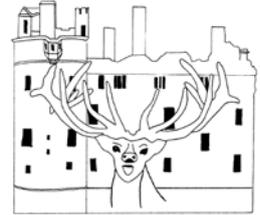




# HUNTLY COMMUNITY COUNCIL



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**Minutes of the April 2015 meeting of Huntly Community Council held in the Council Chamber, the Stewart's Hall, Huntly on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at 7.30 pm**

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

**Present:** Tony Gill (Vice-Chair); Hazel McIntosh (Treasurer); Freda McRae; Rev Norma Milne; Ronald Pittendrigh; Michelle Goodall; Isadora Lee; Mary Burgerhout (Secretary)

**Others:** Janelle Clark, Ian Rogan (Aberdeenshire Council); Pat Scott (Huntly Express); Cllr Moira Ingleby; Stan Davey (member of public)

**Apologies:** Hilda Lumsden-Gill

Tony welcomed everyone to the meeting, including guests Janelle Clark, Marr Area Manager, and Ian Rogan, Area Project Officer (Communities). A list of correspondence received since the March meeting had been circulated prior to tonight's meeting, some items which would be referred to during the meeting and some which were put on the table.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting The March minutes were proposed for acceptance by Hazel and seconded by Norma.

3. Guest Speakers – Ian Rogan Ian apologised for being unable to attend the March meeting and provided the background to the Review of the Scheme of Establishment for CCs, now in its second phase. There are four main areas of contention arising from the responses received from CCs to Phase 2– the difficulty in reading the consultation documents, the proposal that the Council determine election dates, the proposal to change Chairs' terms of office, and CC funding. In light of these, he feels that more consultation/engagement is needed for Phase 2 and will produce a paper detailing the main issues following which meetings will be held with CCs to discuss these. It may be that the Scheme will be amended to reflect actual working practices among CCs, or vice-versa. A discussion arose on the specific issues raised by Huntly CC ie. clarification of the term "significant interest" in relation to eligibility for CC membership, the rationale behind having a Council-determined election date, timescale for issuing of minutes and the options presented to us re payment of the Admin Grant and what the grant actually covers in term of admin support. Tony advised that Mary had today requested at the Council Offices in Gordon Street the photocopying of documents relating to the Local Development Plan and been told that a photocopying service for CCs is no longer provided (although it was done as a one-off on this occasion). Janelle Clark suggested that the Scheme of Establishment should clarify what the roles and responsibilities of both the Council and the CC are in relation to CC admin work. Hazel asked Ian to bear in mind when seeking further consultation/engagement with CCs that after the June meeting, Huntly CC does not meet again till September.

Ian left the meeting at 8.10 pm. Tony thanked him for coming along.

## 4. Matters Arising

- A. Police Issues** Although there was no police officer present, a report was received post-meeting. In the last 4 weeks there have been 24 crimes recorded, 8 of which have been successfully detected 4 undetected and 11 undergoing various lines of enquiry. There have been 7 vehicle-related crimes, 5 involving assault or breach of the peace, 4 theft-related, 4 incidences of vandalism and 4 miscellaneous offences. Tony summarised the contents of two emails sent recently by Sgt Sawers. The Community Drop-in Scheme sees officers engaging with the public through drop-ins at local businesses, cafes, bus-stops etc. The initiative was welcomed by members if it means that there will be more “bobbies on the beat”. Operation Collinsville has seen officers carrying out patrols and road traffic checks in order to reduce the levels of anti-social and irresponsible driving on rural roads, with a number of motorists stopped and educated, cautioned or charged.
- enquiry.

