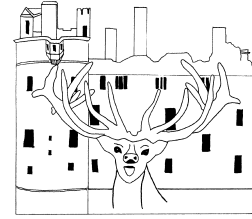




# HUNTLY COMMUNITY COUNCIL



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## Minutes of the June 2013 meeting of Huntly Community Council held in the Council Chamber, the Stewart's Hall, Huntly on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013 at 7.30 pm

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

**Present:** Hilda Lumsden-Gill (Chair); Tony Gill (Vice Chair); Hazel McIntosh (Treasurer); Mary Burgerhout (Secretary); Freda McRae; Bob Ness; Rev Norma Milne; Bronwyn Gall (Youth Member)

**Others:** Cllr John Latham; Pat Scott (Huntly Express); PCs Sutemire and Barnard; Marjory Paget (member of the public)

**Apologies:** None

Hilda welcomed all to this, the last meeting before the summer recess, and extended a special welcome to Bob who has recently undergone a major operation. She advised that a list of all correspondence received since the May meeting had been circulated prior to tonight's meeting, some items from which would be referred to during the course of the meeting and some which were put on the table.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting The May minutes were proposed for acceptance by Bob Ness and seconded by Norma Milne.

### 3. Matters Arising

A. Police Issues PCs Sutemire and Barnard advised there were 21 crimes in the period 17.5.13 to 19.6.13. The majority were for vandalisms and minor thefts, 9 of which have been detected and 5 have positive lines of enquiry. Incidents include an attempted robbery (detected), a caravan theft from Green road, an attempted break-in/vandalism at a town centre and a break-in to a yard at the industrial estate. B Division, of which Huntly is a part, have identified Assault, Robbery, Theft by Housebreaking, Theft of Motor Vehicles, Domestic Crime, Hate Crime and Vandalism as areas of priority for reducing/detecting crimes. Police are liaising with Huntly Football Club re two friendly matches at Christie Park on 10.7.13 (Falkirk) and 13.7.13 (Aberdeen) – crowds of up to 2000 are expected for each game which may necessitate a policing response.

There continue to be calls in relation to annoyance from "boy racers" and police activity to disrupt and detect such offences is being maintained. Meantime the public are encouraged to report such instances and ideally be prepared to provide a witness statement (witness details will remain confidential). A discussion ensued with Hilda reminding members that there had been some success following intervention by PC Malky Smith after the issue was raised last year but is a recurring problem across the town and indeed the shire. PC Barnard advised that Section 126 can be invoked which means an initial warning followed by confiscation of the car if the offence is repeated, but stressed that court action is only possible if the police have evidence such as statements from members of the public.

Hazel advised that the uprooting of newly-planted trees reported at the last meeting had subsequently been shown not to have been an act of vandalism. It has transpired that Steve Gray, Environmental Planner, had arranged for some to be removed, but the stakes etc. had been left lying on the ground.

PCs Sutemire and Barnard and Mrs Paget left the meeting at 7.45 pm. Hilda thanked the PCs for their contribution.

Hilda welcomed for the first time Cllr Latham who joined the meeting at this point.

