



**MINUTES OF MEETING of the PETITIONS COMMITTEE held within the Council  
Chamber, Kilncraigs, Greenside Street, ALLOA, FK10 1EB, on THURSDAY 3 APRIL  
2025 at 1.30 PM.**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Donald Balsillie  
Councillor Denis Coyne (S)  
Councillor Ellen Forson (S)  
Councillor Scott Harrison  
Councillor Willian Keogh  
Councillor Fiona Law  
Councillor Mark McLuckie  
Councillor Bryan Quinn

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Kevin Wells, Strategic Director (Place)  
Lee Robertson, Senior Manager, Legal and Governance (Clerk to the Committee)  
Murray Sharp, Senior Manager, Housing (Place)  
Andrew Buchanan, Housing Operations Manager (Place)  
Pat Cairney, Principal Building Standards Surveyor (Place)  
Keith Johnston, Acting Planning and Building Standards Team Leader (Place)  
Karen Payton, Team Leader – Communications & Marketing (Partnership & Performance)  
Gillian White, Committee Services

As the appointment of a Chair and Vice Chair was on the Agenda for decision, Kevin Wells welcomed everyone to the Petitions Committee and outlined the protocol in terms of fire evacuation and process.

**PET(25)01      APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Martha Benny and Councillor Graham Lindsay. Councillor Denis Coyne acted as substitute for Councillor Benny and Councillor Forson acted as substitute for Councillor Lindsay.

**PET(25)02      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**PET(25)03      APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

At the Council meeting of 30 January 2023, it was agreed that a Chair and Vice Chair of the Petitions Committee would be appointed from within the nominated Committee membership at the first meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Ellen Forson nominated Councillor Donald Balsillie as Chair. Councillor Balsillie declined the nomination as for this Petition being considered, he was also the local member.

Councillor Donald Balsillie then nominated Councillor Scott Harrison as Chair. Councillor Harrison accepted the nomination and as there were no further nominations, Councillor Scott Harrison was duly appointed as Chair of the Petitions Committee.

Councillor Donald Balsillie nominated Councillor Bryan Quinn as Vice Chair. Councillor Quinn accepted the nomination and as there were no further nominations, Councillor Bryan Quinn was duly appointed as Vice Chair of the Petitions Committee.

## **Decision**

Councillor Scott Harrison was appointed as Chair and Councillor Bryan Quinn was appointed as Vice Chair of the Petitions Committee.

## **Action**

Senior Manager, Legal and Governance

## **PLC(25)04 ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS**

An order of proceedings was put before the Committee for information. The Chair advised all parties present of the procedure for hearing the petition.

## **PLC(25)05 PUBLIC PETITION – TILLCOUNTRY RAAC HOMEOWNERS**

The report, submitted by the Senior Manager, Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) summarised the petition which had been received from Ms Lindsay McQuater entitled “Tillicoultry RAAC Homeowners”.

### **Attending:**

Ms Lynsey McQuater, Principal Petitioner  
Mr Wilson Chowdhry, Principal Petitioner’s Representative  
Ms Fiona Crichton, Supporter  
Ms Frances Reid, Supporter

The Committee heard a presentation from Wilson Chowdhry, on behalf of the Principal Petitioner Lynsey McQuater.

He highlighted a number of key points as follows:-

1. **Pre RAAC declaration valuations** – he urged the Council to adopt valuations reflecting property values as if the RAAC issue were not present. He was disappointed that despite the Council making a drastic change in its preferred recommendation, from voluntary acquisition to immediate works, sometime after the petition was written, that they are not being allowed to speak on the new proposal. The proposal involves replacing roofs, retrofitting cavity wall insulation and adding new external render to properties, an option many homeowners would prefer over the previous voluntary acquisition scheme, which only offered paltry sums. They had hoped to challenge Councillors to consider a sundry loan system that would enable homeowners to repair the homes while also preserving existing Council housing stock, sparing the Council the uncertainty of prolonged building projects.

