



**STONEHAVEN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**
19:00– 21:00 Tuesday 13 August 2024
Meeting held in the Sheriff Court Buildings, Stonehaven

Present		
Community Council Members: Alistair Lawrie (AL), <i>Secretary, via Zoom</i> , Caroline Duguid (CD), David Lawman, <i>Chairman</i> (DL), Denise Bannerman (DB), via Zoom , Fiona Tavindale (FT), Ian Hunter (IH), James Stephen (JS), Julie Lindeman (JL), Michael Ogden (MO) <i>Treasurer</i> , Norman MacKay (NMck), <i>Vice Chairman, via Zoom</i> , Raymond Christie (RC), Steve McQueen (SMcQ)		
Aberdeenshire Council Elected Members: Alan Turner (Cllr T), Dawn Black (Cllr B)		
In Attendance - Jane Cruickshank, <i>The Bellman</i> , Fiona Malcolm, <i>Minutes Secretary</i> , Brian Wade, <i>Save Our Mearns</i> , David Strang, Rachel Frame, Andrew Newton, John Cruickshank, <i>Horizon</i> , Audrey Malcolm, Colin Sim via Zoom , Hugh Gordon via Zoom , Denis ? via Zoom , Angela ? via Zoom , Geoff Veitch via Zoom , GT via Zoom		
1 & 2	Chairperson's Welcome and Rollcall	Action
	DL welcomed everyone to the meeting, including those who were attending via Zoom.	
3	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
	Daniel Veltman (DV), Sarah Dickinson (Cllr D), Wendy Agnew (Cllr A)	
4	Consideration and approval of the independently verified Statement of Accounts & proposed budget for the forthcoming year: Treasurer Mike Ogden – <i>Note: The formal approval, was not recorded during the recent AGM.</i>	
	The Statement of Accounts and proposed budget were approved by JL and seconded by IH.	
5	Request update on School Provision for Stonehaven – Including request for school role forecasts for all schools	
	DL had shared information about projected roll numbers to 2028 for Stonehaven's schools (Mackie and three primaries), these show a reduction in primaries , while Mackie stays the same. He asked for an update from Councillors.	

	<p>JS suggested adding this to the Local Place Plan (LPP), and noted that future housing development focuses on Chapelton.</p> <p>DL said school building are aging and not fit for purpose, the community needs to raise its concern.</p> <p>Cllr T assured the meeting there are no plans to close Dunnottar Primary, there is an aging population across Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>DL asked for confirmation that Dunnottar Primary will not close.</p> <p>Cllr B offered to raise this with the education Committee.</p> <p>DL asked when there will be a review of the Stonehaven schools' estate?</p> <p>MO was interested in the potential employment opportunities over the next 10-15 years, as these would impact on the number of families living in the town.</p>	<p>Cllr B</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Electric Vehicle Charging Points</p>	
	<p>SMcQ was concerned about problems affecting the three charging points in Stonehaven, these are situated at the railway station, Viewmount and the town square. The latter two are often broken, Aberdeenshire Council has a contract with Charge Place Scotland to repair any faults within 48 hours. The 4th charging point at Viewmount has not worked since November 2023. He has e-mailed Tim Stephen, Area Manager, and suggested postponing this item until the next meeting for further discussion.</p> <p>Cllr T said another charging point will be installed at the Leisure Centre, and offered to raise this issue with the Infrastructure Services Committee (ISC) and provide an update.</p>	<p>Cllr T</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>It is clear most road kerbs and pavements around the town are not looking as good as they once did, with large amounts of weeds / overhanging hedges / trees, i.e. looking unkept – With the increasing budgetary pressures on Aberdeenshire Council – What can be done?</p>	
	<p>DL wondered if there is something Stonehaven residents might do to address this issue?</p> <p>JL asked about figures in other areas, Cllr T said this information is in the public domain, DL noted re-wilding is something entirely different. IH asked if it was the cost of chemicals or labour, and wondered if the vehicle that sweeps the roads could be adapted to clear the weeds?</p> <p>JL said the person who sweeps the road already hoes weeds when possible. Cllr D, along with Paws on Plastic, is encouraging residents to help.</p> <p>AM suggested Community Service participants could be utilised to help out. Cllr T offered to ask about this.</p>	<p>Cllr T</p>

