***MEARNS COMMUNITY COUNCIL***

Note of Meeting 29th May 2023

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| **Item** |  | **Action** |
| 1.. | In attendance: C Rushbridge (Chair); C Medlock; S Brown (Sec); J Anderson; J Stuart; R Salvan; D Stewart; J Lovell; K Williams; A MacDonald; A Shiach; A Lawson    Ex Officio: Cllrs Carr, Evison; Stelfox;  Visitors: PC Charnley; S Boyd (CLD); J Beadles; A Bruce; H Reid; J Robertson; D Robertson; P Smith; T Smith; S Sives; K Humphries; L Malcom; D Short; J Burks; S Short; D McLaughlin; one other (signature not legible)  Apologies: S Sweeney; K Todd; Cllr Carnie |  |
| 2 | Approval of minute of April 2023– Proposed K Williams; Seconded C Medlock |  |
| 3 | Declarations of Interest – None |  |
| 4 | Matters Arising:   1. Item 6.7c – No follow up by housing re complaint from local authority tenant in Provost Robson Drive. 2. Item 6.8a – SB to try again to contact the access officer re Luthermuir Park access and Crosspoles RoW. |  |
| 5 | Complaint   1. Following a complaint made against a member of the Community Council by another member an initial hearing resulted in seeking approval of all members that they accept apologies, one to the complainant, one to the CC members and one which, following approval by members would be posted on the social media accounts of the subject of the complaint. This was to be decided at the next meeting. 2. The complainant advised that they had received an apology and would accept it. 3. Another member advised that they had been deeply and personally hurt due to the impact of the social media posts. 4. It was agreed to hold a secret ballot of members who would vote either to accept the apologies or to move to the next stage of the complaint procedure which would be a hearing to be held in private. The vote was 7 to 3 in favour of a hearing. 5. Cllr Stelfox stood and spoke out, despite instruction from the chair to stop speaking, advising that the members had made the wrong decision and should be ashamed of themselves. This with a raised voice and a pointing finger. |  |
| 6 | Police   1. Police reports circulated as received. 2. Police reports are now more localised rather than being area wide. 3. Question re the “coffee with a copper” incentive. This being replaced by the Police attending as many coffee mornings as possible to ensure engagement with more members of the community. |  |
| 7 | Correspondence – circulated as received. |  |
| 8 | Settlements   1. Auchenblae: 2. Question about Council policy for adoption of roads – check with Roads but unlikely due to cost and width of roads. 3. Question about grass cutting at the football pitch, it is thought that the Council used to do this. Currently done by the Parks Committee as they manage the recreational facilities in the village. 4. Further complaints about dog fouling across the village and surrounding area. 5. The CC donated a trophy for the gala football competition. 6. West Cairnbeg: No Report 7. Edzell Woods: 8. Vacancy advertised. 9. Fettercairn: No Report 10. Fordoun: No Report 11. Glenbervie: 12. Masonry falling from the steeple. Council is aware and have made some repairs. 13. Laurencekirk – all issues to be addressed under items 9 and 12. 14. Luthermuir 15. Lutherfest due to be held this coming weekend. 16. Re park access, Cllrs reminded that Council has a duty to ensure access to public spaces. This issue has been ongoing for over15 years and discussion has provided no solution. 17. Marykirk: See item 9. |  |
| 9 | Roads Issues   1. Road Closure Notices sent out as received. 2. Potholes – these becoming a more significant issue across all settlements. Despite members reporting these on an almost daily basis there is little evidence of action to repair these. They are a danger to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians who use both roads in villages and the surrounding roads. 3. Road markings need to be redone in Laurencekirk. 4. ACOP gratings at Crown Hotel the former community centre in Laurencekirk need clearing. 5. Weeds at former community centre in Laurencekirk need pulled. 6. Slabs need replacing on both sides of Laurencekirk High Street. 7. Signage for Laurencekirk still not erected. 8. There are several dips in Main Street, Luthermuir. 9. Members feel that This area is not getting value for money from their Council Tax, or their fair share of money allocated for repair of potholes. All we hear is excuses about lack of budget and poor staffing. 10. SB to write to both the Roads manager and the Chair of Infrastructure Services seeking clarification on why the Council do not appear to be working to any Code of Practice. |  |
| 10 | Planning   1. Weekly planning lists circulated as received. 2. SSE OHL Consultation 3. Three members attended a meeting held by Angus Community Councils last week – Mearns are ahead of the Angus in terms of objections. Save our Mearns held a meeting in Laurencekirk which was well attended by members of the public. Andrew Bowie MP and Mairi Gougeon MSP agreed to work together on objecting to the proposal. 4. Mearns CC agreed that they would support the campaign already running rather than duplicate effort. 5. A campaign in Norfolk flooded the electric company with objections resulting in a compromise solution. 6. A subsea cable would be the obvious solution as the electricity to be carried if to deliver power to England. 7. Members to amplify the need to object. 8. Arbuthnott CC are to host a meeting – date to be shared once SSE have advised when they can attend. 9. There is a QR code on the Save our Mearns Facebook page giving access to the feedback form. 10. APP/2023/0550 11. Mearns CC has commented that this application of for twenty-eight houses rather than the twenty agreed. It was noted that there were many objections from members of the public citing assorted reasons. CC to object reflecting public opinion. 12. Suggestion that elected members hold a public meeting to advise those making complaints how things work. Without development there will be no infrastructure improvement as developer obligation pays for infrastructure. 13. It is accepted that people are concerned about more housing in the area without the flyover at the south junction – hopefully, the objections currently preventing work commencing will be resolved very soon. 14. Drumlithie Battery Storage Application 15. members have no comment to make on this. 16. Any other planning issues. 17. Concern about the proposed sale of the former roads depot on Fordoun Road, Laurencekirk. This should be used for the community with one suggestion being extra parking space. 18. LDP issues 19. Concern about constraint to development due to lack of progress at Chapelton. This decision leaves little scope for development of housing and business in the Mearns. |  |
| 11 | Landscape Services   1. Kinnear Square – There has been some work carried out on the wildflower beds, plants seem to have been removed. There have been suggestions that lack of budget may mean that these areas cannot be maintained in the future. It was agreed during a meeting with landscape services held on 15th September 2022 to review the wildflowers after one year. |  |
| 12 | Waste services   1. An ongoing survey re the booking system at Laurencekirk shows 94% support for removal of the booking system. Many respondents advise they use Angus rather than book. 2. Suggestion that the blue and orange bins be swapped as most people have more mixed recycling than paper/cardboard. 3. Question as to why glass cannot be collected as part of mixed recycling. Both Angus and Aberdeen City provide this service. |  |
| 13 | Treasurers Report:   1. Balance in account is £ 8880.19. |  |
| 14 | AOCB   1. Cllr Stelfox was asked what he meant by his comments earlier in the meeting. Several members sought clarification as no detail had been shared with Councillors re the previous meeting. Members feel it inappropriate that an ex-officio members felt he should interrupt the meeting to speak about an issue that did not concern him. A letter to be sent to the Area Manager. |  |
|  | DONM – AGM 7.00pm Monday 26th June 2023 at Mearns Community Campus to be followed by a shorter regular meeting. |  |