He stressed that the Council has the ability to prevent financial crisis for so many who have found themselves in the situation through no fault of their own, suggesting that the Council must accept some responsibility for the historic construction of these homes, which introduced RAAC as a failed cost saving measure, and that these properties were later sold to unsuspecting buyers without any disclosure of the presence of RAAC or acknowledgement of safety concerns that were ignored for decades.

If the Council insists on voluntary acquisition, the petitioners demand that the pre RAAC valuation approach be adopted to ensure fairness. Any voluntary agreement that offered less than market value as at a pre RAAC valuation would push most homeowners towards bankruptcy and homelessness. He stressed that this is unacceptable and cannot be the intention of the elected members, and that they have a duty to support these homeowners in a way that is just and equitable.

2. **Financial support for RAAC-related costs** - he requested financial assistance for homeowners to cover RAAC related costs, including evacuation expenses and disturbance payments, through a voluntary agreement. However, he expressed his disappointment that despite multiple requests for information, they still do not have clarity on whether homeowners' requests for costs will be met, and these costs also include re-entry expenses for retrieving personal belongings, storage fees and Council rents. They are suffering immense hardship, and homeowners are calling for generosity. The delays in progressing options and finding a final resolution have been entirely due to the Council, the majority owner of these properties, who is already liable for much of these costs. He advised that this has only served to exacerbate financial burdens on homeowners and urged the Committee to help them. Homeowners should not be at the cost of a crisis they did not create.
3. **Request a public inquiry** – He called on Clackmannanshire Council to formally request that the Scottish Government conduct a public inquiry into how Scottish Councils' have handled RAAC. This inquiry must examine safety assessments; property transactions; risk assessments for the use of RAAC, considering in Tillicoultry the nearby quarries and quarries and mines and whether quarrying contributed to the early failure of RAAC in Tillicoultry homes; RAAC Disclosures; and Councils' responses to homeowner concerns. Transparency is critical to restoring public trust and ensuring accountability for the decisions that have left homeowners in this precarious situation.
4. **Advocate for a national financial support fund** – he urged the Council to take a stronger stance in lobbying the Scottish Government for a national Financial Support Fund for RAAC affected homeowners. The recent announcement of £3.4 billion in funding from Chancellor Rachel Reeves presents a timely opportunity to secure vital support. With the backing of the local MP, he believed that more visible advocacy from the Council could significantly influence policy decisions at a national level. He asked that whatever method of resolution is chosen in June, he implored the Council to continue pressing the Scottish Government to ensure homeowners do not suffer financial losses. This should include a commitment that, if the sundry loan scheme is chosen, the Council will advocate for government support to ensure long term financial stability.

In his final comments he summarised that the Council face a choice to allow homeowners to slip into financial devastation or to act decisively to ensure they are treated fairly. If voluntary acquisition remains on the table, the pre-RAAC declaration valuations must be implemented or if works are the way forward, financial support must be provided to cover past and ongoing costs. This is not just a policy decision, it's about real lives, real families and a community that has already suffered enough. He urged the Council to stand with homeowners and deliver a just outcome.

Members of the Committee had the opportunity to put questions to the petitioners and to officers of the Council.

## Decision

Having considered the petition and the information presented to it by Ms Lynsey McQuater and her representative Mr Wilson Chowdhry; and having had the opportunity for questions, the Committee agreed to prepare a report to Council with the undernoted recommendations:

1. **Provide Pre-RAAC Declaration Valuations** – that the Council agree that a feasibility study, based on Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) requirements, is carried out by officers and surveyors to establish whether a mechanism for both pre and post RAAC valuations can be carried out as at the date of the Petitions Committee (3 April 2025).
2. **Financial support for RAAC-related costs** – that the Council explores all avenues within existing frameworks to provide support in whatever form that takes including all sectors.

3. **Request a Public Enquiry** – that the Council take no further action on this request at this time.
4. **Advocate for a National Financial Support Fund** – that the Council actively and more visibly lobby the Scottish Government and the UK Government for the establishment of a national financial support fund for RAAC-affected homeowners.

**Action**

Senior Manager, Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Ends 1600 hours