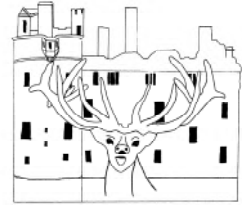




HUNTLY COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Minutes of the November 2012 meeting of Huntly Community Council held in the Council Chamber, the Stewart's Hall, Huntly on Thursday 15th November 2012 at 7.30 pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Hilda Lumsden-Gill (Chair); Tony Gill (Vice Chair); Hazel McIntosh (Treasurer); Mary Burgerhout (Secretary); Bob Ness; Freda McRae; Rev Norma Milne; Jordie Cole; Cllr Joanna Strathdee; PC Malcy Smith; PC Craig Arnott; Pat Scott (Huntly Express)
Apologies: John Greer, Colin Grant, Cllr Moira Ingleby, Cllr John Latham

Hilda welcomed members and extended a special welcome to PCs Smith and Arnott, Cllr Strathdee and Pat Scott. She advised that a list of all correspondence received since the last meeting had been circulated by Mary prior to this meeting.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting The minutes of the 18th October meeting were proposed for acceptance by Bob and seconded by Freda. Hilda reminded those present that minutes were available for viewing on the huntly.net website, at the Library and in the Stewart's Hall window. However, following the appointment of a new Hallkeeper, there has been some reorganisation of items displayed in the window and the CC minutes and contact details have been removed. John, who is also a Hallkeeper, has undertaken to rectify this situation.

3. Matters Arising

A. Police Issues PC Smith advised that in the period 18.10.12 to 15.11.12 there were 15 crimes/offences recorded within the town, the majority for minor road traffic offences, theft, assault and insulting/abusive behaviour. 46% have been detected and 33% have positive lines of enquiry. Guy Fawkes week passed off without incident. While housebreaking in Huntly remains low, the public are reminded to use timer switches on lights/radios in their properties to give the illusion a house is occupied. On 1st November Huntly police officers started wearing body-worn video cameras. These have been trialled in Aberdeen, are now being rolled out across the police force, and will provide potentially crucial evidence as it makes it less likely for offenders to deny involvement in crime. Trials in other parts of the UK have shown they are especially effective at combating anti-social behaviour and alcohol-fuelled disorder, reducing the amount of time spent by officers on paperwork and freeing up local police teams to spend more time in their communities. Locally, it is likely to assist with providing evidence of antisocial driving offences.

Parking issues Bob was pleased to note the improved situation in George Street/Torry Street. PC Smith advised that the crackdown on illegal parking is continuing across the town, with the public responding well – while 26 Illegal Advisory Notices were issued in the first three weeks of the initiative, just one ticket/fine has had to be issued since the enforcement stage started. Hilda raised a concern from the Blythswood Shop Manageress. Because of the repainting of yellow lines in the area, donations are down - donors are worried about the threat of fines if they park their car at the door. PC Smith advised it is acceptable to drop off goods and immediately drive away, but staying to browse in the shop while a car is parked outside is not. At Hilda's request he will visit the shop in the coming days to allay the manageress' concerns.

Although this was an Aberdeenshire Council matter (see under Huntly Topics), the issue of parking on Gordon Street was raised. It transpires that although there have been 45 minute waiting time restrictions - placed on lampposts - along the Gordon Street stretch from Upperkirkgate to the junction since 1987, there are no road markings and the restrictions have never been enforced. Since the crackdown on illegal parking, one resident has had three parking notices issued to her. See under B.viii (AOCB) for further discussion/proposed action.

Bob raised the issue of the width of double yellow lines at the top of Duke Street. This stretch of road is likely to be dug up when gas installation works start shortly and if this happens the lines may have to be repainted (to the correct width). Hazel had been asked by concerned residents to raise the issue of excessive speeding on the road between the all-weather pitch and the golf practice field – the residents in question had had an alarming experience while walking along this stretch. PC Smith noted this incident and said the police were aware of the problem although it is not always possible to apprehend culprits.

PCs Smith and Arnott left the meeting at 8 pm. Hilda thanked them for their contribution.

