



**STONEHAVEN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**
19:15 – 21:00 Tuesday 8 August 2023
Meeting held in the Sheriff Court Buildings, Stonehaven

Present		
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), Michael Ogden (MO) <i>Treasurer</i> , Alistair Lawrie (AL), <i>Secretary</i> , via Zoom , Daniel Veltman (DV) via Zoom ,		
Aberdeenshire Council Elected Members: Alan Turner (Cllr T), Wendy Agnew (Cllr A) via Zoom .		
In Attendance		
Andrew Newton, Julie Lindeman, Jane Cruickshank (JC), The Bellman , Alexander Inglis via Zoom , Rachel Frame via Zoom , Sarah ? via Zoom .		
1 & 2	Chairperson's Welcome and Rollcall	Action
	DL welcomed everyone, including those attending via Zoom.	
3	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
	Apologies received from Donald Lawrie Morrison (DLM), Julia Lawrie Morrison (JLM), Fiona Tavendale (FT), Sarah Dickinson (Cllr D), Dawn Black (Cllr B), Tim Stephen, Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager (TS).	
4	Police Report	
	No Police Scotland report had been received prior to the meeting. RC had asked DC three months ago about drivers jumping the traffic lights at the Allardice Street/Evan Street junction but had still not received a response. DL asked AL to draft an e-mail to Police Scotland, Cllr T said he will also follow this up with Police Scotland.	AL and Cllr T
5	Stonehaven Leisure Centre – Reduced Opening Hours/Reduced Access to Toilets	
	JS said the Leisure Centre had been closed early twice recently, the Centre is operating on reduced hours. Staff had opened the doors to allow members of the public access to the public toilets there. JS has contacted Local Councillors, the Leisure Centre Manager and Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager to raise his concerns, the Beach Toilets will be re-opened when the Leisure Centre is closed for	

<p>refurbishment (later this month until spring 2024). It may be August/September next year before the indoor pool is open again, so the community will be without a swimming pool for a year.</p> <p>DL noted there is no longer a pool at Mackie Academy.</p> <p>JS felt that communications from Live Life Aberdeenshire (LLA) had been poor, he believes that customers are being lost to the new private gym.</p> <p>SMcQ agreed there had been no communication about the reduced opening hours but had received an e-mail from LLA about the closure, suggesting that alternative facilities (Portlethen, Banchory) can accommodate customers.</p> <p>AL wondered if the reduction of opening hours is 'across the board', and reflected this is similar to the situation with libraries. There is a danger that facilities will wither and die.</p> <p>IH recalled that LLA had come to SDCC some years ago, and suggested forming a Community Liaison Group as the community should have more say.</p> <p>JS said that Leisure Centre members pay a monthly subscription and therefore expect a service. He praised Leisure Centre staff and thought they had been failed by management.</p> <p>DL said that access to public toilets is important and recalled the recent closure of Mary Street facilities following vandalism.</p> <p>JS said that no other town (in Aberdeenshire) has a similar concentration of visitors as there are at the beach area, and suggested Aberdeenshire Council might review its marketing of Stonehaven as a tourist destination if access to public toilets is restricted. Local businesses are unhappy about members of the public asking to use their facilities.</p> <p>Cllr T reminded the meeting that the public toilets in Mary Street were only closed due to vandalism.</p> <p>JS suggested Aberdeenshire Council's decision to remove charges to use public toilets, and paid attendants, might be costing more in the longer run, and the public would be willing to pay.</p> <p>DL said the standard of cleanliness was not as high as when attendants were present. He suggested that solutions need to be considered.</p>

