



**STONEHAVEN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**
19:00 – 21:00 9 May 2023
Meeting held in the Sheriff Court Buildings, Stonehaven

Present
<p>Community Council Members: David Lawman, <i>Chairman</i> (DL), Raymond Christie (RC), <i>Vice Chairman</i>, Ian Hunter (IH), Jim Stephen (JS), Steve McQueen (SMcQ), William Watson (WW), <i>Treasurer via Zoom</i>, Alistair Lawrie (AL), <i>Secretary, via Zoom</i>, Michael Ogden (MO), Andrew McArdle (AMcA) via Zoom, Daniel Veltman (DV) via Zoom,</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council Elected Members: Alan Turner (Cllr T), Wendy Agnew (Cllr A), Dawn Black (Cllr B), Sarah Dickinson (Cllr D).</p>
In Attendance
David Charnley, Police Scotland (DC) via Zoom , Jane Cruickshank, <i>The Bellman</i> , Fiona Malcolm, <i>Minutes Secretary</i> , Andrew Newton, <i>Stonehaven Museum</i> , Rachel Frame, <i>The Haven</i> , Starkeeper Morton, <i>The Haven</i> , Paul Bentley via Zoom , Angela Williamson, via Zoom .

1 & 2	Chairperson's Welcome and Roll-call	Action
	DL welcomed everyone, including those attending via Zoom.	
3	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
	Apologies received from Janine Esson (JE), Caroline Evans (CE), Adam Cadamerteri (AC), Donald Lawrie Morrison (DLM), Julia Lawrie Morrison (JLM), Fiona Tavindale (FT), James Morrison (JM), Pauline Brindley (PB).	
4	Police Report	
	<p>The monthly Police Scotland was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>SMcQ was concerned about the number of recent traffic accidents on the A92, in particular at the Muchalls bend, DC replied these were mainly a result of poor weather conditions.</p> <p>SMcQ asked about the police response to Gypsy/Travellers who had parked at the Beach Front on Friday 5 May. DC said the police were</p>	

	<p>aware and had asked them to move on, which they did on Saturday 6 May.</p> <p>SMcQ said there are ongoing issues with parking around the town square. DC replied that although he cannot promise a police presence all of the time, this will be a priority for him and 2 special constables over the summer.</p> <p>MO noted the number of people who park in front of the Town Hall and cause traffic blockages. DC said that vehicle drivers have up to 15 minutes to load/unload, thereafter a parking ticket can be issued.</p> <p>DV requested more police presence in Dunnottar Woods, particularly around the fire pit area, mainly at weekends but also during the school holidays. DC said he was already aware of this issue.</p> <p>RC noted the number of drivers who ‘jump’ the traffic lights on Allardice Street, and expressed concern that a serious accident was highly likely. DC agreed to pass this on to traffic colleagues.</p> <p>DL thanked DC for his contribution to the meeting.</p>	<p>DC</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>ECS/LLA Lets Charges/Access to Facilities including Schools, Halls and Leisure Facilities</p>	
	<p>(n.b. This links to Agenda Item 6a)</p> <p>DL had received details of the increase in Aberdeenshire Council charges for hiring facilities, this is particularly affecting sports groups (dance, basketball). The available facilities do not meet current needs, this is a grave concern, he is aware that one group has moved to Aberdeen. Cllr D had provided information about the process Aberdeenshire Council applies, he noted the hourly cost (for community groups) has increased by £6, to £26 ph.</p> <p>JS recalled that when the Green Hut was acquired by The Men’s Shed via asset transfer, the Judo Club and other groups had to find alternative premises. He asked if the Basketball Club can use alternative space?</p> <p>DL said that, although the Basketball Club can use outdoor space, they need indoor space in bad weather. The Dance Club had issues accessing school premises.</p> <p>IH noted there has always been an issue accessing education facilities.</p> <p>JS understood that Jackie Bruce was paying £26k pa for renting space.</p> <p>DL reflected the current approach (by Aberdeenshire Council) seemed to be disjointed.</p>	