B) Huntly Topics

i) Current Issues

- a) Temporary traffic restriction – road closure on Duke Street for gas installation works from 28th November for five days. Concern was voiced as this stretch of road had recently been resurfaced etc and it was felt this latest closure reflected a lack of co-ordination of work and would not be welcomed by affected businesses.
 - b) Erosion at River Deveron Path Hilda read the response from the Council to the letter sent CC in May after a young girl had fallen from her bike into the river. Rather than put up warning signs, the Council will erect signs indicating the route onto the bund, thus steering people away from the path in question and onto the upper path. Cllr Strathdee said the path had been built by Huntly Ltd and was thus not the Council's responsibility.
 - c) Cemetery Fence For information only - Hilda advised of correspondence between a resident living on the outskirts of Huntly and Aberdeenshire Council re the former's concern at the replacement of the cemetery hedge by a wooden fence. This has apparently been done to ensure greater privacy for funeral parties (Norma quoted an example of where this had been lacking). Cllr Strathdee expressed surprise that the response from the Council did not mention poor visibility for cars coming onto Deveron Road from the Cemetery Road as a factor in the decision to remove the hedge.
 - d) Travellers at Market Muir Car Park Concerns had been raised about travellers using the car park but it had transpired that they were only passing through and had been gone in a matter of days.
 - b) Archive Day at Brander Library This is to take place on 16th November. In response to a request from Library/Museum Services staff, Hilda and Mary are to meet with Helen Chavez from Museum Services to discuss the Brander museum space and its future use.
 - d) Horse Logging at the Meadows Steve Gray, Environmental Planner, has advised that horse logging will take place from 13th November to 7th December. Local residents have been contacted, and the school has been invited to get involved. In response to a query from Freda about the closure of the Meadows Bridge, it was confirmed that this will be reinstated when flood alleviation work is complete.
 - e) Halloween Window Competition Congratulations were offered to Sinclair's Bakery, who have been given their certificate and who will receive the engraved winner's shield shortly. Nominations for the Christmas Window Competition are to be given to Mary by 10th December with the winner being announced in the Huntly Express of 14th December.
- ii) Evaluation of Huntly Conservation Area Review consultation meeting** There had been a good turnout of CC members at this event and Hilda thanked those who had attended. Although the public turnout was low, it had been a productive meeting and Steve Gray had noted all the comments made. Mary has provided him with a written summary of these.
- iii) Gateway Signage Comments** Hilda thanked those who had provided comments, which had been collated by Mary and sent to Donald Boyd.

iv) **Clashindarroch Windfarm – set up of Working Group/Panel re Distribution of Community Benefit** Hilda and Mary had met with Daljit Singh of the Scottish Communities Foundation who are to oversee the setting up of a Working Group and subsequently a Panel to award monies from the Community Benefit Fund. The draft Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding which will apply have been distributed to members. The SCF have asked the local CCs and Cabrach Community Enterprise to nominate two people to form the Working Group. Hilda asked for nominations; as none were forthcoming, she volunteered herself as one. Mary advised she would stand in the absence of other nominations, but would contact Colin and John to ascertain their willingness or otherwise to stand. Tony agreed to be on the reserve list.

v) **Town Events Diary** As Colin and John, who respectively were to have investigated the setting up of an electronic and paper version of an Events Diary were not present, this item will be carried over to the next meeting.

vi) **Market Muir Update** Tony advised that the rescheduled AGM had taken place on 12th November. He reported that as the Boys League are now using the Meadows facilities, their representatives had stood down from the Friends of MM Committee. Additionally, no representatives from Youth Football had volunteered to stand. Membership therefore comprises only the Rugby Club and members of the public. The existing office bearers are standing again but will concentrate their efforts on ensuring Aberdeenshire Council continue with maintenance work at the MM and on exploring funding options for bigger projects. Although the coffee mornings will continue, it will be difficult to carry out other fundraising work due to the reduced size of FofMM. Meetings will in future be held on an ad hoc basis and so the Market Muir Update will cease to be a standing item on the CC agenda, but rather Tony will provide updates under AOCB as and when there is anything to report. The next meeting will be on 4th February 2013. Bob suggested the FoMM apply for lottery funding; Cllr Strathdee advised that the AWP pavilion had been Lottery-funded so funding for another pavilion was unlikely. It is thought that the lead-up to the Commonwealth Games in 2014 will provide funding opportunities. Tony advised that the Market Muir is designated in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan as a recreation area and is therefore safe from the threat of development. Hilda thanked Tony for his regular reports on FofMM activities and reiterated the importance of the facility to the town. Cllr Strathdee commended the FoMM committee for the work done to enhance/improve the Market Muir facilities over the years.

