



**STONEHAVEN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

19:00 11 April 2023

Meeting held in the Sheriff Court Buildings, Stonehaven

Present
<p>Community Council Members: David Lawman (DL), <i>Chairman</i>, Ian Hunter (IH), Jim Stephen (JS), Steve McQueen (SMcQ), Alistair Lawrie (AL) via Zoom, Fiona Tavindale (FT), James Morrison (JM), Michael Ogden (MO), Daniel Veltman via Zoom, Raymond Christie (RC), Andrew McArdle (AMcA) via Zoom</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council Elected Members: Alan Turner (Cllr T), Wendy Agnew (Cllr A) via Zoom, Sarah Dickinson (Cllr D)</p>
In Attendance
Jane Cruickshank, <i>The Bellman</i> , via Zoom , Fiona Malcolm, <i>Minutes Secretary</i> , David Strang Steel (DSS), Andrew Newton, Gordon Ritchie (GR), Jackie Bruce (JB), Annette Leith (Ms AL)

1 & 2	Chairperson's Welcome	Action
	It was agreed to record the meeting on Zoom (to be deleted once minutes agreed).	
3	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
	Apologies received from William Watson (WW), <i>Treasurer</i> , Janine Esson (JE), Caroline Evans (CE), Adam Cadamerteri (AC), Donald Lawrie Morrison (DLM), Julia Lawrie Morrison (JLM), Pauline Brindley (PB), Dawn Black (Cllr B), David Charnley, Police Scotland (DC),	
4	Hannah Dyson Award and Community Award	
	AL acknowledged the significant positive contribution young people make to the community. The panel considered several applications, and decided to make two awards this year, to Finlay Sangster and Phoebe Lawson. Finlay, having overcome some significant personal challenges; <i>including dyslexia, discalcula and his cerebral palsy</i> , achieved a number of SVQ Level 5 qualifications, and has secured a college place to continue his studies.	

	<p>Phoebe won the Springboard Future Chef Award in 2021, and has continued to develop her skills as a chef during the past year. She is also a talented rugby player, and has been selected to play for the Rugby Scotland regional team.</p> <p>Dr David Smail will receive the annual Community Award Trophy in recognition of his tireless work keeping Stonehaven litter and weed-free.</p> <p>In addition, there will be a special award made to all of the groups who took part in the Britain in Bloom (?) competition, in particular Stonehaven Horizon Group, led by John Cruickshank.</p> <p>It is planned to have a presentation ceremony in May (probably w/c 15th), previous winners from recent years will be included as there had been no awards events due to the pandemic.</p> <p>SMcQ, who was a member of the selection panel, seconded all of the nominations, and said it had been difficult to decide on the winners.</p> <p>DL asked for all in attendance to give the successful nominees a round of applause.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Police Report</p>	
	<p>The monthly Police Scotland report was circulated to all SDCC members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>IH asked whether the broken glass panels fronting the River Carron on Carron Terrace had been reported to the police as possible vandalism?</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Stonehaven Tolbooth Museum - Community Asset Transfer</p>	
	<p>DL welcomed representatives of Stonehaven Tolbooth Museum, and invited Gordon Ritchie (GR), Chairman, to address the meeting.</p> <p>GR confirmed that the Museum's Committee has submitted a Community Asset Transfer request to Aberdeenshire Council for the Tolbooth building. The Museum, closed by the Council in 2011, was reopened by volunteers, and received the Queens Award in 2015. In 2019, the Duke and Duchess of Rothesay visited the Museum. The Tolbooth is the oldest building in Stonehaven and is in urgent need of attention and repairs. In 2017, planning permission was granted to develop an extension. The Council does not have a lease agreement in place with the Museum Committee, therefore with no security over the building, it is very difficult to secure any external funding (e.g., Big Lottery Funds) for improvements.</p> <p>Revenue income will be raised through renting the upper floor as a restaurant, public donations and retail sales. It is hoped to increase the number of visitors to the Museum, these are mainly tourists, however</p>	

