



**Preston and Abbey Community Trust
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
Held Abbey St Bathans Village Hall
19th June 2025 at 18:30**

Ref	Present: James Robson (Chair), Victoria Dobie (Secretary), Pip Chandler, Keith Dickson, James Dobie Remotely: Dianne Repsch (Treasurer), Ian Repsch Administrative Officer (remotely): Kat Chisholm	Action
1.	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. 	
2.	Introductions and Apologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR noted full attendance. 	
3.	Conflict of Interest (VD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 10 (25-06-02-Ellemford Show 2025 - Industrial Society): DR advised a conflict as she is a Committee Member for the Ellemford Show. • Item 10 (25-06-03-Life Support Training (paper attached P8-190625): VD, KD, PC. • Item 11 (Abbey Solar proposal): VD and JD each disclosed a potential conflict of interest related to family connections. 	
4.	Minutes from Last Meeting (paper attached P1-190625) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved by all Trustees. 	
5.	Action Log Review (paper attached P2-190625) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACT70 (PATHS Project): On hold until the Preston Village Hall Project is completed. • PACT78 (Preston Village Hall Project): On Agenda (Item 11). • PACT86 (Local Place Plan Update): On Agenda (Item 9). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACT97 (PACT Member sign up on website): Completed. Agreement to close. • PACT102 (Aikengall Ila Community Benefit): On Agenda (Item 12). • PACT104 (Updated Budget and Underspend Report): On Agenda (Item 6). • PACT105 (Communication with grant applicants): Completed. Agreement to close. • PACT106 (Aikengall Ila Planning Review): Completed. Agreement to close. 	
6.	<p>Treasurer's Report (DR) (papers attached P3(a-e)-190625)</p> <p><i>Financial Review</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trustees reviewed and discussed the PACT financial statement, projected funds, and the Aikengall and Penmanshiel spreadsheets for the period 01/04/2025 to 31/05/2025, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. • The PACT bank balance as of 31/05/2025 stands at £ 227,257.59. • No further concerns were raised by the Trustees <p><i>Draft Budget and Underspend Report (papers attached P4(a-b)-190625)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR presented the draft PACT budget for the financial year ending 31 March 2026, which had been circulated to Board members in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the total unallocated funds as of 31 May 2025 stood at £353,905.01. Following review and discussion, the Board approved the draft budget. 	
7.	<p>Community Events (DR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR confirmed that she is aiming to arrange a grand re-opening event for Preston Village Hall on the 19th July 2025 and will update the Trustees in due course. • DR confirmed that the annual Abbey St Bathans BBQ will go ahead on 23rd August 2025. 	
8.	<p>Community Communications (DR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR confirmed that she is continuing to gather content for the next community newsletter, which will be distributed following the completion of the Preston Village Hall project in summer 2025. 	
9.	<p>Local Place Plan (VD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KD advised that the draft LPP has now been placed on the COABP website. All surrounding community councils, local councillors, ABPCC/PACT members and our MP and MSP have been given the opportunity to comment on the plan. In addition a Mailchimp and Facebook notification will be issued shortly asking for input to the draft plan from local residents. The deadline for comments from all areas is 13 July 2025 and once the plan has been updated it will be submitted to Scottish Borders Council (SBC) for approval. 	VD (PACT86)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR asked if the plan would unlock funding from SBC. KD advised that this wasn't guaranteed but that if funding from local or central government becomes available for a specific type of initiative or project that we have already identified within our plan we would be much more likely to be successful in any bid we make. • PACT discussed next steps and agreed that we should start to develop a lower-level delivery plan based on the projects documented within the LPP. This would need to include CC members and other stakeholders. KD agreed to speak to Wendy Reid to ask if she would be happy to continue leading on the LPP work and take forward the delivery plan activity. 	
10.	<p>Grant Applications (VD) (paper attached P5-190625)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD confirmed that there had been no significant updates to the PACT Grants and Projects Spreadsheet. <p><i>Grant Applications Subcommittee Activity (paper attached P6-190625)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trustees thanked VD for the update report. No further comments were raised by the Board. • VD advised that the Grants Application Subcommittee is now including the PACT charitable purpose on the Grant Monitoring Forms to support audit and governance requirements. <p><i>25-05-01-Ellemford Show (Approved 12.05.25 - £4205.00)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to this meeting, the Trustees discussed via email the application from the Ellemford Show requesting £4,205.00 to cover 50% of the event's costs. • The Board approved the application for £4205.00 by email on 12/05/2025 with the funds coming from Aikengall <p><i>25-05-02-TuesdayArtGroup (Approved 19.05.25 - £51.20)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to this meeting, the Trustees discussed via email the application submitted by the Preston Tuesday Arts Club for £51.20 to cover excess hall hire costs incurred in Duns while Preston Village Hall was unavailable. • The Board approved the application for £51.20 by email on 19/05/25 with the funds coming from Aikgengall. <p><i>25-06-01-LanarkLodgeFacilities (Approved 05.06.25 - £3000.00)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to this meeting, the Trustees discussed via email the application submitted by Duns Grizzlies Rugby Group for £3,000.00 towards the purchase of outdoor equipment for disabled and disadvantaged adults at Lanark Lodge Day Centre in Duns. • The Board approved the application for £3000.00 on 05/05/25 with the funds coming from Aikengall. <p><i>25-06-02-Ellemford Show 2025 - Industrial Society (papers attached P7(a-c)-190625)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trustees considered an application from the Ellemford Show Industrial Society for £500.00. This funding is specifically for the Industrial Section of the show to contribute towards the cost of children's entertainment. The Industrial Section is responsible for 	