	<p>Cllr D said one issue is availability (of suitable space/premises), particularly in the winter. In 2009, Aberdeenshire Council had scoped (available space) and concluded there was not enough. The other issue is price – every community group receives a discount on rental costs, however Aberdeenshire Council does not have enough money. She acknowledged the amazing job Jackie Bruce does, all of her concerns have been fed back to the Council, and they are due to review what they are doing.</p> <p>Cllr A said she is still going through the application process for Levelling Up (for a new Leisure Centre), she noted there are other funds available, e.g. Big Lottery. Aberdeenshire Council would also need to contribute (to ‘match’ any Levelling Up monies secured).</p> <p>IH noted this is a national issue, and that £4m is spent on every Olympic medal, he felt that money should instead focus on local needs.</p> <p>JS said the £1.4m allocated from the Participatory Budgeting initiative was insufficient. There has been 20 years of no investment in the town. There is still no container for storage at the Leisure Centre. Banchory, Ellon and Inverurie all have new Sports Centres. £1.4m is not enough, Stonehaven should have a Sports Hub.</p> <p>MO asked if there is potential for clubs to use other facilities, for example the Town Hall or church halls?</p> <p>Cllr D said that storage is the main issue.</p> <p>JS asked why there had been a delay in securing the container for storage at the Leisure Centre?</p> <p>DL suggested moving the meeting on to the next (linked) agenda item</p>	
6	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	
	<p>a) Stonehaven Participatory Budgeting (PB) Project/Stonehaven Leisure Centre</p> <p>DL summarised the position reached at the previous meeting – to request a meeting between SDCC and Aberdeenshire Council to discuss the concerns about the PB initiative. DL and RC had attended a meeting with 3 officials from Live Life Aberdeenshire (LLA) the previous week, they had invited Jackie Bruce to accompany them. Unfortunately, as the meeting was arranged between LLA and 2 members of SDCC, Jackie was not included (as she is not a Community Councillor).</p> <p>The LLA officials explained the PB process, this had been chosen specifically to involve the local community as far as possible. LLA had consulted with local groups, set up a committee of representatives, the PB process was considered a success and had received recognition from COSLA, as 15% of the local community had participated. The</p>	

officials were disappointed that SDCC was trying to change things a year after the PB process had concluded (with the majority of community votes in support of the proposal to improve the Leisure Centre facility).

DL said that, as concerns had been expressed to SDCC, it was right for SDCC to raise questions with LLA, in particular relating to 'value for money' (VFM). The LLA response was, 'This is what the Council can get for £1.4m'. He had asked how Stonehaven might get what is needed? LLA explained that Huntly has established a Community Development Trust, and although Aberdeenshire Council has no budget, they are happy to assist them to access other sources of grant funding. In conclusion, the £1.4m will provide improvements to the Leisure Centre building (higher ceiling, new windows, improvement of overall appearance), but will it give improved/enhanced facilities for the benefit of the community?

IH said that PB (process) does not work well, and PB should have been given to Community Councils to manage. He highlighted the example of SDCC arranging the installation of defibrillators, this cost less than it would had Aberdeenshire Council been responsible.

Cllr A said she is still fighting for Levelling Up funding, she has asked Aberdeenshire Council officials for details about accessing the 'approved suppliers' list, this can be made available to local tradespeople who may be interested.

JS said the community accepts the Council has no money and has to do things for itself. He believes Asset Transfer is the way forward. The Council has no money, yet 4 local groups are paying £130k pa to hire premises.

Cllr T said he fully supports Cllr A. Sports clubs are commercial and need to look at their longer-term sustainability. The Council is in a position to carry risk, so if something goes over-budget, it can carry this. It is not always possible to employ local contractors, e.g. availability. He asked how groups can be brought together? He noted the Shared Prosperity Plan had been launched that day, there are challenges not just here but everywhere. There is a need to focus on priorities.

Cllr D said things take time, what the community can do is critical, it can access funds that are not available to the Council, for example, sport, mental health and wellbeing. All the successful projects have strong community involvement, supported by the Council.

DL said that lots of other areas are doing well, people in Stonehaven now want their share.

