



MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING 25th November 2020

Present: Simon Welfare (Chairman), David Ellis (Secretary/Treasurer), Councillor Paul Gibb, Nigel Healey, Anne Heath, Andrew Wilson, Alexander Burnett MSP.

Apologies: Councillor Peter Argyle, Councillor Geva Blackett, Joyce Lovie, Emma Murphy, Christine Padgham.

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The approval of the minutes of the last meeting was moved by Nigel Healey, seconded by Anne Heath. Agreement of the minutes was unanimous..

2. Police Report

There had been no Police Report since the last meeting.

3. Councillor's Report

Councillor Gibb reported on his submission to the Infrastructure Services Committee about road crossings policy. He welcomed the support he had received from Cromar Community Council to strengthen his argument. Councillor Gibb asked that the survey criteria should be based not just on the number of children under the age of 12 crossing the road, but upon the number of all children wearing school uniform. He stated that by law the Head Teacher must be consulted by the planning officers responsible for surveys and that the Head Teacher must also keep a Safe Routes to School Policy to be available to all parents and others who enquire.

Councillor Gibb also reported that the Children's Crossing warning signs were not working at Logie Coldstone due to faulty batteries. These would be repaired as soon as an engineer could attend. This had been delayed by the Covid 19 precautions.

Marr Area Partnership funding was being run down over a 2 to 3 year period. The question was raised about what the relationship between Marr Area Partnership and Aberdeenshire Council would be when Council funding ceased. The importance of the Marr Area Partnership had been highlighted in the pandemic, as it had been at the grassroots that action and support had been most effective. Nigel Healey reported that the officers of Marr Area Partnership were looking for other sources of funding. Councillor Gibb reported that discussion in principle about withdrawing funding from local area partnerships had been made by Aberdeenshire Council in January as part of proposed budgetary cuts. The £20 million deficit had now risen to £45 million due to Covid 19. Alexander Burnett MSP was asked if there might be funding at Scottish Government level for local area partnerships, but he thought that the Scottish Government would see this as a local government (County Council) issue. Later in the discussion, Members wondered whether, if Aberdeenshire Council no longer had a financial stake in the Marr Area Partnership, it would listen to the issues raised by the

Partnership. Councillor Gibb was asked to convey the strong concerns of Cromar Community Council to the appropriate body in Aberdeenshire Council.

4. Cromar Report

Covid-19 volunteer groups

Dave Ellis reported that the current demand for the volunteer help service in Tarland was limited mostly to prescription deliveries and some shopping. The group was looking at options to help those who had used the service over the Christmas period.

Tarland Community Housing

Steps are being taken to establish a group that is independent of the Tarland Development Group.

Christmas Lights

Nigel Healey was in touch with Gordon Ross about erecting the Christmas tree for Tarland Square that the MacRobert Trust Estate had kindly offered to provide. No official switching-on ceremony would take place this year on account of Covid restrictions.

5. Treasurer's Report

Dave Ellis presented the Treasurer's Report. The balance of the account stood at £4,218.08 and consisted of both Community Council funds and funds provided for the ongoing Covid 19 relief activities.

6. Logie Coldstone Trust

In the absence of the Logie Coldstone members of the Community Council there was no report.

7. Tarland Welfare Trust

Nigel Healey reported that the MacRobert Memorial Hall was open for use by a maximum of 13 people at any one time and in the main hall only. There are currently 6 regular bookings, following Covid safe protocols. The heating system can now be controlled remotely.

8. Tarland Development Group

The minutes of the Tarland Development Group had been previously circulated.

9. Planning Applications

Members thought that none of the current applications required a comment to the Planning Service.

12 more holiday cabins were planned for Allalogie. This was seen as a positive tourist initiative. An application for planning permission in principle for a dwelling house and garage north of Walkmill Cottage, Tarland, was also discussed.

A decision had not yet been made on proposals for a shooting range near Logie Coldstone or for two flats close by the Aberdeen Arms Hotel in Tarland.

The Chairman raised his concerns about the slow operation of the Aberdeenshire Council Planning website and Councillor Gibb promised to raise this question with the Planning Service.

10. Any Other Business

Dave Ellis raised again the need for fast internet connections in the Howe of Cromar. The office of Alexander Burnett MSP had been very helpful in raising the downgrading of Logie Coldstone with OpenReach. Mr Burnett said that the Scottish Government was hoping to sign the contract for the R100 North Lot by the end of this year. Engineers are, however, cautious about the timetable for the local roll-out. Dave Ellis said that, at present, the R100 website for all the Howe of Cromar postcodes shows no plans for improvements. Members heard that detailed plans were believed to be pending the signing of the contract. The actual delivery date might be as late as 2026 but hopefully much sooner.

Nigel Healy asked for a progress report on the installation of an electric vehicle charging point for Tarland. Councillor Gibb agreed to follow this up.

Nigel Healey asked for a progress report on the extension to the graveyard at Tarland. Planning permission had been given, but it was unclear when work would begin. Councillor Gibb also agreed to follow this up

The Chairman thanked Alexander Burnett MSP for joining the meeting and for his helpful contributions. He wished all present a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

11. Date of the Next Online Meeting

The Chairman proposed that no meeting of Cromar Community Council be held in December. This was agreed. The date of the next meeting was set for Wednesday 13th January 2021 at 18.00.