



**Preston and Abbey Community Trust
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
Held at Preston Village Hall
21st August 2025 at 18:30**

Ref	Present: James Robson (Chair), Victoria Dobie (Secretary), Dianne Repsch (Treasurer), Pip Chandler, James Dobie, Ian Repsch Administrative Officer: Kat Chisholm	Action
1.	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. 	
2.	<p>Introductions and Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies: No apologies were received. All Trustees were present. • It was noted that Keith Dickson formally resigned as a Trustee on 24 June 2025. The Board expressed its appreciation for Keith's valuable contributions during his time on the Board and formally recorded its thanks for his service and commitment to PACT. 	
3.	<p>Conflict of Interest (VD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 11 (Abbey Solar proposal): VD and JD formally disclosed potential conflicts of interest due to family connections associated with the proposal. • Trustees reviewed and approved the new Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy (<i>paper P1-210825</i>). This revised version has been recommended by DTAS and it largely matches the previous expectations, but adds clarity. VD agreed to circulate the final approved version of the policy to all Trustees. 	
4.	<p>Minutes from Last Meeting (paper attached P2-210825)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Minutes from the previous meeting were approved. • The Board formally acknowledged that an additional meeting of the PACT Board was held via Zoom on Thursday, 7 August 2025 at 6:00 PM. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Abbey Solar Project in greater detail. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes of that meeting have been recorded and retained for reference. 	
5.	<p>Action Log Review (paper attached P3-210825)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PACT70 (PATHS Project): On hold. PACT78 (Preston Village Hall Project): On Agenda (Item 11). PACT86 (Local Place Plan Update): On Agenda (Item 9). PACT102 (Aikengall Ila Community Benefit): On Agenda (Item 12). PACT107 (VD to contact ParentSpace to discuss next steps): VD followed up with ParentSpace, who remain open to offering tailored courses or 1:1 support in the area. Previous courses had low uptake due to barriers like travel, childcare, and stigma. With Preston Village Hall now reopened, a new attempt may be possible. Parentspace will contact VD when they have the capacity to undertake further courses or 1:1 support. Agreed to close. PACT108 (ABPCC funding from Point North): The Community Council has agreed that VD should submit an application to Point North on behalf of the CC for the Winter Fuel allowance initiative this year. The CC will provide figures to support the application and the CC agreed to an increase in the winter fuel allowance from £100.00 to £150.00 per person. VD to proceed with the application process once figures are received. Agreed to close. 	
6.	<p>Treasurer's Report (DR) (papers attached P4(a-f)-210825)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trustees reviewed and discussed the PACT financial statement, projected funds, and the Aikengall and Penmanshiel community benefit spreadsheets for the period 01 April 2025 to 31 July 2025. These documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The PACT bank balance as of 31 July 2025 was reported as £157,462.76. The budget was previously reviewed and approved; no major financial concerns at present. DR advised the Board of recent changes to Scottish charity law, which now require all trustee details to be submitted to OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator). As the principal contact, DR will collect the necessary information from all Trustees and ensure it is uploaded securely to the OSCR website. It was also noted that from 2026, OSCR will begin publishing the first and last names of all Trustees on the public Charity Register, in accordance with the new regulations. DR reported that the website renewal charge was temporarily paid using her personal credit card following transfer of responsibility from Keith Dickson. The Trustees agreed that the Treasurer should obtain a debit card for transactions from the PACT account to avoid use of personal cards. 	
7.	<p>Community Events (DR)</p> <p><i>Preston Village Hall Grand Re-opening 19.07.2025 (paper attached P5-210825)</i></p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR reported that the Preston Village Hall reopening event was a great success. There were 100 bookings in advance, although approximately 20 attendees did not attend on the day due to poor weather conditions. Thirteen people travelled to the event using the coach that was hired. • A varied hot buffet was served, and leftover food was shared with local residents and volunteers. The event was supported by a dedicated team of volunteers along with one paid helper. • A planned children’s afternoon session was cancelled due to low bookings; however, the magician scheduled for that portion of the day provided walk-around entertainment during the evening event, which was well received by attendees. • Total costs for the event were approximately £1,022.00, equating to around £10.00–£12.00 per head. Hall hire was provided free of charge. Proceeds from alcohol sales, totalling £436.00, were donated to Duns Food Bank. • JR and the Trustees formally thanked DR, IR, and the wider team of volunteers for their hard work and contribution to a successful and well-run event. <p><i>Abbey Village Hall Summer Barbecue 23.08.2025</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventy-five people have signed up to attend the upcoming Summer Barbecue. All logistics are in place, including bus transportation, alcohol licence, food arrangements, and a team of volunteers to support the event. The Board thanked everyone involved for their efforts in organising what promises to be a successful community gathering. 	
8.	<p>Community Communications (DR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR noted that the summer newsletter has been issued to local residents. No further newsletters are planned until the winter edition, which will include information on the Winter Fuel Scheme and upcoming Burns Night celebrations. • An opportunity has been identified to include an article or notice in the Duns newsletter to raise awareness of PACT activities and reach a broader audience. The Trustees advised caution on eligibility messaging to avoid confusion. PC will liaise with DR to explore this idea further and arrange this if appropriate. • Broader communication planning deferred to post-AGM meeting. • Following the meeting, VD emailed Trustees to seek approval for covering the full cost of the most recent community newsletter from Penmanshiel funds, due to insufficient funds in the ABPCC annual support grant. Trustees were also asked to approve the same funding approach for future newsletters. • Unanimous approval was received on 24.08.25 via email from all Trustees. The Board therefore agreed that the newsletter costs will be covered in full from Penmanshiel funds going forward. 	
9.	<p>Local Place Plan (VD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning is underway for a meeting to be scheduled in September to prioritize the community needs that have been identified and 	