	<p>SMcQ proposed asking Aberdeenshire Council what costs were incurred as a result of vandalism, and what their fallback position is when facilities are closed.</p> <p>Cllr T confirmed he has already asked for this information and said that installation of CCTV only acts as a deterrent – this is not an easy problem to solve.</p> <p>DL was afraid that facilities might be lost altogether.</p> <p>IH noted that public toilets at Inverbervie are open longer.</p> <p>JS considered CCTV may be the way forward as Police Scotland can prosecute. He welcomed the re-opening of the Beach Toilets.</p> <p>IH suggested asking LLA to attend/speak to a future SDCC meeting.</p> <p>DL and AL agreed to draft an invitation to LLA.</p> <p>JC said there had been poor communications from LLA to The Bellman about the Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Cllr T agreed it was a good idea to engage proactively with LLA.</p>	DL and AL
6	Barclay Street Gully Cleaning	
	<p>SMcQ advised that, following heavy rainfall in July, local residents had attempted to clear blocked drains. Police Scotland had reported this issue to Aberdeenshire Council, whose response was to erect no waiting signs to allow the gullies to be cleared. These are corroded so too dangerous to clean. He suggested SDCC take this matter up with Aberdeenshire Council.</p> <p>Cllr T intimated he had already reported this, he has asked for the drains to be cleared, and the gullies will be replaced later this year.</p>	
7	SDCC Membership – Potential Co-options	
	<p>DL advised that WW is standing down as a Community Councillor (CC) due to time constraints. He acknowledged WW's positive contribution and professional expertise. A couple of individuals have approached DL to express interest in becoming CCs, DL encouraged everyone to bring forward any other suggestions as new members are needed. In particular, a variety of people and views would be welcome. Potential new members can be co-opted to SDCC.</p>	
8	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	
	<p>a) The Closure of the Haven Community Larder – Future Provision</p> <p>DL explained that, following an interesting and, at times, heated debate at the previous meeting, those who might have a positive contribution to make were invited to a smaller follow-up meeting to look at possible options. Having spoken to CFINE, it was confirmed</p>	

that any alternative provision would only work if it had access to other sources of food. It was anticipated the closure of The Haven would put additional pressure on the other two foodbanks, CAB, Pillar Healthy Living Network and Homestart as well. A dedicated bank account had been set up, but there had been no donations. Feedback from the other foodbanks suggests they are coping with demand. The Co-op has a partnership agreement with The Haven, there is a possibility of them setting up a community fridge, therefore is not in a position to support other local foodbanks at this time. Following the meeting, the consensus was it would be very hard to start another food larder facility, and the other foodbanks are coping with demand at the moment. Most of the comments from Larder customers focused on losing a place to go rather than food poverty. The Catalyst Church, Baptist Church and No 44 all offer drop-in facilities. DL noted The Haven 'project' will carry on, focused on well-being.

IH suggested CAB would be in the best position to provide feedback if people are experiencing hunger, and if there is a real need.

DL said people are experiencing many issues.

JS thanked DL for his efforts to bring people together, this got groups talking together. He believed Julie Gray may have something in the pipeline, and suggested SDCC should support this however it can.

DL reflected people are finding other sources of support since The Larder closed. It was difficult to understand what additional provision might be required, possibly community drop-ins and mental health support?

IH wondered if a café at the Community Centre was a possibility?

DL said Aberdeenshire Council was not going to re-instate the kitchen there. However, this might be discussed with LLA. 30-40 years ago Community Education brought people together.

IH suggested having a group to liaise with LLA.

b) CCTV – Update
DL proposed getting SDCC, Stonehaven Town Partnership (STP) and Stonehaven Business (SBC) together to discuss this issue further? This was supported. Cllr B had already agreed to take this forward and arrange a meeting of all parties.

JS highlighted focusing on specific areas for CCTV.

SMcQ noted the importance of seeking public opinion.

	<p>Cllr T asked if this could be raised at the next meeting of the Stonehaven Town Centre Improvement Group (STCIG)?</p> <p>JS suggested SDCC, STP and SBC should meet and then take forward a proposal to the STCIG. DL supported this.</p> <p>c) SSEN Kintore-Fiddes Tealing East Coast OHL & 400V Substations – Update IH provided an update. The public consultation is closed. The proposed site is the same size as Inverbervie, this is of concern.</p> <p>DL reflected the current infrastructure cannot cope with the move to generating more green energy.</p> <p>MO said underground facilities are much more expensive, and suggested there should be a discussion about potential alternatives.</p> <p>Cllr T said this has been raised at a number of other Community Councils.</p> <p>AL reflected this is culturally significant (as well as environmentally and aesthetically) as the proposed site is close to where Lewis Grassie Gibbon grew up. Culture as well as landscape should be valued.</p> <p>DL felt it was important to push for less painful solutions, but there are challenges.</p> <p>d) Sale of Jubilee House, Keith Place, Stonehaven – Update DL provided information received from Tim Stephen, Area Manager as follows:</p> <p>‘I have now looked into this issue and can confirm that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property is not owned by Aberdeenshire Council, though it does have a right of ‘pre-emption’ which allows the Council right of first refusal to purchase the property on acceptable terms with the existing owner. • Contact has now been made with the agents of the owner, who have confirmed they are aware of the right of pre-emption and will discuss this issue with Aberdeenshire Council once they have ascertained what an appropriate price will be – which will involve sourcing offers on the commercial market. • It is unlikely that Aberdeenshire Council would have the available budget to be able to exercise its right of pre-emption. • Councillors have been briefed on the issue.’ 	
<p>9</p>	<p>Approval of Previous Minutes (13 June 2023)</p>	