	<p>the schedule, organisation, and judging of exhibits on the day, as well as activities for children outside the main tent, and is managed by a separate committee from the Ellemford Show.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD noted that the Grants Subcommittee recommended approval of this application, as it aligns with Charitable Aim “f” — the advancement of community development through community festivals primarily focused on promoting community cohesion. • The Board, approved the application for £500.00 and the funds will come from Aikengall. Due to a declared conflict of interest, DR abstained from participating in the vote on this item. <p><i>Parentspace update</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD informed the Trustees that funding for ParentSpace courses (£1,374.00 for in-person or £990.50 for online) had been previously approved, contingent on the participation of at least three local families. However, as ParentSpace was unable to secure the required number of local attendees, the funding may no longer be required. • VD agreed to work with ParentSpace on developing courses tailored to the needs and interests of local residents. She will provide the Trustees with an update in due course. <p><i>25-06-03-Life Support Training (paper attached P8-190625)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trustees considered the application for £325.00 from the Abbey St Bathans, Bonkyl & Preston Community Council (ABPCC) for Life Support Training courses within the community. The focus of the training will be on the use of AED equipment. • The Board, approved the application for £325.00 and the funds will come from Aikengall. Due to declared conflicts of interests, VD, KD and PC abstained from participating in the vote on this item. 	<p>VD (PACT107)</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Community Projects</p> <p><i>Preston Village Hall Project (papers attached P9(a-e)-190625)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trustees thanked JD for circulating the site minutes from the past six months. • The project’s current completion date is scheduled for the end of June and remains on budget. • JR agreed to liaise with the Preston Village Hall Committee regarding governance matters and will update the Trustees on the outcome in due course. • The Trustees expressed their gratitude to JD for his hard work and perseverance in progressing the Preston Village Hall project. <p><i>Preston Village Hall Project – External Painting approval</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trustees previously approved, via email, the cost of £5,650.70 plus VAT for painting the exterior of Preston Village Hall. VD advised that this expenditure will be covered by the remaining funds from the Quixwood Fund allocated for the Hall refurbishment. As this represents a change in specification from the original application, VD will seek authorisation from Sophie O’Connor at Point North. 	<p>JD (PACT78)</p>

