



**STONEHAVEN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**
19:00 – 21:00 10 January 2023
Meeting held in the Sheriff Court Buildings, Stonehaven

Present
<p>Community Council Members: Ian Hunter (IH), David Lawman, <i>Chairperson</i> (DL), Jim Stephen (JS), Daniel Veltman (DV), Steve McQueen (SMcQ), Pauline Brindley (PB) via Zoom, Raymond Christie (RC), <i>Vice Chairman</i>, William Watson (WW) via Zoom, Janine Esson (JE) via Zoom, Alistair Lawrie (AL) via Zoom, Caroline Evans (CE) via Zoom.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council Elected Members: Alan Turner (Cllr T), Wendy Agnew (Cllr A), Dawn Black (Cllr B), Sarah Dickinson (Cllr D) via Zoom.</p>
In Attendance
Jane Cruickshank, <i>The Bellman</i> , Fiona Malcolm, <i>Minutes Secretary</i> .

1 & 2	Chairperson's Welcome	Action
	It was agreed to record the meeting on Zoom (to be deleted once minutes agreed). DL welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a happy new year.	
3	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
	Apologies received from Adam Cadamerteri, Andrew McArdle, Donald Lawrie Morrison, Julia Lawrie Morrison, James Morrison, Fiona Tavindale, Michael Ogden, David Charnley (Police Scotland).	
4	Police Report	
	Attached separately to this minute. It was noted that the public toilets on Margaret Street in the town centre have been closing early, at 16:00, following a recent act of vandalism. Cllr B advised this had been raised earlier at the Council Ward Meeting. It is on the agenda of the next Town Centre Improvement Group. There was a general discussion about the pros and cons of installing CCTV cameras to deter and possibly identify vandals. Police Scotland now control the main 'feed' from CCTVs across Aberdeenshire/Scotland. DL asked if SDDC members were in favour of installing CCTVs in the town centre, this was unanimously supported.	

	<p>JS asked if there was anything else that might be done to monitor the public toilets?</p> <p>Cllr B agreed to contact Aberdeenshire Council’s Cleaning and Property teams to find out what they plan to do.</p> <p>DL commented that vandalism is a wider issue.</p> <p>Cllr T reflected that CCTV does not always capture useful images.</p> <p>DL commented that the loss of the facilities or the curtailment of the opening hours in the long term should be avoided.</p>	<p>Cllr B</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p>	
	<p>a) Stonehaven Surface Flooding – Feedback from Flood Prevention Group (FPG) – DL has offered a formal meeting with the FPG to discuss what help they require from SDCC. A suitable time has still to be agreed, he will follow up with FPG representatives.</p> <p>b) Nippy Dip – 1 January 2023 – DL noted there had been lots of practical help for the event from SDCC members, he thanked everyone for their contributions. He also noted the positive contributions of a number of local organisations, including the team at RNLI, Stonehaven Fireballs, Stonehaven and District Round Table, and the Rescue Dogs. Over £2k was raised in donations during the event, this will be split, £500 for the Christmas Tree Lights, £1k each for the long-term and day-to-day Defibrillator Funds.</p> <p>DV asked how many people took part in the event? DL replied that some people who registered did not attend, but estimated around 150 bathers braved the harbour water.</p> <p>JS noted this was a well-supported event, with a good effort from the local community.</p> <p>DL reflected that the on-line registration process helped to reduce the administration required on the day. Participants have been encouraged to provide constructive feedback, the team will review this to inform (and improve) next year’s event.</p> <p>IH noted there is video footage of the event available on the Stonehaven website.</p> <p>c) Bervie Braes – Cllr A advised the structural engineers’ report has not yet arrived, she is hopeful that the Council will have it before the next SDCC meeting.</p>	<p>DL</p>

JS was concerned that Aberdeenshire Council may not be taking the issue of visitor access from Dunnottar Castle to the town seriously. Over 100,000 customers paid to visit the Castle last year, with an estimated 300,000 in total, this is potentially a missed opportunity to attract people to come into Stonehaven itself. He suggested a sign might encourage people to do this, and felt it would help local businesses. He noted the lack of suitable parking for coaches in the town, and also highlighted the potential additional footfall from cruise ships docking at Montrose and Aberdeen. The Land Train is still not operating, he wondered when the Council will sort out the necessary infrastructure to enable people to access the town? He suggested there needs to be a collective fight, and even an action group, to enable the Bervie Braes – the main artery into town – to reopen.