	<p>IH raised a safety issue at the East Glebe due to overgrown bramble bushes.</p> <p>RC was annoyed about the advertising boards some retailers use, for example Specsavers. These are a hazard for disabled people.</p> <p>SMcQ asked if budget figures could be made available to Community Councillors?</p> <p>There was a discussion about head count, with the following FOI being submitted to the Council:</p> <p><i>“We are very aware of the increasing budgetary pressures on Aberdeenshire Council and the resulting reduction of service provision. We would like to understand how this has been reflected in the number of staff employed in each service. Could you advise what the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Head Count is for Aberdeenshire Council, each year over the last 5 years, plus highlight which services have seen a reduction in their FTE Head Count over the last five years and which services (if any) that have seen an increase in their FTE Head Count over the last five years.”</i></p> <p>DL stated the expected answer, would help explain the pressure on the council and the resulting reduction in service provision.</p> <p>JS commented that Stonehaven is the tourism hub of Aberdeenshire. Bin collection is carried out through voluntary overtime. He suggested there should be a separate budget to keep Stonehaven attractive.</p> <p>DL asked if Councillors could provide Landscape Services budget figures, Cllr T confirmed this was possible, the budget had reduced from last year, the service had been reorganised.</p> <p>IH said the Council should tell the community if they are not carrying out this service.</p> <p>DL wished to encourage people to keep the area in front of their own houses and business premisses clear of weeds.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p>	
	<p>SSEN Kintore - Tealing 400kV Connection and Hurlie (Fetteresso Forest) 400kV Substation</p> <p>DL confirmed that a consultation response from SDCC had been submitted. SSEN will provide an update about the revised route on 19 August 2024. SSEN has offered an on-line briefing to all Community Councillors, DL will circulate details. He thought it was unlikely SDCC could influence any decisions, but emphasised that concerns had been raised.</p> <p>DL invited Brian Wade, (BW), Save Our Mearns (SOM), to address the meeting.</p> <p>BW explained that SSEN has refused to publish an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This should be in the public domain before submitting a planning application. In Germany, there is a</p>	