	<p>the Museum is also an educational facility. There are 40 volunteers, 12 of whom sit on the Committee.</p> <p>They are seeking SDCC support for the Community Asset Transfer request, a visitor survey has been supportive.</p> <p>JS asked about the timescale for the planned building work, also would ownership increase opportunities to secure funding?</p> <p>GR said the work would take over 5 years, and yes, ownership would provide security and be more attractive to potential funders.</p> <p>The meeting unanimously supported the proposal.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Stonehaven Participatory Budgeting Project/Stonehaven Leisure Centre</p>	
	<p>DL had circulated an article, published by The Bellman, setting out a series of questions, and responses from Aberdeenshire Council, about the Stonehaven Leisure Centre project. He invited Jackie Bruce (JB), from Stonehaven Community Sports Hub (and the Panthers Basketball Club) to summarise the main issues relating to the project.</p> <p>JB explained she had been on the Participatory Budgeting (PB) Reference Group, and had never been in favour of the proposal. There was a meeting on 2 March 2023 to discuss storage, this is a major issue for sports groups and users. She shared a PowerPoint presentation to demonstrate how little additional floor space will be available as a result of the planned improvement project. No additional storage space is included in the plans. She suggested an alternative option that would keep the existing layout and add a partition in the current seating area.</p> <p>DL commented that, on paper, there was only a small amount of additional space being created for the significant amount of money being spent. He wondered why Aberdeenshire Council is budgeting so much, and suggested this is a question for elected members as proposals will be brought to the Area Committee on 25 April. He asked if (the project) represents value for money (VFM)?</p> <p>IH noted that, at the recent Community Planning meeting, Aberdeenshire Council advised that SDCC was fully consulted at the beginning of the process.</p> <p>DL confirmed that 2 representatives from SDCC were involved in the PB process and had raised questions about how much extra space was to be created. He also queried whether the improvements to the changing rooms were to come from existing budgets, if not it would not be VFM, and this needs to be challenged.</p>	

	<p>JS suggested a common sense approach was needed, to ensure getting as much for the money as possible.</p> <p>Cllr D said that elected members had not been directly involved(in the?) reference group, which involved representatives from the local community. Voting papers had made it clear that additional budget was available for the changing rooms. The £2.5m PB funding will be used for new equipment, PAMIS (Promoting a More Inclusive Society) and an enhanced reception area, not just additional floor space. She said it was not in the Council's interest to not seek VFM, and that the project costs are based on advice received.</p> <p>DL wished to highlight there is a group of people who are not happy with the proposal.</p> <p>JB suggested a better result could be achieved by spending £500k to put up a partition, she believed that none of the groups in the town will benefit from the project.</p> <p>Cllr A reminded the meeting that she has submitted a proposal to the Levelling Up Fund for £10m for a new facility, as the current Leisure Centre is too small and not fit for purpose. She agreed that in general costs have gone up, but it remains her ambition to secure the Levelling Up money.</p> <p>Cllr T said he had not commented on the (PB community) survey/questionnaire, due to possible conflict of interest, as he is a member of the Planning and Area Committees. He agreed that costs have increased, but this does not remove the need for budgetary scrutiny.</p> <p>DL asked (the meeting) if SDCC should ask questions if there are concerns (from community groups and individuals)?</p> <p>JM said it seemed too much money for too little return, and was not VFM.</p> <p>MO noted the bottom-line figure does not explain the individual costs, e.g. for groundworks, drainage, etc. Therefore it is very difficult to understand where the costs lie.</p> <p>JM suggested a detailed breakdown of costs is needed.</p> <p>Cllr T said this may not be available due to commercial-in-confidence constraints (relating to procurement of contractors).</p> <p>DL invited Annette Leith (Ms AL), who Chairs the Stonehaven Community Sports Hub, to address the meeting.</p>	
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Ms AL agreed that Aberdeenshire Council had never set out to waste money. PB funding was supposed to be for new things for the community. She said she cannot see Stonehaven gaining anything new, other than equipment, lighting and sound systems. Otherwise, the project is about upkeep (of the existing facility).

AL asked if the lack of storage is a direct result of the project?

JB replied that all local clubs lack storage space.

AL said that the proposals that were presented to the public were clear, but there was no breakdown then of how the £1.4m was to be spent, and this is needed.

JS said that at the beginning he was not in favour of the proposal, because he felt it was not getting much, he thought the money should have been spent on another project. Aberdeenshire Council should have improved the Leisure Centre, the Green Hut had already been lost, this is to be replaced by a storage container, there is a need to push back as this is not demonstrating VFM.

IH reflected that PB was meant to be an extension of democracy. He felt the process had not worked well. There ought to have been more specifics before people were asked to vote. The community should have been widely consulted, the process had failed.

JM said the community had been dictated to.

AL reflected this had been a learning experience, and agreed more detail was needed. He noted there had been extensive public consultation for suggestions, and thought perhaps the process was not handled in the best way.

Ms AL agreed that, had more detail been given, and an alternative proposal considered, it might deliver a better result, as the Leisure Centre main hall will still not be large enough for purpose.

A member of the public (*lady, did not say who she was*) asked about the social impact of the project. Will the proposal result in getting more people active?

JB said that currently none of the sports clubs use the Leisure Centre PB room as it is used for storage. She felt that groups would not use the enhanced space.

