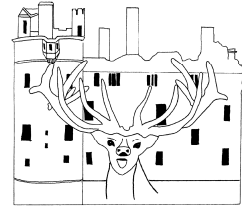




# HUNTLY COMMUNITY COUNCIL



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## Minutes of the September 2012 meeting of Huntly Community Council held in the Council Chamber, the Stewart's Hall, Huntly on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 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 Malky Smith; Pat Scott (Huntly Express)

**Apologies:** Colin Grant, Cllr Moira Ingleby

Hilda welcomed members back after the summer recess and extended a special welcome to Cllr Strathdee, PC Malky Smith and Pat Scott. She advised the meeting would follow the new trial format and that a list of all correspondence received since June, some of which would be referred to during the course of the meeting, had been circulated by Mary in advance.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting The minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> June meeting were proposed for acceptance by Bob Ness and seconded by Norma Milne.

### 3. Matters Arising

A. Police Issues PC Smith reported that in the period 19/8 – 18/9/12 there were 33 crimes and offences in Huntly (town only), the majority for minor theft, assaults and insulting/abusive behaviour. 36% have been detected and 21% have positive lines of enquiry. There have been some thefts of pedal bikes. Members of the public are asked to be vigilant following the circulation of counterfeit £5 notes in local shops. A drugs warrant was executed this month and although no controlled drugs were found, nevertheless the message to dealers is that such behaviours will not be tolerated.

Boy racers/anti-social driving continue to cause concern around the Market Muir/Gordon Street but drivers appear to have accepted PC Smith's suggestion that they park further away from houses with engines switched off while they sit chatting. PC Smith advised the police in Huntly do not have the equipment to monitor noise levels from car exhausts but VOSA do, although they tend to target busier roads/areas. He will however be talking to VOSA on another issue shortly and will raise noise levels with them. Sgt Binning awaits a response from Mark Skilling re his suggestions for the Market Muir junction.

A joint community engagement programme with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Grampian Fire and Rescue, Moray Council and RGU has been developed to gather community views on how to create fairer/more accessible services within Grampian. People are encouraged to participate in an online survey ([www.surveymonkey.com/s/Grampiansurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Grampiansurvey)) which runs until 31/10, as well as in face to face events via discussion days and focus groups.

Issues raised by members: The ongoing problem of cars parked at junctions/on pavements and the absence of yellow lines was discussed. King St, Scott Drive, George St, Church St and Granary St junctions are particularly abused by drivers. PC Smith will raise this with colleagues with a view to action being taken. He said that while police have powers to issue parking tickets it is the job of traffic wardens to do so. It was agreed that the focus should be on both increasing

the number of yellow lines and educating drivers. The fact of the No Right Turn sign in the square being ignored by some drivers was raised; PC Smith agreed the signage needs to be improved. Concern was voiced about cars parking at the Post Office, stopping buses from making the turn to the bus stop. PC Smith highlighted some recent instances of illegal parking in the Square and the ways in which the police discouraged drivers from repeating such offences. It was acknowledged that the road surface on Duke Street and Bogie Street is much improved following the resurfacing works although there were still issues about the siting of yellow lines. PC Smith advised that those holding disabled badges are entitled to park in disabled parking bays only, not on yellow lines.

The Battlehill is now being used by youths for (in some cases underage) drinking; an issue with tenant behaviour in the new Gordon Street flats was raised. The police are aware of both of these concerns and are monitoring the situation.

Hilda advised of several police-related items of correspondence received including the quarterly Marr Local Policing Update, a letter from Alison McInnes MSP re the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Bill, a Public Services survey which can be completed online, the Joint Community Engagement Programme as mentioned in PC Smith's report, and the Community Resilience Platform initiative which aims to make communities aware of where to source services, information etc pertaining to their local area.

PC Smith left the meeting at 7.55 pm. Hilda thanked him for his contribution.