	<p>Cllr D said that, in Inverurie, data led to the decision to build a new school. Being clear about priorities and working together (e.g. with Garioch Development Trust) are critical.</p> <p>JS said that the community needs to do it themselves, he feels cheated that money is being spent on the Leisure Centre, however how do we make sure LLA gets the best possible? How can we steer it?</p> <p>MO asked if there was community funding available, and how do we tap into it, e.g. Sport Scotland?</p> <p>DL reflected the data for the Local Place Plan will help, but the community needs to be collective.</p> <p>Cllr T said it takes time to build a business case supported by data and proper plans. He cited the example of the Stonehaven Flood Group which took a long time – it takes time to gather evidence. He asked what is the collective?</p> <p>DL acknowledged all the comments and contributions but felt that other areas had done better than Stonehaven. In general, everyone is paying more but getting less. It is important to stand up for Stonehaven.</p> <p>Cllr A said that (someone from Levelling up?) had told her that, in Aberdeenshire, the north gets everything, the south gets nothing. (May not want to include this?)</p> <p>DL said LLA advised there would be no further dialogue about the Leisure Centre and they would proceed with their plans.</p> <p>JS noted that half the money for Banchory (sports centre?) was raised by the community, there is a need for community groups to come together.</p> <p>DL said the next Place Plan meeting could be the focus for priorities</p> <p>b) Hannah Dyson Community Awards Presentation The presentation at the Town Hall Community Centre at 19:00 on 16 May will recognise this and previous years' recipients. AL confirmed that Bruce Stewart (Area Manager) will present the awards. Light refreshments will be provided.</p>	
7	<p>£5.2m Procurement Plan approved (10 Significant Projects) for Environmental and Infrastructure Projects in the south of Aberdeenshire – Announced March 2022 – Project Details and Status Request</p>	
	<p>DL noted that Aberdeenshire Council Communities Committee had issued a press notice last year about £5.2m for 10 Environmental and Infrastructure Projects in south Aberdeenshire, this was on the same</p>	

	<p>day as the decision was made about Invercarron Resource Centre. He had asked for details of the projects last year, this was not available. He had asked again, and wanted to know what these projects are?</p> <p>Cllr D said that the Procurement Plan, including the 10 projects receiving £5.2m, was presented to the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee meeting a year ago, this was followed by a press release. Elected members are not allowed to disclose details of the projects as the Procurement Plan, prepared for Committee by Aberdeenshire Council officials, had been tabled as 'exempt'. This means that details cannot be made public.</p> <p>DL thought it was strange the press release about the £5.2m was issued on the same day as the announcement about Invercarron Resource Centre.</p> <p>SMcQ agreed, and said, 'It absolutely stinks!'</p> <p>Cllr T explained that, although Councillors have access to information about the projects, they are governed by rules, and cannot disclose details. The Council Procurement Plan was tabled as 'exempt', details are 'commercial-in-confidence. Although, regrettably, he could not share details, he confirmed the 10 environment and infrastructure projects include some in Stonehaven, and some have already started.</p> <p>DL asked why the information is not in the public domain?</p> <p>WW said local authorities ought only to make exempt relevant sections of reports/committee papers, otherwise information should be in the public domain.</p> <p>RC suggested adding this issue to the agenda of the Community Council Forum meeting on 23 May, and noted that Councillors were all frustrated too.</p> <p>SMcQ commented that the Council apparently has no money, then it has but we do not know what it is being used for!</p> <p>DL agreed to ask Emma to add this to the Forum Meeting agenda.</p>	
8	Approval of Previous Minutes (11 April 2023)	
	AL approved and SMcQ seconded the minutes of the previous meeting.	
9	Planning Report	
	DL said there had been nothing of note since the previous meeting.	
10	SDDC Committees/Subgroups	