IH suggested proposing to LLA that SDDC accepted the result of the ballot, but wanted them to review how the money is spent.

Cllr T noted the time restraints on the budget, and that alternatives would take time to develop.

	<p>MO asked what could be done to revise the proposal as the issue of storage had not been addressed at all. Cllr T said that planning (for the project) was approved, and work was due to start on 25 June.</p> <p>MO asked who the answer would come back to?</p> <p>DL noted that elected members will have to decide on 25 April at K&M Area Committee meeting when they approve the spending plan.</p> <p>Ms AL said any building work must start this financial year, but agreed questions needed to be asked.</p> <p>JB said it was not right that money was being spent for no benefit, and that the money could instead go to next-level projects.</p> <p>Cllr D said the BMX proposal was the next one on the list.</p> <p>DL asked if other projects should get the money instead, or should we just take what is available? Elected members would need to make the decision.</p> <p>Cllr D highlighted that the vote (for PB projects) had been taken by residents of the town, a process and the resulting outcome had been followed, and wondered if it would be legal to challenge? She wondered if a project to improve the Leisure Centre, which addressed the issues of increased space and additional storage, might be an option?</p> <p>IH proposed that SDCC should tell LLA that, whilst we accept the outcome of the PB vote, we wish to enable negotiation to take place to improve upon what is proposed. This was seconded by RC, and supported by the majority of SDCC members.</p> <p>JS commented that there was no chance of getting any more for the Leisure Centre.</p> <p>AL agreed to revise the wording of the question before it goes to LLA.</p>	<p>AL</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p>	
	<p>a) Ury Estate Master Plan – Link Road Information DL thanked Cllr B and Cllr D for raising SDCC concerns about the link road, Aberdeenshire Council’s responses had been circulated prior to the meeting. In summary, the plans for a link road had been in place before any houses were built, and it was very clear that the roads would be designed for use by a range of vehicles, including HGVs.</p> <p>b) Stonehaven Flood Group</p>	

	<p>DL said that that there was nothing further that SDCC could do, Stonehaven Flood Group is considering ways that SDCC can support them.</p> <p>MO said the issue had not progressed since the last meeting. Cllr T said that not everyone had been at the meeting, and asked if there might be an action for SDCC to engage with the group again? They had last met with them 5 months ago.</p> <p>DL proposed a further meeting.</p> <p>c) Hannah Dyson Award and Community Award See Agenda Item 4.</p> <p>d) Community Council Participation Request IH said he had asked for SDCC to be part of the process. 17 Community Councils (CCs) had taken part. The Guide issued during COVID made no mention of CCs. The Guidance Notes for Council Officers will include a requirement to consult with CCs in any PB process. Also, if they speak to the community, they should let the CC know, so they know what is happening on the ground.</p>	<p>DL</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Approval of Previous Minutes – 14 March 2023</p>	
	<p>The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved by SMCQ and seconded by AL.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Planning Report</p>	
	<p>APP/2023/0395 – AWPR Stonehaven Roundabout/Megray Road – Service Station – including Hydrogen Refuelling, Traditional Pumps, 10 EV Charging Points, Lorry Park and Coffee Drive-Through</p> <p>DL reminded everyone that no decision had been made at the previous meeting. He had received an e-mail response earlier that day regarding the concern raised about the size of the proposed lorry park. There was insufficient space available to accommodate more HGVs. Regarding the query about a bus stop at the site, the company have written to the bus companies and are waiting for a reply. Pedestrian access to the facility remains an issue. Stonehaven Flood Group and Aberdeenshire Council Roads Department had raised a concern about the local burn which runs adjacent to the site.</p> <p>IH said that the planning proposal for the new supermarket at Ury Estate would need bus access, therefore the Service Station would not be the best place for a bus stop.</p> <p>DL noted that the consultation process for the proposed supermarket is still open. Most major trunk roads have service stations, he asked what others thought?</p>	