	<p>assign responsibilities to relevant parties and a timeline. This session aims to build a clear framework of objectives and designate leads for each priority, ensuring effective progress and accountability. The meeting will be facilitated by Wendy Reid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key stakeholders invited will include representatives from PACT, Community Councils, Hall Committees, and other interested local groups or individuals invested in the community's development. • VD agreed to set and circulate the confirmed date within the coming week to allow maximum participation. It is noted that JD and DR may be unable to attend. • The Trustees approved the hall hire for this event. They further agreed to approve the catering budget by email once numbers are known. VD will request RSVP tracking to inform facilitation, catering and participant list. 	<p>VD (PACT86)</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Grant Applications (VD) (paper attached P6-210825)</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</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD noted that no updates or reports were required at this time. • Requests for funding for hall hire were not taken through the subcommittee, and the Coldingham application is to be discussed. <p><i>25-07-01-PrestonCommunityCafeHallRentalCosts (Email approval 16.07.25 for £300.00)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to this meeting, the Trustees discussed via email the application from the Preston Community Café requesting £300.00 to cover hall hire costs. • The Board approved the application for £300.00 by email on 16.07.25 with the funds coming from Aikengall. • VD confirmed that the application was approved by herself, JR, and JD, with IR, DR, and PC not participating due to conflicts of interest. • It was noted that the Community Council holds funds ring-fenced for the café in the ABPCC account, though this was not disclosed in the submitted application. Despite this, the grant for hall hire was approved on the understanding that existing funds are intended for equipment and supplies to help sustain the café's activities. <p><i>25-08-01-PrestonStitchersHallHire (Email approval 14.08.25 for £210.00)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to this meeting, the Trustees discussed via email the application submitted by the Preston Stitchers for £210.00 to cover excess hall hire costs incurred while Preston Village Hall was unavailable. • The Board approved the application for £210.00 by email on 14.08.25 with the funds coming from Aikengall. <p><i>25-08-02-AbbeyScottishWomensInstituteHallHire (Email approval 14.08.25 for £40.00)</i></p>	

- Prior to this meeting, the Trustees discussed via email the application submitted by the Abbey St Bathans Scottish Women's Institute for £40.00 to cover excess hall hire costs incurred while Preston Village Hall was unavailable.
- The Board approved the application for £40.00 on 14.08.25 with the funds coming from Aikengall.

25-06-03-Life Support Training (change to timeline)

- DR confirmed that the Life Support Training session scheduled for 3 August 2025 was cancelled due to low sign-up. She is seeking a new date and an update will be provided once a new session is confirmed.
- The Board approved this change to the project timeline, and the previously approved funding will be retained.

24-09-01-DunsArcheryClub – Final Report (paper attached P7-210825)

- Trustees noted the final report and raised no concerns.

25-05-02-TuesdayArtGroup – Final Report (paper attached P8-210825)

- Trustees noted the final report and raised no concerns.

25-02-01-PrestonArtGroup – Final Report (paper attached P9-210825)

- Trustees noted the final report and raised no concerns.

24-07-02-DunsRugbyClub – Final Report (paper attached P10-210825)

- Trustees noted the final report and raised no concerns.

Coldingham CC Grant Application (papers attached P11(a-d)-210825)

- VD outlined a funding application received from Coldingham Community Council for a contribution of £5,000.00 towards an Inclusive Community Playpark, aimed at replacing the current equipment with more accessible options for children with a range of needs. The total estimated project cost is £218,000.00.
- VD proposed, with approval from the Chairs of the Community Council (CC) and PACT, to suggest that the applicants instead apply for £10,000.00 from the Quixwood Small Grants Fund, with shared support from both ABPCC and Grantshouse CC. This approach was in light of the broader community benefit, including potential use by Grantshouse residents.
- The proposal was presented to the PACT trustees for information noting that both Chairs had approved the suggested course of action.

General Discussion

- Following review of the final reports, it was agreed that DR will update the funding report section of the website once the report has been revised by PACT and the Community Council in advance of the next AGM.
- DR expressed concern that some applicants had yet to submit invoices required to release approved funding. KC agreed to follow up with the relevant applicants and update DR accordingly.