**B) Huntly Topics**

**i) Current Issues**

- a) Various temporary traffic restriction/road closure notices: Settrington Street - resurfacing work, Market St and Castle St - Hairst Halloween, Duke Street/Bogie Street - resurfacing (complete), the closure of the unsafe Bogie Bridge at Upper Piriesmill.
- a) Signage: The A96 "brown" signs have been erected; HBA are however pursuing additional signage to indicate the presence of hotels, shops etc in the town. The four Gateway Town signs are still to be erected. Hilda and Donald Boyd had inspected the four entrances to the town where the signs are to go with Hilda suggesting the Gibston Bridge entrance sign be relocated so as to incorporate the Milton development.
- b) Watson Avenue fence – concerns have been raised by locals at the erection of a fence beside the NHS property which is now for sale, cutting off access to the footpath leading to Rothieden. A letter has been sent to NHS Grampian requesting clarification on the permanency or otherwise of the footpath closure.
- c) G-Med Out-of-Hours Review: The review has now been received and a copy was circulated among members. While much of it is a summary up of the reasons for the changes to the system and the statistics quoted are not easy to interpret, the findings are that the new system is working well and no complaints have been received. It was agreed to display the review in the Stewart's Hall window, and to forward a copy to Huntly Medical Centre requesting their comments.
- d) Fundraising Awareness Event: This was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, attended by Hilda, Tony Hazel and Mary. The focus was on large scale funding applications but nevertheless it was an interesting and useful presentation. We await copies of the slides used.
- e) Huntly and District Heritage Group: Two meetings have been held with a further scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> September in the Brander Reading Room. The Group hopes to start off with an oral history project. Any interested members of the CC are encouraged to attend.
- f) Display Cabinet: The flag is now on display in the case in the Stewart's Hall and the Scouts, Guides etc will be encouraged to use it for parades; it is hoped it can be paraded by the CC on Armistice Day if a belt, pole etc can be sourced. John indicated that he had spoken to a member of the Woodturners Group who had offered to make a flagpole (handheld size) for us, which the CC would greatly appreciate. Further fundraising will be required by the CC to ultimately purchase these items. We await an invoice from Duncan Anderson for the construction of the case, one key for which is being kept by Mary, the other by the hallkeeper.

- g) Bedding Plants Order: Mary rang local groups in advance to advise of the tighter deadline this year. All applications received have been sent to Sandy Grant at Alford.
- h) Garden Competition: This was held on 18<sup>th</sup> August and despite the poor summer the quality of entries was excellent although the number entered was disappointingly low. There will be a rethink of how to approach the 2013 competition. The judges were Norma, John (who Hilda thanked for filling in for Colin) and Nick Chambers. The winners were: Best Garden – Mr and Mrs Wilson, Braemead, Deveron Road; Best Hanging Baskets and Tubs – Keith and Pam Cockburn, Deveron Street; Best First Time Entry - Helena Sierakowska, Torry Road; Best Community Garden - The Friends of the Jubilee Hospital. The shields are being engraved and will be passed to the winners shortly. Hilda thanked the judges and Mary for organising the competition.
- i) Gifts from Huntly, New Zealand: A proposed visit from Peter Harris, former Mayor of Huntly, New Zealand, which was to include a programme of introductions (organised by Hilda) to HBA, HDT etc, and a lunch with Moira Ingleby, had to be cancelled due to Mr Harris's illness on the day in question. He and his wife did however subsequently visit Huntly on their own and left some leaflets and gifts, which have been distributed/displayed as appropriate. Hilda read out the accompanying note of thanks.
- j) Huntly Conservation Area Review: Steve Gray of Aberdeenshire Council had emailed the CC asking whether we could include with our October meeting a public meeting to discuss the Huntly Conservation Area Review Public Consultation. It was agreed it was not feasible to combine the two, but suggested that a separate meeting be held w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> October – Mary to advise Steve accordingly. Cllr Strathdee expressed concern that the review would result in an extension of the conservation area with householders who wish to alter/extend properties suffering as a result.
- j) Administration Grant: The annual grant has been received, but at £787.50 is down from last year, meaning the CC will have to carry out additional fundraising.

