

Greener Kincardine and Mearns

AGM, Thursday, 13th January 2022, 19:00 (by Zoom)

1 Present: Ian Hunter (IH) (chair), Sandra Davison (SD), Cllr Sarah Dickinson (CllrSD), Mike Duncan (MD), Paul Melling (PM), Mhairi Eddie (ME), Tajana Telisman Susic (TS), Paddy Coffield (PC)

Apologies: Mike Perks, Peter Bellarby

2 Minutes of Last AGM (copy included): were accepted.

Matters Arising: None

3 Chairperson's Report (Ian Hunter)

I don't intend saying very much. It's a long time since we last met and I'm indebted to Paddy and Sandra for taking the initiative to rekindle Greener K&M.

I think it's worth taking a few minutes to consider why Greener K and M was started in the first place. It was, as the present constitution says, "To act as an action group to bring together the groups and citizens of Kincardine and Mearns to cooperate in order to attain an influential voice on environmental issues."

Being involved with a community council I've certainly learnt that within any one Community Council it's rare to have expertise on all the subjects facing our communities. Issues like the environment and transport occasionally make their way onto the agendas but not very often.

We complain that we're not consulted with, and yet for Agencies to visit 65 community councils within the Aberdeenshire area is not feasible. Consulting with a group representing all of K and M is

To empower our communities and feel part of the Democratic process it seems sensible to form groupings to focus on key issues so participants can become informed. Many people don't wish to join community councils but often have very strong opinions on some of the issues discussed. So there is obviously merit in forming organisations in which they can use their talents, have their voice heard and increase their knowledge.

From my experience with forums one of the useful outputs is that it brings items on to the agenda of community councils. And it's useful input because it is informed.

The initial constitution of Greener K and M was based on the Constitution of Transport Action Kincardineshire (TrAK). It may however no longer be suitable for some of the opportunities now available. So I look forward to improvements.

On a personal note I'm afraid I can no longer stand for office as my personal situation has changed, and I feel I can no longer play a major part although I certainly wish to remain a member.

4 Amendments to Constitution (copy included): None received

5 Election of Officers:

Chair: Ian Hunter (Ian intimated that due to personal circumstances, he would need to limit his involvement to chairing the meetings)

Secretary: Paddy Coffield volunteered to take on this position: meeting agreed

It was decided to postpone the election of the other positions until the next meeting since

- a) it was thought that it would be better to wait until we had a bigger number attending
- b) we agreed that we needed to reconsider the primary function, aims and objectives of the group.

An EGM can be arranged before the next meeting to consider possible changes to the constitution and to appoint or re-appoint officers)

6 Future Activities:

6.1 Single-Use Plastic-Free Stonehaven

Cllr SD explained what next steps are required in the campaign to achieve plastic-free status for Stonehaven.

There are two immediate requirements:

a) to form a Steering Group with key stakeholders from the whole community. This requires the steering group to include business alongside residents and crucially must have local authority representation

b) to pass a motion at Aberdeenshire Council supporting the objective of a plastic-free Stonehaven.

Cllr SD suggested that the Stonehaven Town Centre Improvement Group (STCIG) had the right composition to take on the governance of this project and proposed that we approach them to request that they take on the role of Steering Committee and that they add a standing item to their agenda to review the progress of the project. Surfers Against Sewage are happy with this proposal. Agreed unanimously. (**Action: Cllr SD**)

PM asked whether this was a suitable topic for the Scottish Rural Parliament, and was a bit concerned that this was a purely Stonehaven initiative. IH said we should consider Stonehaven as a pilot for similar projects in other communities within K&M.

6.2 Community Climate Action Plan

MD had submitted an application to Keep Scotland Beautiful to participate in their Community Climate Action Plan for which they were offering funding and support for 7 communities. The application had been written by MD assisted by the Horizon group and some others. MD explained that there had been 49

applications and that Stonehaven had not been selected. PC will distribute copies of the application to GK&M members.

MD suggested that he contact KSB to ask for access to any training or reference materials they have to help us develop a local plan independently. It was agreed that it would be a very worthwhile exercise for Greener Kincardine and Mearns to do that. **(Action MD)**

MD pointed out that the North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCOAN) had been setup with funding from the same source and that it could be useful to maintain contact with them.

SD said that she is the GK&M contact with NESCOAN and that here is a [Mapping Community Climate Action in the North East of Scotland](#) event planned for 5th February.

7 Future Meeting Topics:

7.1 IH said that one of the advantages of the GK&M was that we had a wide representation from other environmental campaigning groups throughout the area, including Johnshaven, Inverbervie, Stonehaven and Portlethen and that we should seek to continue and extend that throughout Kincardine and Mearns.

IH reckoned that the wide range of our interests and involvement helped to attract a high calibre of speakers who would find it useful and interesting to reach a fairly wide audience.

IH suggested that our MSP Mhairi Gougeon might be a good candidate to address one of our meetings given her responsibility in government for rural affairs.

7.2 MD described the work of the Huntly Regeneration Trust who have installed their own wind turbine and developed an alternative transport hub and suggested that their work might give us a very worthwhile model for a project locally in K&M. SD pointed out that the Deveron project "The Town is the Garden" is a related initiative, based in Huntly, which we could learn from. It was agreed that MD would approach them to request that they make a (virtual) presentation to us at a meeting in the near future. Agreed also that we would invite other groups who could be interested in developing some initiatives along the same lines. **(Action MD)**

MD mentioned that there could be some funding available from Craigneil Windfarm for projects in Stonehaven

7.3 TS agreed also to make a presentation on the biodiversity work being done by the Greenspace team in Aberdeenshire Council. (Date to be arranged).

8 There took place a wide-ranging discussion of the role of GK&M. PM emphasised the geographical extent of the group and suggested that we were in danger of being too Stonehaven focussed. MD thought that it was not

possible to develop activities across the entire area at one time and suggested that any projects or campaigns developed in Stonehaven (or elsewhere in the area) could be considered as a pilot to be rolled out in other localities potentially.

IH explained that the group had been setup primarily to enable communication and information sharing by a wide range of disparate groups across the area.

MD considered that there was a fundamental decision to make about whether we continue in that form or rather aim to become more of a group to develop and implement projects.

ME thought that the group could represent the whole of K&M while some campaigns may be more locally based in particular settlements.

IH thought that any project proposals would likely be adopted and developed by sub-groups.

PC was of the opinion that we could have a role in suggesting project ideas and helping to find funding and form a project team made up of any other groups or individuals whether part of GK&M or not. The proposal that the STCIG take on the Plastic-Free Stonehaven initiative was an example of that way of working.

CllrSD suggested we try to increase interest in the group and suggested that it would be worthwhile contacting those who had attended meetings previously to ask if they were still interested and to persuade them to come along to future meetings. **(Action PC)**