***MEARNS COMMUNITY COUNCIL***

Draft Note of Meeting 24th April 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  Ex Officio: Cllrs Carr, Evison; Stelfox; Carnie  Apologies: S Sweeney; M Robson; A Lawson; A Shiach; K Todd |  |
| 2 | Approval of minute of March 2023– Proposed A MacDonald; Seconded J Stuart |  |
| 3 | Matters Arising:   1. Item 8c – Question asked as to why local shops cannot work in conjunction with Cfine. 2. Item 7f – Cllrs asked to question why when householders living in the Laurencekirk Lanes paid 50% of the cost of upgrading the surfaces they are now left with lanes full of potholes which the Council will not repair as roads unadopted. While it is accepted that the local authority has evolved several times over the years and that different policies were introduced the people in Laurencekirk bought into a plan which was promptly rejected under new management. Was there not an obligation for the new authority to uphold a recently agreed arrangement? 3. Common Good – while it is accepted that the Council hope to establish a list of common good assets by December 2023 the CC has concerns about the possible asset transfer of the Burgh Buildings. The Council had the land title made over to them in recent years without local consultation. There is concern that some of the buildings on the site are common good and that the Council cannot grant an asset transfer without local consultation. Cllr Carnie to arrange a meeting with the new Area Manager and a Council lawyer to discuss further. SB to seek advice from Scottish Community Councils. | **Cllrs**  **Cllr LC**  **SB** |
| 4 | Police   1. Police reports circulated as received. |  |
| 5 | Correspondence – circulated as received. |  |
| 6 | Settlements   1. Auchenblae: 2. Question about a new diabetes clinic to be held in the Mearns area. Nobody could confirm, A MacD to ask Auchenblae Surgery. 3. Speed Limits – still awaiting a decision on speed reduction in villages. Concern that Police Scotland have stated they will not issue tickets in 20mph zones while 30mph remains the national limit. 4. West Cairnbeg: No Report 5. Edzell Woods: 6. Two car accident on A90 at NWB junction last week. No casualties reported although one person had to be cut out of one vehicle. 7. Aberdeenshire Council had promised to deliver winter gritting equipment (Shovels, wellington boots, hi-vis waistcoats etc.). This has not been delivered. KW to forward emails re the equipment promised to Cllr Carr. 8. KW advised that he will be stepping down as the Edzell Woods representative due to lack of Council support for issues raised. He will attend the May meeting. The area office has been advised and will advertise the vacancy. CR thanked KW for his service to the Community Council over the past 20 years. 9. Fettercairn: No Report 10. Fordoun: 11. A90 – problems with traffic turning south from the Fordoun junction. Due to confusion re road markings. SB to advise Amey. 12. Old Aberdeen Road between Fordoun and Castleton has a number of potholes. Unsure if these have been reported. Members to report as they use the road. 13. Glenbervie: 14. Potholes all over the village. High Street particularly bad. Road from A90 via Broombank also bad. These have been reported. 15. Laurencekirk 16. Potholes in High Street getting worse. 17. Scottish Water to be advised of sewage oozing from a manhole cover in Alma Terrace outside the former RBS building. 18. The resident of a local authority house in Provost Robson Drive phoned the Council in 2019 to advise of a problem with the windows. Her call was returned in 2021 with a promise to inspect. Now in April 2023 and no inspection. The house is like a wind tunnel with drafts coming from the windows. A Jones, housing manager, to be advised. 19. Luthermuir 20. Access to the hall an ongoing issue. A recent site visit by elected members resulted in an agreement that the downpipe will be repaired with the householder covering the cost. There is a useable connection to the drain. 21. The access officer works from home (in the Western Isles) and has not been able to visit the area due to ferry cancellations recently. The family that gifted the park to the village did not give it without access. Access Officer to be contacted again in the hope that he can visit Luthermuir. 22. A major concern is that the defibrillator is located at the hall, and, in an emergency, vehicles cannot easily access the hall. 23. The boundary hedge between the lane and one of the properties needs cutting back. SB to advise landscape services. 24. Request for meeting with new area manager to ascertain where responsibility lies re the above noted points. 25. Marykirk: 26. The man that introduced wind turbines to the World, Professor **James Blyth** (4 April 1839 – 15 May 1906) was born in Marykirk. A blue plaque is to be placed on the house he lived in while resident in Marykirk. A new road in Marykirk is named Blyth Way in memory of the inventor. The adjacent road, Esk View, had street signage While Blyth Way has not. This needs to be addressed. | **AMacD**  **KW/**  **Cllr GC** |