**ii) Market Muir Junction/Active Travel Audit/Car Parking Review** Mary had emailed members giving the background to the meeting that is proposed to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> October at the Gordon Arms hotel, hosted by Aberdeenshire Council. Mark Skilling is to issue invitations to Huntly and Strathbogie CCs, the HBA, HDT and ward councillors. At that meeting, which will not be open to the public, Mark Skilling will outline the measures proposed under the Active Travel Review/Car Parking Audit which will include proposals related to the Market Muir Junction. He has made it clear however that the recommendation that no remedial action be taken re the junction will stand, but he is willing to be present to explain this decision to any members of the public at a pre-meeting session which will run from 6 – 7.30 pm. Hilda and Tony will be on holiday but Hilda urged CC members to go along and make their views known to Mark. A file compiled by the HE of the responses received following their appeal for experience of near misses etc at the junction is now held by the CC and Hilda thanked all involved for responding to the appeal. The file's contents will be summarised and presented to Mark prior to the meeting. Cllr Strathdee stated that Mark was disappointed that the statistics were such that a case could not be made to make improvements to the junction; it is hoped that the “dossier” together with representations made by the public at the pre-meeting session on the 11<sup>th</sup> will lead him to reconsider his decision.

It was felt that the police and Tap o'Noth CC should also be present at the meeting and both Mary and Cllr Strathdee will request this of Mark. Cllr Strathdee suggested that to overcome car parking problems in the town centre, the Square be made a “45 minutes free parking” zone.

Bob left the meeting at 8.40 pm.

**iii) Windfarm Developments** Various items of correspondence have been received including confirmation of the approval of the Clashindarroch development, advice of a “meet the developer” event by Vattenfall who also asked to address a CC meeting (declined - see below), confirmation of the refusal of the Cairnborrow development and Donald's Boyd subsequent email, feedback from Burcote Wind re the Meikleton of Ardonald public exhibition, and an invitation from HDT to attend the exhibition on 25<sup>th</sup> September re the proposed acquisition of a community wind turbine at Dummuies. In addition, Hilda advised that Mary had received requests from residents in Ythanwells re a proposed development in their area which falls

outwith HCC's boundaries. It was felt that the AB54 postcode and some rural areas having a postal address of Huntly contributed to the confusion re CC boundaries. As a result of such requests, the CC recently had published in the HE an article confirming the geographical boundaries of Huntly, Strathbogie and Tap o'Noth CCs, and reiterating HCC's neutral stance on windfarm developments falling outwith their own boundary.

iv) **Market Muir Update** Tony advised that a committee meeting had been held on 27<sup>th</sup> August but was not quorate. The quiz night on 14<sup>th</sup> September had been successful with 18 teams competing, the CC team coming fifth. The AGM will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> September. The rugby team are now using the Market Muir as are amateur teams and the Youth Football teams, but the Boys League are continuing to use the Meadows pitch because of the superior changing facilities. It is hoped to improve the changing facilities at the MM pavilion in due course.

Jordan left the meeting at 9 pm.

v) **Planning** The planning applications for the period 21 June to 20 September were circulated and drew no particular comment.

vi) **AOCB**

- Hilda offered congratulations to the Hairst organising committee for this year's successful event. She advised of the forthcoming Bee Happy festival; John made an appeal for china teapots for an associated event taking place in the Battlehill.
- The Banff and Buchan College is moving out of the Learning Centre at Gordon Street.
- Hilda had received an email from a Mr Shields who related his negative experience of shopping and parking in the town centre. The email has been forwarded to CC members, ward councillors, HDT and HBA but Hilda has meantime responded to Mr Shields.

Cllr Strathdee and Pat Scott left the meeting at 9.10 pm.

4. **Treasurer's Report** Hazel reported that the General Account holds £1,636.36, the Gordon Highlanders Account £632.69 and the EIS Account £3,741.74.

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, appropriate items having been discussed earlier in the meeting. With regard to Community Planning, Hilda and Tony had attended the Ward 14 Community Ward Forum at Keig on 4<sup>th</sup> September – the next one is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> November, venue to be advised. The MAP AGM and Community Gathering is to be held at the McRobert Hall in Tarland on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

On the Table items comprised the G-Med Out of Hours Review, the Town Collection, NHS Grampian's Involving You and Cancer Awareness leaflets.

6. **AOCB**

- a) Donald Boyd has been invited to the October meeting to give an update on HDT's activities.
- b) The new meeting format will be formally evaluated in October.
- c) A card has been sent from the CC to Adam Sinclair who retired earlier this month as Caretaker of the Stewart's Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

7. **Date of Next Meeting** - Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30 pm.