**ThB. Huntly Topics**

**i) Current Issues**

- a) Temporary Traffic Restrictions – Upperkirkgate, 11<sup>th</sup> May x 5 days (laying new gas service); 6 – 8 Richmond Lane, 27<sup>th</sup> April x 5 days (install water service);.
- b) Marr Area Bus Forum Mary attended the Forum on 26<sup>th</sup> March and raised the issue of the siting of the Bus Stand in the Square. Tony read out the response from the Public Transport Unit which outlined the background to its introduction as a replacement for the previous (much smaller) stand and which confirmed that it cannot be moved nearer the bus stop. Mary had also contacted Planning, who advised that planning permission was not, as we had originally been led to believe, required to erect the Stand.
- c) Park and Pay Sign Following concerns raised re the size and colour of the two signs and the apparent lack of consultation/planning permission for their installation, Mary had contacted Planning who advised that the size of a sign determines whether formal Advert Consent is required, and that this will be checked out. Janelle and Cllr Ingleby are investigating this issue; the signs are the size and colour they are because across the shire, drivers claim they didn't notice the previously smaller signs and parked without paying. While the parking meters themselves cannot be moved, the plan is to come up with a smaller, more sympathetic design and also to move at least one of the signs.
- d) Bins at the Linden Centre Entrance As discussed last month, these bins have been sited with no consideration given to the fact that they spoil the view of the Arch and the Gordon Highlanders' Memorial. Janelle will investigate this issue.

Frustration was expressed re points b),c) and d) above in relation to the Council's practice of erecting unsympathetic signage, stands etc in a conservation area without prior consultation with the public or the need to go through the planning process, while local residents have to jump through hoops to get permission for basic alterations to their properties. Tony had hoped to meet planner James Leadbetter, who has a fortnightly surgery in Huntly, on 15<sup>th</sup> April to discuss these issues but Mr Leadbetter was not in fact in Huntly as scheduled on that day. Tony hopes to meet with him at a later date.

- e) Older People's Forum Tony and Mary attended the OPF meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. OPF members raised the issue of safety at the Market Muir junction and claimed that accidents/near misses continue to happen (Tony encouraged them to report these to the police). They also had concerns about the poor visibility for drivers coming from Gordon Street due to cars parked on the left obscuring the view. Mary contacted Sgt Sawers for information on any recent reports of accidents, the response being that nothing significant had been reported and any incidents were due to driver error. Mary will contact Mark Skilling to ask if a review of safety at the junction has been carried out since the safety measures were put in place. The next OPF meeting is on 18<sup>th</sup> May and in response to Tony's request for a CC rep to attend, Ronald volunteered. Mary will provide him with feedback for the Forum once she has heard from the Council.

- f) CC Promotional Stall Mary had contacted Anna Wilson (Farmers' Market) about the possibility of having a stall at the September FM/Hairst. Two stalls are available each month, one for fundraising and one for awareness-raising, and the Fundraising stall for September is already allocated. The CC had planned to have a joint fundraising/information stall but as this is not possible, it was agreed to book the vacant promotional slot instead. A gazebo is to be hired via John Greer - a meeting will be held mid-late August to organise the event.
- g) Young Carers Having received Norma's availability in May, Mary has contacted Andy Farquhar with a proposal to meet on 12<sup>th</sup> May – response awaited.
- h) Supporting Communities Event Following the cancellation of the event scheduled for Huntly last year, three new sessions have been organised for the Council but disappointingly there is not one in Huntly. The first venue is Turriff (Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May) followed by Banchory (13<sup>th</sup> June) and Kemnay (7<sup>th</sup> September). Mary will circulate the email to members so they can advise her of their availability. In addition, online training is available for CC members on a range of issues. Janelle advised that one-to-one training is also available although those interested would have to complete the online training first.

Dora left the meeting at 8.45 pm.

- ii) Road Issues No response has been received from Ralph Singleton re our query before the March meeting as to when the repainting of yellow lines across the town will recommence. Mary chased him up two weeks ago but has still not received a response. Janelle will investigate. Tony advised that vehicles continue to drive up Bogie Street which is one-way and questioned whether the "No Entry" sign at the Gladstone Road junction is prominent enough (the Council have claimed it is). Janelle will investigate.
- iii) Clashindarroch Windfarm Community Fund The fund is now open for the first round of applications (closing date 4<sup>th</sup> May); the closing date for applications for the Community Panel members has passed and there are 10 applications in total across the four CC/community association areas. Foundation Scotland are reviewing these, and they and CC Panel members (formerly the Working Group) for each area will have an informal chat with applicants towards the end of April. The next meeting is on 6<sup>th</sup> May at which the Panel will assemble for the first time and sample assessments will be carried out in readiness for going live with applications/awarding of funds thereafter. Dummuies Wind Farm Community Fund We have received a letter from eco2 who manage this fund asking us to identify local projects for funding to which Mary has replied. It appears that the adverts being placed in the local press are not soliciting many applications. Pat advised that an article to supplement the adverts is being drafted by the HE. Cairnborrow Wind Farm Michelle and Ronald confirmed that they have heard nothing further re the next meeting of the Liaison Group.