| 7 | Roads Issues   1. Road Closure Notices sent out as received. 2. Oatyhill Bridge – the objections to the A90 flyover centre around access to the five properties concerned. A suggestion was made that a temporary road be made to allow access from the east side of Denlethen Wood. Cllr KS to write to the Infrastructure Services Director with a copy to Mearns CC secretary. It is noted that there is an issue with parking at the east side of the   wood. A suggestion was made that Facebook be used to ask that those using the woods be more considerate when parking at the east side. A suggestion was made that bike racks be located at the woods.   1. Suggestion that Jill Fotheringham who professes to lead the A90/A937 campaign be invited to a CC meeting. Members agreed that this has previously been attempted and that Ms Fotheringham has not responded to communications. Suggestion rejected. 2. CR to write to the Scottish Government transport minister requesting that Mearns CC be included in all further discussion re the flyover. While the CC are not statutory consultees on trunk roads they certainly are on the adjacent roads. The flyover will affect adjacent roads. | **Cllr KS**  **CR** |
| 8 | Planning   1. Weekly planning lists circulated as received. 2. APP/2023/0550 – 28 houses adjacent to Gardenstone Street for Muir Homes. It is noted that the original bid was for twenty houses. CC to make comment re the difference. Most members appreciate that housing is required in Laurencekirk. 3. APP/2023/0689 – 247 houses on site M1 in Laurencekirk. This application is not really about the houses which already have planning consent. KW to seek an extension for the CC to make comment. Members to review application before next meeting to allow for a meaningful discussion. 4. Meeting with Planning Development re issues with the LDP. CR, JS, CM and SB attended. A report on the meeting to follow. 5. APP/2021/1563 – Caldhame Wood, Luthermuir. This application was approved, and work commenced. It was then considered that the application had not been approved and the settlement boundary amended to exclude the site. Subsequently planning advised that the site is live. Cllrs advised by the architect. 6. Concern that the lack of progress in housebuilding at Chapelton has led to constraints being put in development in Laurencekirk. Cllrs have no knowledge of this although this extract from the LDP (page 20) states “The rate of growth in Chapelton has been unexpectedly slow and the local aspiration for a model town here is likely to be constrained unless significant new development land elsewhere in the corridor is restricted.” 7. Proposals for the old academy site were discussed at the recent meeting with the planning development team. Full report to follow. | **KW**  **KW**  **SB** |
| 9 | Landscape Services   1. Kinnear Square – Laurencekirk representatives are receiving complaints about the wildflower area which looks a complete mess. 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. 2. An alternative suggestion would be to make Kinnear Square a community garden or to plant an orchard. It is thought that a rose garden might be more welcome to the community. 3. Trees damaged or removed following severe storms are gradually being replaced in Kinnear Square. |  |
| 10 | Waste services   1. Concern again about the inferior quality of the new bins. When emptied they blow about the streets. 2. The CC has posted a survey seeking comment on the booking system at the recycling centre. Responses this far overwhelmingly support removal. |  |
| 11 | Treasurers Report:   1. Balance in account is £ 8880.19 as of 31st March 2023 2. A MacD is liaising with Auchenblae Parks Committee re the trophy or cup to be donated. |  |
| 12 | AOCB   1. The participation request seeking to ensure CC’s are made aware of participatory budgeting exercises being carried out in their area has been approved. Officers will be given briefing notes on the correct procedure. This does not mean that CC’s will be involved in decision making but gives members the opportunity to ensure that all relevant groups in the area are invited to be involved. 2. Suggestion that the CC make a participation request to ensure that they are advised of any proposed asset transfers was supported unanimously. 3. No formal announcement has been made re the new Area Manager. 4. Aberdeenshire Flag. Disappointment that while flags were given to towns in the north of the area none were given to K&M. Given that four Newtonhill primary pupils designed the flag this was a clear omission. 5. Question re whether Aberdeenshire Council would be making a proclamation on the coronation - Cllrs. Have not been advised. This was the custom when Laurencekirk had a Town Council. |  |
| 13 | DONM – Monday 29th May 2023 at Mearns Community Campus. |  |