.
- 11) Burton Jubilee Hall Committee – Request for community council to obtain portrait of The King – agreed, and Clerk to action.

Accounts

Payments

Easy Websites (direct debits for August, September, October)	:	£110-88
Clerk (incidental expenses April – September 2025)	:	£256-85
F.J. Groundworks (INV-1006)	:	£180-00

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C’llr Robin Howells, seconder C’llr John Evans).

Income

Paddy McNamara (repayment of pro-rata member allowance)	:	£121-33
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Bank signatories

In hand, with paperwork to be completed between Clerk and C’llr Michelle Campbell.

Quarterly budget review

Members considered the quarterly budget review prepared by the Clerk. There were no comments on the review statement.

External audit of 2024/25 accounts. Members considered the report, which gave a qualified approval of the accounts, based on perceived inadequacies in the community council training plan. Agenda item to be tabled for November to discuss and needed revisions to the training plan. Clerk to circulate any draft proposals in advance of the November meeting.

Discussion of arrangements for possible lease of land at Barnlake from P.C.C.

Members discussed the current situation, based on actions agreed in the September meeting, and subsequent advice written by the Clerk, following his site meeting with C’llr Scott Sinclair. C’llr Scott Sinclair reported that the six items agreed in the September meeting had been actioned, including submission of an expression of interest and back up information for a Places for Nature grant. A litter bin had been requested, but this had been redirected to Neil McCarthy in the P.C.C. Environmental Services Department, and a response was awaited. Regarding the wooded area, C’llr Scott Sinclair commented that the proposal was for this to be not open to the public. He suggested that limiting public access may be possible in practical ways, such as erecting signage. He felt that this would mean that risk assessments of the area would not be necessary. Members were unsure of this, and felt that legal advice may be needed on whether or not B.C.C. would be responsible for any incidents on this land even if public access was discouraged. C’llr Peter Griffiths commented on situations where landowners could

be held liable under certain circumstances for injuries caused to unauthorised individuals on their land, even if access had been prohibited, and signage erected to say this.

C’lir Scott Sinclair mentioned that contractors for the work had been tentatively arranged, but that he would liaise with them as necessary to update them on the current situation / potential delays in commencing work.

Regarding the general condition of the land and unmade footpath, C’lir Scott Sinclair did not feel this was a matter of concern. Regarding the drop-off at the bottom of the land into the waterway, he suggested that a sign to say that the footpath terminated at the bench would address this concern.

C’lir Scott Sinclair said that he had confidence that the projected budgets for maintaining the land had been thought through and were essentially sound.

A question was raised about whether or not the lease allowed a get-out clause. It was confirmed that the community council could terminate any formal lease with 12 months’ notice.

Regarding the boundary issues with the neighbouring building plot, C’lir Scott Sinclair reported that he had had a very positive site meeting with the plot owner, and in principle agreed a satisfactory way to address this matter.

C’lir Vicky White asked about the possibility of excluding the wooded area from any lease taken on. C’lir Scott Sinclair suggested that even if the community council did not go ahead with the lease, it would still have some degree of responsibility for Barnlake Wood.

Clerk to seek legal advice on what legal responsibility the community council would have for any incidents that might occur in the wooded area, if a lease was taken up on the land, but the public discouraged from accessing it (NOTE – C’lir Scott Sinclair also undertook to look into this matter). Matter to be tabled for further discussion in November.

Discussion of maintenance arrangements for community well, Port Lion

P.C.C. had confirmed that the land ownership was not with them, and common law suggested that it may be with the adjacent landowner. However, C’lir Vicky White said the owner of the neighbouring property had told her that someone from the community council had attended the site many years ago with a solicitor, and said that the well was a community asset. The Clerk confirmed that the land did not appear on any records currently in the community council’s possession. Members felt that some work on volunteer basis might be possible, but were mindful of potential liability if formal responsibility was accepted for the well.

Discussion of draft Biodiversity Enhancement report for 2025

Members considered the updating of the report prepared by the Clerk. C’lir Scott Sinclair referred to the original 2019 report, which he had prepared on behalf of the council. He suggested that the original remit was for the report to consider the entire community council area, not just the land in B.C.C. control. He felt that the approach being taken in the way the report was updated was not sufficiently rigorous, and did not take the original remit sufficiently seriously. He felt that the mandate was for something much more wide-ranging and comprehensive. However, Members overall were content with the revised report as drafted, and adopted it without revision (proposer C’lir Robin Howells, seconder C’lir John Evans). Clerk to arrange publication as required.

Discussion of casual vacancy arising following departure of Paddy McNamara

Matter of advertising casual vacancy left in abeyance for the time being.

Discussion of potential actions towards possible re-opening of toilet block at Burton Ferry

The Clerk had made enquiries with P.C.C. about the cost of maintaining the facilities if these were to be re-opened, and was awaiting a substantive response. Deferred for further discussion in November, by which time it was hoped that a response would have been received with indicative figures.

Discussion of possible replacement of goalposts at Houghton Playing Field

The goalposts had deteriorated, and one broken, and subsequently removed as a safety hazard. One quotation had been received for a replacement, but was felt by Members to be somewhat on the high side. Clerk to seek alternative quotations.

Discussion of Rights of Way issues in Port Lion

The matter had been reported to P.C.N.P.A. Public Rights of Way Department. They had confirmed that the route concerned was not a registered footpath. However, they had also said that responsibility for dealing with requests to get routes added to the definitive map of registered footpaths rested with P.C.C. The Clerk had attempted to make contact with the relevant officer in P.C.C., but without success. Clerk to follow this up as necessary.

Discussion of overhanging growth at junction of Ashdale Lane and main road

Clerk to contact P.C.C. to report concerns about the overhanging vegetation and adverse impact on visibility.

Discussion of situation with provision of new hospital to replace Withybush Hospital

C’lir Derek Jones commented on rumours that plans for a new hospital had been abandoned. This being the case, he felt that enquiries should once again be made about the situation with Withybush Hospital, especially given the recent substantial remedial works that had been done there. Clerk to write to Hywel Dda Health Board, to ask about the situation with services at Withybush, and whether removal of these services had been stopped. Letter to also ask for an update on the proposals for the future of the hospital. Letter to be copied to Henry Tufnell, M.P. For information.

Any other business

There was no other business to report.

The meeting ended at 8-15pm. Next meeting to be held at 7pm on Wednesday 5th November 2025.