	<p>JS said concerns had already been raised about flooding, and agreed there is a need for a service station.</p> <p>DL reflected that most users (of the service station) would be transient rather than local people. JS said that retailers are responsible for clearing litter from the area surrounding their businesses, and wondered if this requirement would apply to the service station?</p> <p>DL said there is a need to encourage the public to tidy up their own litter.</p> <p>JS said there are too many takeaways in Stonehaven, and noted that volunteers pick up litter.</p> <p>DSS noted that Stonehaven Gateway <i>Includes bus stops in both options – one larger or two small retail units.</i> He also advised that flooding risk had already been addressed as the former Megray Burn was already diverted as part of the AWPR development. There is now a ditch, not a source of running water.</p> <p>RC proposed that SDCC support the planning application. SMcQ seconded this.</p> <p>IH asked if people (pedestrians) would want to cross the road to the supermarket and should there be fencing?</p> <p>DSS said there is ‘dropped kerbing incorporated in the AWPR.</p> <p>JS noted that as the service station is a motorway facility for drivers, it was unlikely people would want to cross the road.</p> <p>The majority of those present indicated their support of the planned service station.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>SDCC Committees/Subgroups</p>	
	<p>a) Local Development Plan/Local Place Plan DL said access to software is now available, and there has been some progress. MO said a possible set of activities had been suggested, and people can make useful comments at the meeting on 17 April. He offered to produce a Gant Chart to meet the timeframe. He suggested there should be more rigour about running and recording meetings.</p> <p>b) Invercarron Resource Centre/Older People’s Services – Participation Request DL said the survey had focused on people’s experience of their visit to the vaccination centre, he thought more questions could have been included. This is an annual survey, a question about wider older people’s services could be included. There is still no dedicated space</p>	<p>MO</p>

	<p>(in Stonehaven) for older people, that includes access to tea and coffee-making facilities. He asked what had happened to furniture and crockery/kitchen equipment that had previously belonged in the Resource Centre?</p> <p>RC said he had visited the vaccination centre in September, he had been the only person there. He felt it should have been highlighted in the survey that it(the centre) was a facility for older people.</p> <p>Cllr A said the space was too big (for a vaccination centre?) all the chairs had been put in the bin. She had written to the CEO (of Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership – AHSCP) on 26 March and will share the response with SDCC.</p> <p>DL asked if Cllr A could verify what had happened to the furniture?</p> <p>Cllr A agreed to ask .</p> <p>IH said that SDCC should have had input to the questionnaire.</p> <p>DL confirmed SDCC had been involved, but unfortunately was unable to contribute.</p> <p>JS asked if SDCC could co-opt Vera Coull to SDCC, to contact user groups?</p> <p>DL said SDCC already has a sub-group, but was unable to contribute (to the content of the questionnaire).</p> <p>RC suggested members could contribute to the Older People’s Forum.</p> <p>Cllr T encouraged SDCC and individual members to respond to the survey and make their views known.</p> <p>Al reflected that an account of footfall is needed. The vaccination centre needs to justify its use of the large premises. Could the space at the end of the questionnaire be used to add relevant questions about longer-term support for older people? He suggested that SDCC write separately (to AHSCP) highlighting concerns about the survey.</p> <p>DL summarised – SDCC will complete the survey, articulate issues and also write a letter (to AHSCP). The sub-group will take this forward.</p> <p>c) Community Resilience Plan MO confirmed the local churches have offered their support , but at a cost. There are no details of costs, and SDCC has no budget. The Scouts and Sea Cadets are also supportive.</p> <p>d) SDCC Communications</p>	<p>Cllr A</p> <p>Cllr A</p> <p>RC, AMcA, IH</p>
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	SMcQ advised the new SDCC website is now operational, and asked members to ensure all relevant documents are uploaded. If anyone needs anything added they should let him know.	
12	Outside Bodies/Committees	
	<p>a) Transport Action Kincardineshire (TRAK) The next meeting is on 1 May 2023</p> <p>b) KDP – Wind Farm Grant Application Reviews DL said SDCC needs to nominate representatives to contribute to the grant process. He suggested he and JE will take this forward.</p> <p>c) Town Centre Improvement Group SMcQ said the Community Action Plan is with SDCC for completion.</p> <p>DL has shared raw data with people involved in the Local Place Plan, he emphasised this is not a report, and suggested this might be discussed at the LPP Group.</p> <p>d) Stonehaven Community Resilience Plan – (See Item 11c)</p> <p>e) Kincardine and Mearns Community Council Forum – no update.</p> <p>f) Kincardine and Mearns Community Planning Group IH reported that he is waiting for a response from Aberdeenshire Council about Montrose Station. Cllr D said this is on the agenda the next NESTRANS meeting.</p> <p>IH will circulate details of the Town Centre Health Check.</p>	<p>DL and JE</p> <p>IH</p>
13	Treasurer’s Report	
	<p>The Treasurer’s Report was circulated prior to the meeting and was approved.</p> <p>DL intimated that the current Treasurer, WW, wishes to stand down and asked members to consider how this vital role might be filled.</p>	
14	Correspondence	
	There were no outstanding items of correspondence.	
15	AOCB	
	Cllr D reminded everyone the consultation on Aberdeenshire Council’s Community Asset Transfer policy and process closes on Sunday 15 April.	
16	Dates of Next Meetings	
	Agenda Discussion and Planning Meeting – Tuesday 2 May 2023	

	Next full SDDC Business Meeting – Tuesday 9 May 2023	
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