	<p>a) Local Development Plan/Local Place Plan – DL reported a lot of work has already been done, and information shared. The issue of sports facilities will be raised.</p> <p>b) Invercarron Resource Centre/Older People’s Services – RC will liaise with Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) and the Mearns Coastal Healthy Living Partnership (MCHLP) to arrange a meeting to find out what happened to furniture and equipment belonging to the Invercarron Resource Centre. Cllr A suggested asking Kenny Johnston as he lives next door Cllr B thought the chairs may have been disposed of but offered to check. AL said it was a pity that chairs had been thrown out, and noted the lack of suitable seating for older people in other venues. MO said furniture with no fire certificate is unusable. IH said that he was aware of people living in Newtonhill and Chapelton being directed to Asda at Portlethen for vaccinations. He asked why (the vaccination facilities) are centralised rather than portable? Cllr A said there had been no consultation undertaken <i>(by AHSCP about options for vaccination centre? Repurposing of Invercarron Resource Centre?)</i> Her queries are now with the Legal Team. <i>(AHSCP?)</i> AL said it would be useful to have a clear indication of footfall at the Vaccination Centre, and asked Councillors if lower letting fees for older people’s groups might be considered? IH noted there is a meeting of the 50+ group at the Community Centre at 12:30 on Thursday 11 May. AL noted this group is considering becoming constituted.</p> <p>c) Community Resilience Plan – MO advised he is still working on locations, and is waiting for responses from some of the churches. DL asked for his name to be added to the list of volunteers available in the event of an emergency response requirement.</p> <p>d) SDCC Communications – SMcQ confirmed there had been no changes to the website, he suggested additional material, in particular photographs, could be added.</p>	<p>Cllr B</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Outside Bodies/Committees</p>	
	<p>a) Transport Action Kincardineshire (TRAK) – IH advised the next meeting had been cancelled and as yet no new date had been arranged.</p> <p>b) KDP – Wind Farm Grant Application Reviews – no update.</p> <p>c) Town Centre Improvement Group – the next meeting is scheduled for 29 May 2023.</p>	

	<p>d) Stonehaven Community Resilience Plan – (See Item 10c)</p> <p>e) Kincardine and Mearns Community Council Forum – (See Item 7) £5.2m for 10 Environmental and Infrastructure Projects in south Aberdeenshire, details unavailable to SDCC.</p> <p>f) Kincardine and Mearns Community Planning Group – no update.</p>	
12	Treasurer’s Report	
	The Treasurer’s Report was circulated prior to the meeting.	
13	Correspondence	
	<p>a) AL had received an e-mail asking about the possibility of short-term permits for carers who park in the town square when collecting prescriptions for clients, and asked if Councillors would follow this up. DL advised he understood a similar scheme was already in place in Aberdeen, the carer who had sent the e-mail had received a £20 parking fine. Cllr A offered to follow this up and asked for the information in the e-mail to be passed on. JS also asked that this issue be looked at.</p> <p>b) DL advised that AC wishes to resign from SDCC. He suggested that, after the AGM, SDCC look at co-opting additional members.</p>	Cllr A
14	AOCB	
	<p>DL updated the meeting on the UK Government’s Prosperity Fund, expressions of interest must be lodged by 22 May 2023. An e-mail providing further details has been circulated, there is a broad range of categories which may be of interest to local community groups, he encouraged everyone to share as widely as possible. SDCC will be happy to support any interested groups to apply.</p> <p>Cllr T confirmed that project proposals must be submitted by the middle of June, the Prosperity Fund is likely to be over-subscribed.</p> <p>DL asked all SDCC members to stay for a short time following the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr A said that there were some problems at the harbour following the recent improvement work, the contractors are investigating and will rectify the issue.</p> <p>MO asked how a large used tyre in the Carron River should be disposed of?</p> <p>Cllr A offered to arrange for someone to remove it.</p>	

	<p>Cllr D advised contacting Aberdeenshire Council's Community Waste Officer.</p> <p>JS wished to record his thanks to John Cruickshank who organised Big Help Out volunteering opportunities locally on Monday 8 May. 8 organisations, and over 140 individuals were involved, this showed true community spirit.</p>	
15	Dates of Next Meetings	
	<p>Agenda Discussion and Planning Meeting – Tuesday 6 June 2023, 19:00</p> <p>AGM – Tuesday 13 June, 19:00</p> <p>Next SDDC Business Meeting – Tuesday 13 June 2023, following AGM</p>	