	There were a number of amendments to the previous minutes, AL will send to the Minutes Secretary for correction.	AL
10	Planning Report	
	Stonehaven Town Partnership (STP) wishes to undertake improvement work (to improve accessibility) to the Sheriff Court Buildings. The planning application form shows the applicant organisation to be SDCC. (The fee is reduced when a planning application is made by a Community Council on behalf of a community group.) STP had inadvertently forgotten to tell SDCC before the planning application was submitted. DL asked if the meeting was content to approve the application, this was supported unanimously.	
11	SDDC Committees/Subgroups	
	<p>a) Local Development Plan/Local Place Plan – MO provided an update. Pippa has prepared a plan, including constraints, the group will clarify a questionnaire, and the consultation process (on-line and face-to-face) in October. Aboyne has a very good website, setting out how, why and when. The group has considered using a professional web developer, but this is costly, so they will look to SDCC to develop it. SDCC will need to approve a budget for publicity - website and fliers and posters. JC (The Bellman) has provided information about Google hosting free of charge. (Aboyne use Google) DL proposed an annual budget for marketing and publicity of £300, this was approved.</p> <p>b) Invercarron Resource Centre/Older People’s Services – Participation Request – IH confirmed the next meeting is scheduled for after recess, by when the results of the consultation exercise should be available.</p> <p>c) Community Resilience Plan – MO provided an update. St James Church and the Scout Hut have confirmed they will provide accommodation. The Sea Cadets will seek approval from their Management Committee. Fetteresso Church are also positive. It is good to have locations spread across the town. The Co-op has resilience support funding. STP have been supportive about generators. An application for £8,420 has been made to SSEN’s Resilience Fund, for tie-in points for generators at three locations, a decision is expected in October.</p> <p>d) SDCC Communications – SMCQ suggested waiting for new members to be co-opted to SDCC, before arranging a sub-group meeting.</p>	
12	Outside Bodies/Committees	

	<p>a) Transport Action Kincardineshire (TRAK) – IH provided an update. There was a meeting on 10 July, attended by two MSPs and four Local Councillors. A range of topics was discussed including taxi legislation. Additional tests are required for private hire vehicles if they are to be used for public transport. There is no longer a waiting room at Stonehaven interchange on Barclay Street. People are very unhappy about the arrangements at Aberdeen Bus Station. There was a suggestion to create a Park and Ride Terminus north of Aberdeen. TRAK has written to Scotrail about passengers having to change trains at Montrose Station.</p> <p>b) KDP – Wind Farm Grant Application Reviews – DL advised the next decisions will be made on 9 August, applications to the fund have been oversubscribed significantly.</p> <p>c) Town Centre Improvement Group – next meeting 29 August.</p> <p>d) Stonehaven Community Resilience Plan – (See Item 11c)</p> <p>e) Kincardine and Mearns Community Council Forum – next meeting 6 September.</p> <p>f) Kincardine and Mearns Community Planning Group – no further meetings scheduled.</p>	
13	Treasurer's Report	
	The Treasurer's Report was circulated prior to the meeting. MO asked members to either send invoices to him and he will pay them or provide evidence of payment (as well as an invoice) if they have paid themselves.	
14	Correspondence	
	None.	
15	AOCB	
	<p>a) DL recorded his thanks on behalf of SDCC to the Aberdeenshire Council Waste Department team who dealt with the removal of dead birds from the beach. He acknowledged this is an unpleasant job.</p> <p>b) The pelican crossing on Allardice Street has been removed (due to safety issues) and replaced with temporary lights, DL recorded his thanks to Aberdeenshire Council for responding to this issue so promptly.</p> <p>c) DL wished to congratulate the Tolbooth Museum for achieving a 3* Scottish Tourist Award.</p> <p>d) The Scottish Government is proposing to introduce legislation which would make it illegal to park vehicles on pavements.</p>	

	<p>e) AL highlighted the Local Poetry Festival which will take place in Stonehaven on 10, 11 and 12 August. All the events are free.</p> <p>f) JS wished to acknowledge the success of the many local events that have been taking place over the summer. He also wished to record his thanks to Horizon and all the local groups who have worked so hard to make Stonehaven look so good. AL noted the fliers that had been designed (by SDCC?) had been useful in promoting events.</p>	
15	Dates of Next Meetings	
	<p>Agenda Discussion and Planning Meeting – Tuesday 5 September 2023, 19:00</p> <p>Next SDDC Business Meeting – Tuesday 12 September 2023, 19:00</p>	