



## CROMAR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF ONLINE MEETING 24th March 2021

**Present:** Simon Welfare (Chairman), David Ellis (Secretary/Treasurer), Councillor Paul Gibb, Nigel Healey, Andrew Wilson

**Apologies:** Joyce Lovie, Emma Murphy, Anne Heath, Cllr. Peter Argyle, Cllr. Geva Blackett

#### 1. Minutes of Last Meeting

Nigel Healey moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th February be approved, seconded by Andrew Wilson. Agreement was unanimous.

#### 2. Matters arising

David Ellis reported on the online meeting he attended of the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs and Connectivity Committee. Properties had been identified throughout Scotland eligible for state aid in progressing the upgrade of broadband provision. The Scottish Government expects that this review will be complete by 31st March 2021. This list would then be forwarded to BT to allow the "remodeling" of plans for upgrading the service as part of the R100 programme. The deadline for this process was 30th April 2021. There would follow a period of review before publication of individual properties with anticipated installation dates on the Scotland Superfast website. The completion of the whole program now extended to 2026 which is disappointing. It was hoped that Cromar might be part of the earlier builds but this would not be known until the R100 plan was finally published.

The Cromar Community Council bank account had been opened with NatWest Bank. The main benefit of the new account is the provision of a free accounting suite which will greatly help management of the accounts.

Nigel Healey reported that the defibrillator in Tarland Square, outside the MacRobert Hall, had been replaced and the whole costs met in a generous gesture by the MacRobert Trust. The Chairman would write to the Chief Executive of the Trust thanking the Trust for this gift to the community.

#### 3. Police Report

There were no matters requiring comment in the detailed report relating to the Cromar area.

#### 4. **Councillor's Report**

Councillor Gibb reported that Aberdeenshire Council had approved its budget on the 17th March 2021. This estimates a £20 million deficit. £10 million pounds had recently come in a grant from the Scottish Government for Covid challenges and support for economic recovery.

Councillor Gibb had written to support the continued grant made to the area partnerships within the shire. £100,000 over 2 years had been allocated to area partnerships on an application basis. A proactive application was advised from Marr Area Partnership. It was reported that Alan Wood had been appointed Director of Infrastructure Services.

The Community Council thanked Councillor Gibb for his regular reports and updates on the Covid situation and the easing of lockdown.

Simon Welfare and David Ellis, on behalf of Cromar Community Council, had attended the online meeting of Marr Area resilience Groups. The view was widely expressed at the meeting that the 'hub' had been a very useful link. There was a feeling that Aberdeenshire Council could benefit from having some kind of hub in the future, not confined to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

#### 5. **Cromar Report**

##### a. **Covid 19:restrictions, volunteer groups etc**

The volunteer groups in Logie Coldstone and Cromar continue to be busy mainly with the 4 days a week newspaper delivery and some prescription deliveries. Discussion had begun about the future of the Cromar Community Help operation. It was envisaged that the newspaper delivery would end around the 5th April.

##### b. **Recycling Areas**

These were being well maintained at present.

##### c. **Roads and Drains**

Concern was raised about the need for road markings indicating right of way at Tarland Surgery, There are still many potholes on the roads and members of the community are encouraged to report these directly to the Roads' Department of the Council.

##### d. **Hanging Baskets and Bedding Plants**

The Chairman had made initial contact with Kate Redpath, but to date no action plan was in place. Volunteers would be sought to water the plants, this year being provided by Aberdeenshire Council.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

David Ellis reported that expenses payments to volunteer drivers were being made electronically and automatically captured in the accounts package. The balance in funds was £2541.42. He hoped to send the accounts to Donald Gordon in the near future, so that Donald could review the accounts as independent examiner before the AGM in June.

## **7. Logie Coldstone and Ordie**

There was nothing to report.

## **8. Tarland Welfare Trust**

Nigel Healey reported that the Trust was awaiting clearer government guidance on the re-opening of the MacRobert Hall for activities. The MacRobert Trust had taken a lease on the flat at the MacRobert Hall for use by gardening students at Douneside House.

## **9. Tarland Development Group**

The minutes had been previously circulated and there were no matters that required comment from the Community Council.

## **10. Planning Applications**

The planning applications still open for comment were reviewed. No input was required from the Community Council.

## **11. Any Other Business**

Andrew Wilson asked about the major draining work taking place in the fields opposite Tarland Golf Course, and if there would be an impact on the wetlands area at the bird hide. The Chairman said he would make inquiries about this and about the progress of the Tarland Wetlands' Project.

The Secretary said that Community Council elections would take place in June, with nominations accepted online and on paper from 12th May to 2nd June. The ballot to elect community councillors would take place thereafter in time for the AGM in June.

## **12. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Cromar Community Council would be held online on Wednesday 28th April 2021 at 18.00.