Cllr A said the Council is ready to reopen the Bervie Braes as soon as it is safe to do so, however due to the most recent landslide, it has remained closed. However, she assured the meeting she will fight to get it reopened once the report is received, assuming it is safe to do so.

DL suggested that SDCC meets with the Town Improvement Group and the Business Association.

JE asked about the nature of the report.

Cllr A clarified that it is a structural report to determine the safety of the road, given previous landslides. If it is deemed structurally unsafe, there will be a problem as the Council has no money to undertake remedial work.

Cllr T suggested using the number of people who paid for entry to Dunnottar Castle as a benchmark for potential additional visitors to the town.

Cllr D suggested the concerns about restricted access due to the closure of Bervie Braes might be raised with the Stonehaven Town Centre Improvement Group (STCIG).

SMcQ confirmed STCIG next meets in two weeks, the Transport Group might consider this too.

DL said it is important that Community Councillors contribute proactively to these groups, and raise this issue with them.

JS noted the Caravan Site has been very busy, parking for coaches is relevant to the Town Partnership who want to get more businesses into the town.

	<p>DL highlighted the need to support local people as well as tourists.</p> <p>Cllr A suggested a meeting of all interested parties might be convened once the structural report is available.</p> <p>Cllr T anticipated it is likely there will be more events this summer, however many businesses have closed, and an integrated effort is needed to ensure the town thrives.</p> <p>AL agreed to draft and send an e-mail to send to Diane ? (Chair of the Improvement Group).</p> <p>DV asked if there is a need to establish another sub-committee to focus on tourism?</p> <p>Cllr B advised that this is not necessary as the Stonehaven Business Association already includes tourism in its remit.</p> <p>d) Library Opening Times IH asked for an update, Cllr D confirmed she had sent an e-mail to all Community Councillors on 22 December. In summary, all larger Aberdeenshire libraries are now open for 30 hours per week, the restricted opening times are due to budget constraints. Aberdeenshire Council's policy is to support people to stay warm in their own homes rather than make available additional communal 'warm spaces'. However, libraries welcome everyone during opening hours.</p> <p>AL asked when the decision to restrict library opening hours had been made? He was concerned about the potential closure of libraries in the longer term due to a lack of footfall.</p> <p>Cllr D said there was no actual date when a decision about opening hours was made. She believes a great deal of effort (on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council) has been made to ensure libraries are accessible, and offer a variety of events for people to participate in.</p> <p>AL noted the current opening times are restricting for working people, and those who need to use PCs to access benefits.</p> <p>Cllr D agreed but highlighted the impact of budgetary restraints.</p> <p>IH said the decision to close libraries was made during the Covid pandemic. He reflected that people like to socialise as well as stay warm, the Community Centre is open (and heated) at weekends but not used. He wondered if local charities might access available space there?</p>	<p>AL</p>
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	<p>Cllr D said that local churches provide access to warm spaces too. She offered to check which budget has affected the reduced library opening hours, and how the decision was made.</p> <p>e) Hannah Dyson Award and Community Award AL confirmed cheques and covering letters had now been issued to award recipients. Additional letters highlighting the next round have been issued to all schools in the area, also to The Bellman. He encouraged Community Councillors to let him know of any other potential organisations who might be interested in applying.</p>	Cllr D
6	Approval of Previous Minutes (December Business Meeting – 13 December 2022)	
	DV approved and AL seconded the previous minutes.	
7	Planning Report	
	DL said that AL circulates Aberdeenshire Council planning updates weekly. He noted the proposals for landscaping the Recreation Grounds .	
8	SDDC Committees/Subgroups	
	<p>a) Local Development Plan/Local Place Plan – AL is keen to involve members from other groups, and suggested Jane Cruickshank (The Bellman) and Martin Anderson.</p> <p>b) Invercarron Resource Centre/Older People’s Services – DL confirmed that Bruce Stewart, (Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager) had e-mailed inviting representatives from SDDC to meet with him on 31 January 2023. There was a discussion about the number of members who would attend this meeting, also who would be most appropriate.</p> <p>JS suggested finding out if previous user groups still existed and if they did, inviting them to the meeting.</p> <p>DL said the purpose of the meeting is to discuss and agree how to achieve the outcomes that arose from the Participation Request.</p> <p>IH reflected that the main requirement is to see the Centre reopened.</p> <p>DL said there were several points in the Participation Request.</p> <p>DV asked if any interested Community Councillor might contribute to the pre-meeting discussions?</p> <p>AL advised the Mearns Health Delivery Network (MHLN) is looking at what resources are needed for older people. There is</p>	