## **B) Huntly Topics**

- i) **Co-option of Additional Member to CC** Colin Grant has regrettably decided not to stand again as a co-opted member due to family/work commitments. A letter of thanks for his contribution to the CC has been sent. However, we are pleased to have received a nomination for Youth Member (Bronwyn Gall, a 6<sup>th</sup> year pupil from The Gordon Schools), this having been proposed by Hilda and seconded by Tony. Hilda asked for support for the nomination, and having received this unanimously, Bronwyn was duly welcomed and invited to sit round the table as our new Youth member. Hilda provided her with a brief outline of the CC and its remit, and introduced her to other members.
- ii) **Current Issues**
  1. Traffic Notices – resurfacing work on Market Street (from 24/6) and Steven Road (from 1/7).
  2. Huntly Express 150 year anniversary We have been asked to provide a greeting to the Huntly Express which will feature in their 150 year anniversary commemorative supplement in August. Hilda read out Mary’s suggested draft and it was agreed to submit this to the HE.
  3. Signage There is no update re the installation of the gateway signs and Hilda expressed disappointment that for the second year running the signs are not in place for the tourist season. Cllr Latham advised the signs are in storage in Huntly and undertook to find out when they are to be erected and advise us accordingly. Hilda advised that the Huntly Business Association is to liaise with Bear Scotland re the inclusion of additional information (on services/attractions) on the A96 town signs.
  4. Email from Cllr Ross Hilda read an email from Cllr Ross expressing his concern that the £100k allocated to the town for the Huntly Hub/regeneration project has been relinquished by HDT and the money returned to the Council’s general “pot”, the reason being that while the £100k would have paid for the acquisition of the proposed hub site, it would be virtually impossible to raise the c. £300,000 required for the associated renovation work. Tony suggested that given that it was known from the outset that renovations would be costly, the money could have been allocated to other projects. Cllr Latham explained that the criteria for awarding the money was that it go to a project whose base case was already established and that the Huntly Hub project met this criteria. Cllr Ross has arranged a meeting for 21<sup>st</sup> June to which Les Allan, Ward 14 councillors, reps from HDT, Gordon Rural Action, Huntly Mental Health, and Hilda as Chair of HCC have been invited. Hilda is unable to attend and asked that another member do so if possible (post-meeting note: Freda attended the meeting). Hazel noted that the abandonment of the Huntly Hub project means HDT will be occupying the Brander Museum room for some time to come.
  5. Road Issues

White Lines at Junctions Hilda read out Ralph Singleton’s response to our query about the erosion of white lines at junctions. A contract to remark the lines is being sent out to tenderers and the schedule of junctions to be remarked is being finalised.

Right of Way Re the “right of way” through the Somerfield car park, the Council’s website indicates that there is little chance of contesting the “closure” of the right of way through the Somerfield car park (due to happen when the Whisky Shop acquires the site). This was accepted by Bob who has raised the issue on behalf of his local community but he suggested the Council would have to upgrade the existing formal path.

Car Parking Review Hilda read a letter from Les Allan inviting us to a Car Parking Review at the Linden Centre on 2<sup>nd</sup> July. An agenda for the Review had subsequently been sent and

includes an item to be presented by Mark Skilling (who has not replied to our email asking for an update re the Market Muir junction) re the junction. Frustration was expressed that we had “been here before” with the Car Parking Review (ref meeting held last October) and that it appeared to be a repetition of what happened with the Road Traffic Management Review in that there was consultation after consultation but no sign of action being taken. Hilda advised that this view is shared by the HBA, and encouraged as many members as possible to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> July meeting.

An email from Ralph Singleton to Cllr Strathdee, which she passed onto Hilda, appeared to indicate that the CC had not put forward their views on the issue of the absence of yellow lines to back up the parking restriction signs on walls/lampposts in Gordon Street. We did in fact do so in November 2012 and have responded to Cllr Strathdee with details of our communications to/from Ralph Singleton on the subject.

- iii) **Clashindarroch Community Fund** Hilda thanked members for responding to the request for views on HDT’s proposal to manage the Clashindarroch Community Fund, the consensus being that the CC wish to stay with the Foundation Scotland proposal. Hilda and Mary had attended a meeting hosted by Vattenfall on 19<sup>th</sup> June, along with representatives from Strathbogie and Tap o’Noth CCs and the Cabrach and Glass Community Associations, where both HDT and Foundation Scotland presented their bids to manage the fund of £180,000 per annum. The unanimous decision was to go with FS. Vattenfall will arrange a follow-up meeting in September. They had hosted an open day at the Gordon Arms on this, the day of our June meeting, which some CC members had attended.
- iv) **CC Membership/Promotion and Image of CC** With the co-option of Bronwyn as our Youth Member, we now have seven members but can co-opt a further five. It was agreed by all to make efforts over the summer to attract new members (who must be resident or owners of a business in the town) and to review the situation at the September meeting at which time the quorum, currently five, may also need to be reviewed. It was noted that Mary as Secretary could become a member. Meantime, Hilda will resubmit to the AB54 magazine the article she wrote last year introducing the CC so that it can be featured in a future edition, following which we will provide them with quarterly updates. The Huntly Express was thanked for its ongoing excellent coverage of our activities.
- v) **Garden Competition** Following comments made to Norma that last year’s competition was held too late and the article in the Huntly Express asking for the community’s views, Hilda has received one suggestion that it be held 2 weeks earlier. However, an expert had said that last year’s date of mid August was fine. It was decided to hold the competition this year on 3<sup>rd</sup> (or 4<sup>th</sup>) August, and to appoint three professional judges. A list of potential candidates was drawn up and Mary will contact them to check their willingness/availability. Meantime, boxes with entry forms will this year be put at the Stewart’s Hall kiosk, the Library, the ground floor of the HE offices and Watt’s, with people also having the option to submit entries by email. Mary will produce posters which members were asked to help distribute.
- vi) **Planning** There were three applications, none of which drew significant comment. Hilda advised that Mary had submitted the CC’s comments (from the May meeting) re Asda’s canopy application to the Council’s website.