	<p>different approach due to pressure from local people – cables are underground not overhead.</p> <p>JS suggested that businesses run the country, rather than the Scottish and UK Governments.</p> <p>BW said that underground or sub-sea cabling is preferred and cheaper in the long term, based on information published in a National Grid paper. He will send a copy to DL for information.</p> <p>CD asked if there might be a campaign to access the EIA information.</p> <p>BW suggested that SDCC, as a statutory body/consultee could request this information.</p> <p>MO thought there would need to be a large area for underground cabling, and felt there was a need to focus on the issue of generating energy here to be exported south. He was happy to approach the MP Andrew Bowie about this.</p> <p>BW said the project was passed without appropriate requirements of impact assessments.</p> <p>IH suggested SDCC should be supportive of SOM.</p> <p>DL said SDCC has held meetings, and will share information with and support SOM. If individual Community Councillors (CCs) want to take things forward, they need to be proactive.</p> <p>BW welcomed the opportunity to work with SDCC to raise awareness.</p> <p>JL suggested contacting Aberdeenshire Council Area Office about working with SOM. There needed to be a consensus of CCs to take this forward.</p> <p>DL highlighted there may be different CCs elected to SDCC in September, so was wary of making any commitments before the new SDCC is in place.</p> <p>CC confirmed she was willing to become involved.</p> <p>JS had previously attended four meetings but there was no battle plan. He acknowledged DL for facilitating discussions with all relevant parties.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council Updates</p> <p>DL said many of these items had been covered at the last Town Centre Improvement Group meeting.</p>	
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	<p>a) Storm Damage Updates (Harbour / Board Walk / Promenade Steps) Work is underway at the Harbour, and the Boardwalk improvements will go ahead as the budget allows. The Promenade Steps remain boarded up, no further update available.</p> <p>b) Redcloak Park The muddy areas have now dried out, RC recorded his thanks to Cllr B for taking this issue forward (re. contractors and their responsibilities). The exercise bars at Farrochie Park had been removed, Cllr B confirmed these will not be replaced due to health and safety issues.</p> <p>c) Library Opening Hours – SMcQ asked whether the opening hours had been reduced because of staff illness, or lack of use, and requested clarification. DL reminded the meeting of the suggestion the Library may be moved to Viewmount. SMcQ how the Council decides whether opening hours are extended? IH wondered who makes decisions at Live Life Aberdeenshire (LLA). Cllr B explained that decisions are made based on available data, this is not just the number of books loaned, some of the data may be older, he will ask again for updated data. He confirmed recent closures were due to staff illness. IH asked about the structure at LLA, and noted the CEO is Avril Nicol. JS said Council officials make decisions. JL noted that LLA had still not attended a SDCC meeting. SMcQ suggested the ‘new’ SDCC might take this forward.</p> <p>d) Fly Posting DL explained that where a license is in place, the Licensing Board can intervene as they look at the Ts and Cs of licenses. SMcQ asked how those businesses who allow their customers to drop litter can be tackled? DL suggested encouraging businesses to take responsibility for the areas surrounding their premises, as Aberdeenshire Council can only influence license-holders.</p>	<p>Cllr B</p>
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	<p>e) Leisure Centre Upgrade Costs Breakdown</p> <p>DL has submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request (to LLA or Aberdeenshire Council?)</p> <p>f) Public Toilets</p> <p>DL asked if there could be a sign at the Beach Toilets directing people to the Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Cllr B offered to raise this with Tim Stephens, Area Manager. She said the toilets had been closed at the weekend because the cleaner/keyholder was off sick so they could not be opened.</p> <p>DL queried why another Council employee had not opened them instead, and suggested there should be a back-up system.</p> <p>JS said no other town in Scotland had the problem Stonehaven had at the weekend. Visitors from two cruise ships and coaches had come to the town , but there were no public toilets available.</p> <p>JL agreed there needs to be a sign (at the Beach Toilets) as soon as possible as staff at Molly’s Café Bar are being harassed.</p> <p>g) Town Bus Service</p> <p>DL said the new Stagecoach Town Service (4a and 4c) will start on 19 August, Monday to Friday, but there is no service on a Saturday.</p> <p>Cllr T confirmed this, a Saturday service would be commercial and is not in the current contract.</p> <p>DL asked if more details of stops on the route could be added to timetables.</p> <p>h) Tourist Bus Parking and Traffic Management</p> <p>DL said there ought to be designated areas for coaches to drop off and pick up passengers, and to park, not at the Harbour! He is waiting to hear from the Council about this.</p> <p>JS asked for a meeting with the Area Manager, the Roads Department, Councillors and local businesses, Councillors need to accept it is a major problem.</p> <p>DL added that people are double-parking to go into shops, there is no monitoring of 45-minute parking restrictions, traffic management is an issue.</p> <p>SMcQ said this had been raised at the last Town Centre Improvement Group meeting, they are still waiting to hear from the Council about a proposed temporary solution. There was a traffic</p>	<p>Cllr B</p>
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	<p>management survey and review in 2022, but still no progress, this needs to be pushed forward.</p> <p>DL said that lines (road markings) need to be repainted at the Harbour.</p>	
9	Approval of Previous Minutes (3rd July 2024)	
	These were approved by JL and seconded by SMcQ.	
10	Police Report	
	Police Scotland had advised SDCC to get in touch if there are any issues, Cllr T had circulated the latest report earlier, it had come in late.	
11	Planning Report	
	<p>DL explained that SDCC had been supportive of both proposals for supermarkets. A communication from Morrison's was circulated before the meeting confirming they are no longer taking their proposal forward. He wished to make Councillors aware of concerns, a bridge for access needs to be in place. Potentially, another supermarket could go on the site as planning permission has been approved.</p> <p>JS suggested asking FM Developments for an update., SMcQ agreed, saying his fear is that Stonehaven doesn't get a supermarket at all!</p> <p>IH wanted more information, including from the Planning Department. MO reflected the need for access for large vehicles, the planned route will go through the estate, but this is not viable because of residential properties.</p> <p>David Strang said all operators are not keen on Ury Estate. DL summarised saying SDCC had backed both proposals, and did not want to end up with nothing.</p>	
12	SDCC Committees / Sub-Groups	
	<p>a) Local Development Plan / Local Place Plan – Next Meeting 14/08/2024. This was confirmed by MO</p> <p>b) Invercarron Resource Centre / Older People's Services IH reported the Over 50s Forum met on 12 August, and lots of good ideas were generated.</p> <p>c) Community Resilience Plan MO reported that an electrician is looking at requirements on 15 August and installing (generator tie in points) on 18 August, he has</p>	