vii) **Planning** There were five planning applications for the period 19.10.12 – 15.11.12 for which Tony had printed off supporting documentation. Re the move of the Kiddiewinkies Nursery to the former Learning Centre, concern was expressed that the Gordon Street may be used as a drop-off/pick-up point, particularly given the current issues around parking in this area. It was suggested that this entrance could be closed off so that the main entrance will be on Littlejohn Street. There was no significant comment on the remaining applications.

viii) **AOCB**

1. Ref the Gordon Street parking issue referred to under Police Matters, Cllr Strathdee had spoken to Ralph Singleton of Aberdeenshire Council who is waiting for the CC's response. After much discussion as to the area covered by the existing 45 minute signs, Jordie suggested that as people had been parking there for 25 years without any enforcement of the signs, this situation be allowed to continue. It was agreed to write to Ralph Singleton to ask for the signs from the Upperkirkgate to the Laundrette stretch to be removed, with the existing restrictions from the Laundrette to the junction continuing to be applied.
2. Hilda has been invited to a Deveron Arts "The Town is the Menu" Project lunch at the Empty Shop on 16th November.
3. CC Christmas Greetings will appear in the Huntly Express as usual in December.
4. The CC Christmas meal is booked at the Forbes Arms, Rothiemay for 8 pm on 14th December – partners welcome, and drinks beforehand at the Crown at 6.45 pm with a mini-bus taking us to Rothiemay. Mary to be advised as soon as possible of firm numbers.

5. Tony had been asked by some residents if a grab rail could be installed at the entrance to the Stewart's Hall (there is a disabled entrance at the side of the hall, but it is felt support to climb the steps at the front is needed). A similar request had been refused by the Council some years ago on the grounds that the sandstone front would be damaged. However, it was believed by members that the rail need only be built into the concrete steps. Mary to contact the Council to request that a rail to be installed.

6. Hazel stated that the grassy area to the right after going through the school arch, beyond the concrete posts where the fence was, is no longer maintained by the Council and is now overgrown. The fence was dismantled when the new clock was put up although the posts remain (some lying on the ground) and the area is now unsightly, creating a bad impression for visitors. Mary to contact Aberdeenshire Council to ask for remedial action to be taken.

7. Cllr Strathdee advised that although the Council have amended their A97 signage on the A96, Bear Scotland are not erecting new signage for cost reasons, nor will they allow their existing signage to be altered. She is now taking the matter to Transport Minister Keith Brown.

8. Freda raised the issue of a local householder who has turned the kerbstones at the rear of his property to allow vehicle access. Cllr Strathdee advised that neighbour notifications should have been issued; she noted the address and will investigate.

Pat Scott left the meeting at 8.55 pm. Jordie Cole left the meeting at 9 pm.

4. **Treasurer's Report** Hazel reported that the General Account holds £1,309.36, the EIS Account £3,741.74, and the Gordon Highlanders Account £632.69. There are ongoing problems with the Bank of Scotland following the changeover of Treasurers and it was agreed that if these have not been addressed by the bank by the time of the CC's January meeting, we will change to another bank. The renewal notice for the CC's Lottery Registration is due on 31.12.12 and a cheque was accordingly issued. £50 was raised in total by members for Bob's Quiz Sheets, the winner being Mrs Brenda Donald. Hilda thanked Bob for his work in producing the sheets.

5. **Correspondence**

A list of all correspondence received from **Marr Area Office/Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning (MAP) and other external agencies** had been circulated in advance, with relevant items discussed earlier in the meeting. Items highlighted:

- Changes to the Public Entertainment Licence in July 2013 will potentially affect events such as EIS in that a PEL will be required even if there is no admission charge for an event. Hilda and Mary to study the document and revert at the January meeting in conjunction with discussion of EIS 2013.
- Hilda thanked Mary for attending the Community Ward Forum on 14th November and read out her summary of the evening.

On the Table items –

- Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012 – Marr Extract. Hazel took it away to read and will return it to Mary from whom other interested members can borrow it. Hilda noted that it referred to (potential) employment opportunities at sites around the Mart and a housing development at Pirriesmill.
- Copies of the newly-launched AB54 magazine
- List of planning applications
- (the Viewpoint Citizens Panel newsletter is now available on the Community Planning Partnership website)

6. **AOCB** Bob has written to and received a response from the Justice Secretary on the "bring your own bottle" issue which it is hoped will be resolved through the changes to the Public Entertainment License.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.

7. **Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday 17th January 2013.