#### **viii) AOCB**

1. Hilda advised that our application for £1,000 from the Huntly Cultural Fund to help towards the costs of EIS 2014 had been successful. As a member of the judging panel she had declared an interest in the CC’s application and was not present when the application was discussed.
2. Hilda had attended the official opening of the Balhousie Care Home on 27.5.13.
3. Hilda and Tony had attended an Army Engagement event at the Beach Ballroom on behalf of Cllr Strathdee on 4<sup>th</sup> June (publicity material on the table).

4. Hilda read an email from the Garioch Community Planning officer advising a church-run foodbank is to be set up in Inverurie.
5. MSP Fiona Hyslop is to visit Huntly on 24<sup>th</sup> July following the award to the town of Creative Places funding, and Hilda has been invited to the event at the Empty Shop.
6. Hilda has been asked to pursue the provision of benches on the School Avenue and on Deveron Road. The two Avenue benches near the War Memorial have been removed, apparently for repainting, and Bronwyn confirmed that school pupils are now sitting at/on the War Memorial when they wait to be picked up after school. There is one bench in the grassy area by Deveron Road but a second one has been requested. Mary to contact Sandy Grant accordingly.
7. Hilda noted several instances of cars driving up Bogie Street the wrong way. A discussion ensued on the existing signage, the overall view being that it was adequate.
8. Hilda advised that a letter had been received from a resident who had concerns about various issues. A response will be sent to the individual concerned.

Pat Scott left the meeting at 9 pm.

4. **Treasurer's Report** Hazel reported that the General Account holds £304.81, the Gordon Highlanders Account £495.85 (a discrepancy of 10p has arisen which may be attributable to interest being added when we changed banks) and the EIS Account £3,721.74. The 2012/13 accounts have been sent to the Council's Finance office and advice of the amount of the 2013/14 Admin Grant (at £760.50, less than last year) subsequently received.

5. **Correspondence**

Items highlighted: Aberdeenshire Council/Marr Area Office : Bob will complete the Licensing Policy Review questionnaire; the results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey (completed by Mary some months ago) issued to CCs have been collated by the MAO and we are pleased to note that among the actions to be implemented is the establishment for CCs of a single point of contact with the Councils to ensure responses are provided timeously. Mary had circulated a questionnaire on Pressured Area Designation (extension of the suspension of Right to Buy council houses) and members' views on the associated questionnaire were sought at the meeting and the questionnaire completed. Hazel suggested that the related issue of the "bedroom tax" was having an impact on the school roll, with many families moving into the town. Community Planning – the next CWF will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> September at Keig Hall, Alford.

Cllr Latham left the meeting at 9.10 pm.

6. **AOCB**

Hazel advised that she had not, as planned, been able to circulate the school uniform questionnaire to members as the deadline for completion had in fact been a few days after the meeting. P6s and P7s had been asked for their views as well as pupils, parents etc, with the decision being to change the uniform colour to black. Ties will remain as at present but there will be "senior" ties for 6<sup>th</sup> years.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm. Hilda thanked all for attending and wished everyone a good summer.

7. **Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2013.