iv) Planning Applications Tony summarised the applications made since the last meeting. There was no significant comment on these, though Hazel noted the irony of the Royal Bank having to apply for permission to erect new signage which is a like-for-like replacement, while the Bus Stand (not like-for-like) did not need such permission. Local Development Plan We have been sent the proposed 2016 plan and asked to submit comments by 8<sup>th</sup> May. Tony circulated copies of the items relating to Huntly (Mary had earlier emailed the website link) and a discussion took place on the proposals to release land for development/house building. Michelle suggested that since the plans have been carried forward from 2012, with no development having taken place, it is likely that nothing will happen until after the A96 is dualled. Among other points raised were the road access from the A96 into any new development at the Battlehill, the uncertainty over the ownership of the track opposite the railway station leading to the Pirriesmill Cottages and the need to protect the trees on either side (the Crows' Wood), and the need for detail on how additional school, health centre etc facilities would be achieved and where sited. Hazel pointed out the many advantages of the Primary School being located next to the Secondary School and the detrimental effect of

building a new Primary School at Pirriesmills. Mary will email members with the points raised and ask for any other specific points to be fed back to her by 30<sup>th</sup> April so that she can complete the Response Form.

A drop-in event is being held on 29<sup>th</sup> April between 1 and 7 pm in the Stewart's Hall - members are encouraged to go along and make comments as individuals should they wish.

#### **v)AOCB**

**Post Office Move** Tony reminded members that the Post Office moves to RS McColl's premises on 24<sup>th</sup> April.

**Car Parking at Railway Station** The lack of parking spaces at the railway station and consequent overspill into eg. the track to Pirriesmill was discussed. Tony addressed the issue to Pat as secretary of Strathbogie CC – she advised that it had been raised last year with Scotrail and Nestrans with little result. The situation continues to be monitored.

**AGM** The AGM takes place on 21<sup>st</sup> May and a notice advising of vacancies to be filled will be placed in the HE on 24<sup>th</sup> April, with nomination forms available from the Council Offices until 8<sup>th</sup> May. There are 10 vacancies, made up of four genuine vacancies, three arising as a result of terms of office coming to an end, and three arising as a result of co-options coming to an end. Pat will publish an article in the HE explaining the reasons for the apparently high number of vacancies.

Pat and Cllr Ingleby left the meeting at 9.30 pm.

5. **Treasurer's Report** Hazel advised that the General Account holds £393.53, the Gordon Highlanders Account £496.35, and the EIS Account £3,391.74. We have received advice from the Council of the 2015-16 Admin Grant (£846.28). Hazel has submitted the accounts to Bernard Henderson for independent auditing.

6. **Correspondence** Items highlighted:  
**Aberdeenshire Council/Marr Area Office** – items of interest already discussed.  
**Community Planning** – Lizzy Shepherd of MAP has moved to work with communities in South Marr and is being replaced by Nick Mardall.  
**Other** – various items were put on the table.

7. **AOCB**  
**Quiz Night** Freda, Michelle and Mary (with partner) had participated in the Quiz Night held at The Gordon Schools on 1<sup>st</sup> April and made a very respectable showing.  
**Local Community Plan** Janelle advised that the 2016-2019 Plan is being prepared and that workshops will be run at the next round of Community Ward Forums (mid May) to establish what local communities see as priorities and how these can be met. In addition CCs will be contacted directly to solicit their views.  
**Scottish Health Council** We have received an email from the SHC advising of the service they provide and offering to come to one of our meetings. Michelle will look into this.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm. Tony thanked all who attended, and in particular Janelle Clark.

8. **Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015 (AGM at 7 pm followed by meeting at 7.30 pm)