Location: Mearns Community Campus

Present: Andrew Macdonald (AM), Dave Stewart (DS) Janette Anderson (JA) Alasdair Shiach (AS) Chris Rushbridge (CR) Remi Salvan (RS)

EX Officio Cllr Carr, Cllr Evison

Observer: Gordon Reid

Apologies: Kevin Todd (KT) Carol Medlock (CM) John Lovell (JL) Anne Lawson (AL), Paul Green (PG), Ashley Buchan (AB) Ken Williams (KW),

Date: 29th April 2024

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

Circulated and reviewed with no further comment, no matters arising.

Proposed AS, seconded CR

1. **Declarations of Interest**

None

1. **Correspondence from Aberdeenshire Council**

Circulated as received (Correspondence, Road Closures, Planning, Roads and Landscape services).

1. **Correspondence from Residents and Stakeholders**

A letter from, a Marykirk resident seeking MCC support in making their views on establishing part time street lighting in one street within the village known to Aberdeenshire Council.

**Action**: AM will write to Aberdeenshire Council.

1. **Police Report**

Concern was voiced that the ongoing absence of a representative from Police Scotland was yet more evidence of significant dilution of commitment from the service. This is exacerbated by the lack of presence at the local police office.

**Action:** AM will write to Police Scotland to seek confirmation and advice regarding service levels and local strategy.

1. **Settlements**

**Auchenblae**

Sri Lankan High Commission event was very successful. Held on James Taylor’s birthday, including reception in the Hall, laying a wreath at the Statue and a Gala Dinner in the evening.

The Sri Lankan delegation are keen to leverage the relationship and are talking of creating the Pekoe Trail (Pekoe being a grade of tea) this will start in Auchenblae and conclude in Sri Lanka creating a Tea Tourism trail. If successful this should create both tourism and job potential.

**Fettercairn**

Nothing reported

**Fordoun**

With the “retirement” of the current contact Aberdeenshire Council are seeking a contact to deal with annual flower allocation

**Edzell Woods**

Cllr Carr advised work on the Shakin’ Brig is due to start imminently.

**Glenbervie & Drumlithie**

Nothing reported

**Laurencekirk**

Accessibility to the Community Campus has been wholly unsatisfactory since the imposition of Covid control measures.

The relocation of period products within the Community Campus ( specifically the school) is causing concern, it is understood work is in hand to address this. It was felt this falls out-with the remit of the Community Council, Cllr Evison is to follow up.

**West Cairnbeg**

Nothing reported

**Luthermuir**

Access at Crosspoles is still causing problems. Can MCC arrange a meeting with the Outdoor Access officer?

**Action**: AM to contact Aberdeenshire Council.

**Marykirk**

It was welcomed that reconstruction work has started on the road which was destroyed by flooding, however very serious concern was raised that the works whilst protecting the road will not address the cause of flooding, indeed it is felt that it will act as a dam and exacerbate flooding and the consequential damage. It is felt that the build does not match the published design.

**Action** : AM will write to Aberdeenshire Council to seek clarification of this matter.

1. **Planning**

APP/2024/042 after free-flowing discussion it was agreed CR to write to Aberdeenshire Council confirming MCC’s objection.

1. **Roads**

There is an apparent lack of coordination and planning evident in relation to recent, current and future works affecting the roads in and around the area as BT related works is undertaken. This is resulting in severe inconvenience and on occasion settlements being effectively cut off.

**Action:** Cllr Carr to raise the matter with Aberdeenshire Council.

1. **Closure and curtailment of Services**

A free-flowing discussion took place during which very significant concerns about the ongoing degradation of service levels in the K&M area. This is not restricted to Aberdeenshire Council Service Centres but relates to all of the Emergency Services as well as Minor Medical Support. There is a growing perception, based on lived experience, that people have to look after themselves and are forced to rely on very poor support from call centre based “services”.

This is an ongoing and worsening matter of great concern to the community; it will be raised with elected representatives.

1. **Meeting with Landscape Services**

A meeting note was circulated previously, the meeting was successful and clarity on a number of longstanding matters secured.

1. Cairn O’Mount Car Park Map.

Cllr Carr is to research contacts made during the planning and construction of Coastal Path project with the aim of obtaining contact details for a information board / orientation map designer

1. **Treasurers Report**

£8981.86 in RBS as at 31st March 2024

AS confirmed bank account and signatory issues have been addressed.

1. **Briefing from Councillors**

Given the widespread community concern about the state of the roads in K&M it was stressed that responding to the NESTRANS Survey on Cycle Routes was very important in terms of safety, utility and sustainability.

1. **AOCB**

The march along a section of the High Street (Laurencekirk) by the Royal Regiment of Scotland on 12th May is something to look forward to, it was felt an opportunity was going to be missed by cutting the procession short by ending at Frain Drive rather that Kinnear Sq.

Date of next meeting 27th May 2024

No other matters arising, the meeting was closed,