BMCC Meeting - Dolphinton Hall - 7 September 2026.
Draft minutes

Elected Members	Present		Ex-Official Members	Present
Alistair Muirhead/Chair	Y		Alex Allison	Y
Andreas Hudson/Sec	Y		Ian Macallen	N
Stephen Jenkins	Y		Ralf Barker	N
Anne Hutchinson	Y			
Eric Holford	Y			
Tammy McAlistair	Y			
Felix de By	Y			

1. **Attendance**
    a. The meeting was held at Dolphinton Hall on Monday 7 September 2026 at 7.30 pm.
    b. All elected and ex-official members listed above attended. Two member of public attended.

2. **Welcome and recording**
    a. Attendees were reminded that the secretary was recording the meeting on his phone to assist with preparing the minutes.

3. **Apologies and Update**
    a. No apologies were received.

4. **Approval of minutes of meetings and reports**
    a. The minutes of the July meeting were approved. No August meeting had taken place.

5. **Secretary Report**
    a. Community Council elections
        i. The October 2026 elections would begin a new four-year electoral period. Existing members wishing to continue had to submit fresh nominations by 4 pm on Thursday 10 September 2026. New eligible candidates could also stand, with a proposer and seconder registered within the Community Council area.
        ii. Black Mount Community Council had seven places. Between four and seven valid nominations would result in an uncontested election. Eight or more would require a public ballot. Members were reminded to submit their forms by the deadline, and the secretary offered help with scanning and sending completed forms.
        iii. 10 September was also the deadline for nominating the Independent Interim Chairperson. It was reported that a nomination had been made. Notices of uncontested elections or polls were due on 11 September. All existing councillors would stand down on 21 October. Contested elections would take place on 22 October, with results published on 23 October.
        iv. The Independent Interim Chairperson would call the inaugural meeting, normally within 21 days of the election or as soon as practicable thereafter. The scheduled 2 November meeting could serve this purpose, subject to the formal arrangements.
        v. The newly elected councillors would elect the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The report stated that the Chair would serve for the four-year electoral period, with eligibility for a second consecutive term if re-elected. Secretary and Treasurer appointments would be reviewed at each AGM.

vi. Members discussed arrangements if a ballot were required and noted that the position would be known after the notice on 11 September. A possible poll at Elsrickle Hall on 22 October was discussed, subject to confirmation.

b. The two £500 microgrant applications in the secretary's report were considered under Current Business below.

6. **Treasurer report**
   a. The treasurer reported that £1,034 of renewable energy microgrant funding had been allocated. Approval of the two £500 applications being considered would leave £2,966 available.
   b. Of the £500 administration award for the year, £93 had been spent on hall hire. Members were reminded to submit eligible expenses, including software costs. It was noted that approximately £36 had been returned in the previous year.

7. **Planning**
   a. Application P/26/0132 concerned five house plots, associated access, landscaping and drainage on land 50 metres northwest of Elsrickle Primary School. Correspondence received from John McCann on 6 September confirmed approval, with the formal decision dated 23 July 2026. The decision notice, conditions and plans were available through the SLC planning portal.
   b. SLC's correspondence stated that Community Council consultation comments had been taken into account. At the meeting, uncertainty was expressed about whether BMCC had submitted comments. It was noted that the proposal reduced the number of plots from nine to five.
   c. The notification had been sent to John McCann rather than the current planning liaison contact. The need to ask SLC to correct its contact details was raised.

8. **Blackmount Social Group**
   a. A £500 application was being prepared towards the fireworks event planned for Saturday 7 November 2026. Help would be needed to transport and erect the tent. Brian Carroll would order the fireworks. A council licence costing £300 was discussed.
   b. The previous day's community walk was reported to have been successful, with approximately £200 raised so far.
   c. The Christmas dinner was planned for Friday 4 December 2026, usually starting at 7 pm. Alistair would speak to the caterer. Entertainment options were still being considered.
   d. The community cycling event was reported to have been successful and used an entirely off-road route. Attendance was reported as approximately 30 people, including 11 children. Members discussed possible clashes with other activities and the need to reach newcomers through publicity.

9. **Current Business**
    a. Current Grant Submissions
        i. Biggar and District Men's Shed
            1. The revised application sought £500 towards broadband for October 2026 to October 2027. The Men's Shed was based in Elsrickle, had over 40 members and supported adults from Biggar and the surrounding area. Broadband supported administration, digital inclusion, facility management and emergency communications.
            2. Members asked about applications to neighbouring Community Councils and other funding sources. Representatives explained that other applications had been made, including for LED lighting and broadband, and that a larger funding proposal concerned solar panels and batteries to help with heating. Members discussed the importance of sharing support across funding sources, particularly for recurring costs.
            3. The £500 microgrant was approved unanimously.

        ii. Black Mount Primary School
            1. The school sought £500 towards secure outdoor storage for loose-parts play equipment. Updated SLC guidance required tyres, plastic pipes and similar combustible materials to be removed unless securely stored outside school hours. The application identified 53+ pupils as direct beneficiaries.
            2. The original project estimate was £2,250, with support from the school's Replacement Budget and PEF funding, fundraising and sponsorship. Head Teacher Lisa Shields had confirmed that SLC required a metal unit purchased through an approved supplier, costing approximately £2,000 or more. The grant would contribute towards the cost.
            3. Stephen Jenkins and Andreas Hudson declared interests because their children attended the school. The other members saw no issue with their participation in the vote. The £500 microgrant was approved unanimously.
10. AOB
    a. Overgrown verges, hedges and road safety
        i. Residents raised concerns about vegetation restricting road width and visibility in Dolphinton and elsewhere in the area (coordinates 55.70870237542878, -3.436737971367838). Earlier complaints and contact with SLC had not, in their view, led to an adequate resolution.
        ii. Residents described pedestrians and people with pushchairs having to move into vegetation to avoid traffic where there was no pavement. Large agricultural vehicles and lorries were reported to be using the verges, leaving mud and debris on the road. Overhanging hedges and trees were said to push traffic towards the opposite side and contribute to drainage problems.
        iii. A resident reported damage to a car while making room for a tractor and suggested that passing places could help. Other suggestions included cutting vegetation back to its former extent, clearing accumulated material from road edges and providing photographs or measurements to support the complaint.
        iv. Similar concerns were raised about routes towards Walston and overgrown pavement near Elsrickle.

v. Members discussed SLC's response to vegetation on private land. A resident referred to section 90 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. The discussion did not establish a settled legal position. Writing directly to landowners was considered, but members agreed to approach SLC first.

vi. A draft letter to SLC would be circulated for members to add specific examples. Existing correspondence and supporting evidence were to be brought together. Escalation to the Chief Executive was suggested.

b. The Bugle and community website

i. Members requested that electronic editions of The Bugle be made available on the Community Council website. It was agreed that the files would be uploaded.

c. The next meeting would be held on Monday 5 October 2026 at Elsrickle Community Hub, starting at 7.30 pm.

d. The meeting on Monday 2 November 2026 was discussed as the AGM and potential inaugural meeting of the new Community Council, subject to the election process and arrangements by the Independent Interim Chairperson.