	<p>funding for a post for one year, should (SDCC) ask for this to be extended (at the meeting with Bruce Stewart), or should this be raised separately?</p> <p>DL clarified that seven or eight points were raised in the Participation Request (PR). He suggested the need to review the PR document before the meeting with Bruce Stewart.</p> <p>RC advised that MHLN are waiting to hear if the post will be extended.</p> <p>Cllr A reflected that Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) will be focused on their review..</p> <p>DL suggested that he, RC, JS, AMcH, and IH meet before the 31 January meeting.</p> <p>c) Community Resilience Plan – DL acknowledged the amount of work MO is doing on this, and asked for his thanks to be recorded. Tess White is attending the next Zoom meeting on 18 January 2023, a WhatsApp group has also been set up.</p> <p>d) SDCC Communications – SMcQ confirmed that work is ongoing to update the SDCC website. Rather than convene a separate meeting of the Communications Group, there will be a discussion half an hour before the next SDCC Agenda Planning Meeting at 18:30 on 7 February 2023.</p>	AL
9	Outside Bodies/Committees	
	<p>a) Transport Action Kincardineshire (TRAK) – the last meeting had been cancelled and was now scheduled for 12 January 2023 at 19:00.</p> <p>b) KDP – Wind Farm Grant Application Reviews – no update.</p> <p>c) Town Centre Improvement Group – AL confirmed the group will meet in two weeks.</p> <p>d) Stonehaven Community Resilience Plan – (See Item 8c)</p> <p>e) Kincardine and Mearns Community Council Forum – no update.</p> <p>f) Kincardine and Mearns Community Planning Group – meeting postponed.</p>	
10	Treasurer’s Report	
	<p>The Treasurer’s Report was circulated prior to the meeting and was approved. DL noted several invoices are due this month.</p>	
11	Annual Zoom License Renewal	

	<p>DL advised the Zoom license is due for renewal and asked if SDCC members wished to continue 'hybrid' business meetings. JS felt that it is preferable for people to be physically present at meetings, and encouraged members to attend when possible. DL recognized that some people prefer the flexibility of Zoom for a variety of reasons.</p> <p>The proposal to renew the Zoom license was supported unanimously.</p>	
12	Status of Kincardine Community Hospital Minor Injuries Unit	
	<p>DL had circulated an article on social media about the continued closure of Community Hospital Minor Injuries units, including the one at Kincardine Community Hospital in Stonehaven.</p> <p>Cllr B had received a query from a constituent last October about the same issue. She had contacted Janine Howie, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP), who explained there has been a phased approach to reopening these units across NHS Grampian, but the facility at Kincardine Community Hospital remains closed. It is hoped to reinstate this unit, however it depends on the availability of staff. Cllr B offered to follow up with AHSCP. If someone experiences a minor injury, they are advised to contact NHS 24 first for advice.</p> <p>AL noted that, according to NHS, the nearest (to Stonehaven) minor injuries units in Aberdeenshire are in Huntly, Peterhead and Fraserburgh.</p> <p>Cllr D confirmed that, even before the Covid pandemic, people needed to contact NHS 24 and secure an appointment to attend a minor injuries unit or a casualty department. She recognised that people need to be clear about what to do, but also that the local Minor Injuries Unit is important to the community.</p>	Cllr B
13	Correspondence	
	No correspondence had been received.	
14	AOCB	
	<p>a) DV highlighted the forthcoming Dunnottar Woods Association AGM on 12 January 2023, and the positive contribution of Paws on Plastic initiative.</p> <p>b) DV asked when the Christmas Tree and Lights in the Market Square would be taken down, this is due to happen soon</p>	
15	Dates of Next Meetings	
	<p>DL noted that he will be on holiday so will not be attending the next SDCC Business Meeting.</p> <p>Agenda Discussion and Planning Meeting – 7 February 2023</p> <p>Next full SDDC Business Meeting – Tuesday 14 February 2023.</p>	