Abbey Solar proposal

- VD reported that PACT has an opportunity to apply for a grant of approximately £200,000.00 from CARES to support a small solar array development on land owned by Abbey Timber (AT) a local business. Should the project proceed, the proposal would be to lease the land of AT and resell power either to AT or directly into the National Grid. The project would be owned by PACT and generate long-term income. PACT would be required to invest approximately £50,000.00 if the project proceeds. At this stage, no funding decision will be made.
- The Board approved a contribution of £1,000.00 towards the G99 application, which will determine how much energy can be fed into the grid. The total G99 application cost is £1,500.00, with Abbey Timber contributing the remaining £500.00.
- Trustees discussed concerns including: the need for transparency and clear communication with the community; ensuring PACT's charitable and constitutional remit permits such investment; risks if the sawmill ceases operations; the need to clarify whether surplus energy can be sold or used elsewhere; the requirement to set up a commercial subsidiary.
- If the grant application is unsuccessful, or PACT decides not to proceed, but Abbey Timber does proceed with a connection to the grid, Abbey Timber has agreed to reimburse PACT's £1,000.00 contribution should they decide to proceed with another project.
- If successful, PACT will compile questions for FDR Seed who would act as agent for PACT to guide the next phase of project planning.
- VD and JD highlighted a potential conflict of interest should the project proceed beyond the G99 application stage given AT is owned by close relatives of said/ stated PACT trustees. These conflicts can be managed by having non conflicted trustees voting and also the use of a third part agent, FBR Seed to conduct any negotiations.

Abbey St Bathans Village Hall Trust (paper attached P10-190625)

- The PACT Trustees noted the Trustees of Abbey St Bathans Village Hall Trust (the Trust) had sought clarity on conditions attaching to the asset improvements made by PACT to Abbey St Bathans Village Hall, and the use of those assets by the Trust. This clarity was sought in relation to the Trust's treatment of those assets for accounting purposes. The PACT Trustees noted and confirmed the asset improvements were provided on condition that the Hall should continue to be used for the benefit of the Abbey St Bathans Community, and it was understood that the Trust accepted this condition, so would treat the asset improvements as having been received into an expendable endowment fund for that purpose.
- It was recognised that this was an expendable endowment since long term maintenance, adaptation and renewal of the Hall may require capital investment in future, by the Trust. Accordingly, if the Trust (or a successor charity) deemed it necessary or appropriate in line with their charitable purpose, the endowed asset improvements (or any part of them) could be spent or disposed of, provided that funds generated are used for similar charitable purposes. As well as protecting how the asset improvements to the Hall would be used, it was noted this would enable the Trust to progress preparing

	<p>annual accounts in line with a suggestion made by OSCR (which was made for discussion with the Trust's financial advisers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trustees reviewed and approved the updated wording. 	
12.	<p>Windfarm Communications</p> <p><i>Aikengall Ila Community Benefit (JR)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JR updated the Trustees on correspondence with CWP regarding the community benefit fund generated by Aikengall Ila. An initial offer of £40,000.00 per annum was made, based on five communities. JR responded with questions about the calculation, inflation, and index-linking, but no further reply has been received to date. The Trustees agreed the offer was not unreasonable, and efforts continue to secure the best possible outcome. DR asked if CELCA could approach CWP directly. JR advised that while PACT is keen to work with CELCA, multiple approaches could be counterproductive. The Trustees agreed that CELCA should not be asked specifically by PACT to contact CWP at this stage, and PACT will share updates with them when appropriate. <p><i>Quixwood Visit June 2025 (VD) (paper attached P11-190625)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VD reported on the successful visit in June 2025 by David Todd, NTR (Quixwood) representative, and Sophie O'Connor, Point North representative. VD noted that Sophie and David expressed keen interest in supporting the local Winter Fuel Allowance initiative. VD will investigate whether the ABPCC can apply for this funding directly. 	<p>JR (PACT102)</p> <p>VD (PACT108)</p>
13.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><i>New Borders Funding Portal (VD)</i> VD informed the Trustees that PACT has registered on the portal to receive updates on funding opportunities. The Trustees agreed that PACT should also register as a funder.</p> <p><i>Penmanshiel annual report (VD)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VD confirmed that the annual Penmanshiel report has been submitted <p><i>Berwickshire County Show 2025 (VD)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VD informed the Trustees that an application had been received from the Berwickshire County Show for their 2025 event. Given its similarity to previous years' applications, the Trustees approved funding of £1,000.00. 	
14.	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>To be held at Abbey St Bathans Village Hall, at 6.30pm on Thursday 21st August 2025.</p>	