<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"> • A snagging list is currently being compiled to identify and address any outstanding issues or defects. To ensure these are properly resolved, a retention amount of 2.5% of the total project cost is being withheld for one year until the snagging work has been completed to satisfaction. • The final project report is expected to be submitted to Point North by the end of August 2025. • JD confirmed that he has reviewed the financial documentation to date and is satisfied with the final figures presented for the project. • It was agreed that following the upcoming AGM, PACT will work jointly with the Preston Village Hall Trustees to undertake a project review, addressing any remaining outstanding items and formally closing the project. • JD confirmed that he has submitted an application to CARES on behalf of PACT, for funding for the Solar Panels. JD noted that the solar energy element of the project will be considered separately and in due course once the Cares grant decision has been made. <p><i>Abbey Solar proposal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD informed the Board that Local Energy Scotland has approved a grant of £235,107.00 to support the construction of a solar array at Abbey Timber, subject to the fulfilment of specific conditions. • VD noted Abbey Timber has since expressed concerns about the project's timeframes and review process, particularly in relation to internal planning capacity and the grant's timeline. • VD emphasised that the grid connection outcome remains a critical dependency. If connection capacity is confirmed and the timing aligns, there may still be potential to revisit the project proposal with Abbey Timber. • VD will update the funder to clarify PACT's position. Firstly, if the grid connection is confirmed, then Abbey Timber may wish to consider planning for an re-application to be submitted for a Solar Array in 2026, and would support with funding professional planners be available for this from the present grant. Alternatively, if grid connection is denied, or Abbey Timber do not wish to go ahead, could PACT consider transferring the funding for a solar array to a different site within our CC area.. • The Board also explored the possibility of establishing a subsidiary focused on income generation, it would not have to be restricted to renewable energy projects.. This could provide a mechanism for long-term endowment growth, aligning with PACT's aim of sustaining community benefit beyond the life of the current windfarm agreements. • JR proposed that a dedicated session be held to explore this opportunity in more depth, potentially involving external legal and financial advice. He suggested aiming for early 2026 as the target for reaching a formal business decision regarding PACT's involvement in a subsidiary. • It was agreed that a focused planning meeting will be arranged in early November 2025 with DTAS specialist support to advance this discussion. VD agreed to gather background material, explore 	<p>JD (PACT78)</p>
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	<p>subsidiary options, and coordinate with relevant stakeholders in preparation for that meeting.</p> <p>Swimming Subsidies 2025/26 (final report for 2024/25) (paper attached P12-210825)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final report for the 2024/25 Swimming Subsidies Programme was reviewed. A total of 78 community beneficiaries were recorded as having used the scheme. • The associated grant payment has been received from the funder, confirming successful delivery of the programme in line with agreed outcomes. • Feedback has been positive, and there was general agreement among Trustees to explore repeating the programme for the 2025/26 period, subject to available funding and ongoing community need. • Funding for 2025/26 has been secured and there has been good uptake already. 	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Windfarm Communications</p> <p><i>Aikengall Ila Community Benefit (JR)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR provided an update on ongoing correspondence with CWP, noting that he has received a holding response but is still awaiting a formal reply to his enquiry. He remains hopeful that a full response will be received shortly and confirmed his intention to follow up with CWP as needed. • JR will seek to obtain a clear update and ensure that the matter is resolved ahead of the October AGM. <p><i>Monashee Wind Farm (VD)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD reported that she had a preliminary discussion with Hannah Sharp, Project Communications Manager at Green Switch Capital (GSC), developers of the proposed Monashee Wind Farm. • VD confirmed that the project is expected to generate 24MW of electricity over a 40-year lifespan. GSC has proposed a community benefit package of £5,000.00 per MW per year, which could equate to £120,000.00 annually, although this figure remains subject to change pending final planning approval. • Hannah Sharp outlined potential models for managing wind farm funds which included management by Foundation Scotland, and a dedicated Green Switch Capital management structure for the various wind farms they are developing. Local management was a further option and VD had explained why this is so important for PACT. • The Board discussed the potential advantages of managing funds through a local community trust, including greater flexibility, local accountability, and alignment with specific community needs. Concerns were noted around the potential drawbacks of external or "one-size-fits-all" fund management models. • VD confirmed that a meeting will be arranged between local community representatives and GSC to explore these options further. JR confirmed that he will attend. 	<p>VD (PACT102)</p>

<p>13.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><i>Date of the next October AGM (DR/IR: 23rd no, VD: 30th no)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGM Date Confirmed: Tuesday, 4th November 2025 at 6:30 PM at Preston Village Hall. • VD confirmed that PC, JD, DR would be standing for re-election. <p><i>Paths (JD)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JD expressed interest in revisiting and reactivating the Paths Project. He proposed exploring a low-impact path to the cemetery, with potential modest widening of the existing car park. He has agreed to develop an initial plan suitable for the AGM. 	
<p>14.</p>	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>AGM to be held Tuesday, 4th November 2025 at 6:30 PM at Preston Village Hall.</p>	