	<p>had no response from the Scouts. DL thanked MO for all of his work on this.</p> <p>d) Achères & Stonehaven Twinning Partnership No further update.</p> <p>e) Swim the Bay - Next Meeting 17/09/2024</p>	
13	Outside Bodies / Committees	
	<p>a) Transport Action Kincardine-shire (TRAK) No date has been confirmed for the next meeting.</p> <p>b) Town Centre Improvement Group Next Meeting 01/10/2024, also see Agenda item 8h above.</p> <p>c) Kincardine and Mearns Community Council Forum Date of next Meeting TBC</p> <p>d) Kincardine and Mearns Community Planning Group No update.</p>	
14	Treasurer's Report	
	MO reported there had been no transactions this month.	
15	Aberdeenshire Council wide Community Council Elections	
	DL explained nominations will open on 19 August until 8 September. There will be an advertising campaign, he has nomination forms if required.	
16	Correspondence	
	None	
17	AOCB	
	<p>a) CC had noticed trees were being cut at Dunnottar Woods, and asked if there were any plans to clear the path (blocked by a fallen tree). JL was meeting with Dunnottar Park Woodlands Association on 14 August, so would ask them.</p> <p>b) AL reported on the success of the recent Poetry Festival. The result of work with local schools is on display at the Library, part of a larger exhibition celebrating the Scots language. The exhibition has been nominated for a Scots Language Award. It is planned to take the display to other venues across Aberdeenshire, SDCC will be invited to send a representative to a meeting about this on 6 September. DL agreed to attend.</p> <p>c) DL formally thanked all Community Councillors and Councillors for their commitment and contributions over the previous years, he also thanked the Kincardine and Mearns</p>	<p>JL</p> <p>DL</p>

	<p>Team, the Bellman, the Minutes Secretary and members of the public for their input. He looked forward to the new SDCC in September. AL formally thanked DL for his work as Chairman of SDCC.</p>	
18	Dates of Next Meetings	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaugural Meeting of New Community Council: Monday 23 September 2024 @ 7pm • Agenda Discussion Meeting: Tuesday 1 October 2024 @ 7pm – TBC by New Community Council • Business Meeting: Tuesday 8 October 2024 @ 7pm – TBC by New Community Council <p>DL reminded everyone that Aberdeenshire Council will call the next meeting in September, all CCs will be invited. At the meeting, the Constitution will be approved, and people will be appointed to sub-committees. Technically, there could be a meeting on 10 September of the existing SDCC, alternatively this can be delayed until 23 September when new CCs have been elected. This was agreed unanimously.</p>	