



CROMAR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ONLINE MEETING

26th May 2021

Present: Simon Welfare (Chairman), Councillor Paul Gibb, Nigel Healey, Anne Heath, Joyce Lovie and Andrew Wilson

Apologies: Dave Ellis, Emma Murphy, Cllr. Peter Argyle, Cllr. Geva Blackett

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 2021 had been previously circulated. There had been no ordinary meeting in April. The approval of the Minutes was moved by Nigel Healey and seconded by Anne Heath.

2. Matters arising

The Chairman reported that Simon Power of The MacRobert Trust Estate had drawn attention to the fact that the MacRobert Hall flat had been leased for use by hotel staff at Douneside House. The Chairman had also received an email from Simon Power explaining the drainage work in a field near Kincaigie: 'The TDG wetland group have been involved in discussions about the replacement of the drain across the field at Kincaigie. The new drain is being installed in such a way that it will be possible to flood parts of the field during the year. The Trust farm tenant has been very helpful in agreeing this approach – all with the intention of supporting wetland birds.'

3. Police Report

The Police Report had been previously circulated. It was noted that there had been an arrest of an individual in relation to threats made against the local SNP candidate during the recent Scottish Parliamentary Election Campaign. There had been some anti-social behaviour incidents and drugs-related searches in Aboyne.

Housebreaking remains low in Upper Deeside, although there were several housebreakings in Aboyne in March and arrests followed. Residents of Cromar are encouraged to remain vigilant, ensuring their properties are secure at all times.

The large roads network across the Deeside area is being patrolled for drink and drug driving, speeding, and various other road-traffic offences.

Wildlife Crime remains low in the area. There was, however, an arrest in the Tarland area for hare coursing and there have been some incidents of birds of prey being found dead due to poisoning in the Deeside area.

The Chairman drew attention to recent vandalism to the fencing at Tarland Tennis Courts. This had been reported to the police. Members of the public are encouraged to report crimes and concerns about criminal activity in the area to Police Scotland and to notify the Community Council.

4. Councillor's Report

Councillor Paul Gibb had nothing new to report since the last meeting when he confirmed the approval of Aberdeenshire Council's Budget for 2021. Work on road maintenance is ongoing.

5. Cromar Report

a. Cromar Community Housing Project

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Sam Foster, Housing Development Officer for the Cromar Community Housing, who gave a detailed update on the progress of the Project. From previous surveys and present information there continues to be a pressing need for affordable housing in Tarland. This is required to enable young people to remain in the community and older people to downsize and live more centrally in the village. There had been added demand for houses in rural areas from people wanting to move out of cities following Covid 19 and the establishment of home-based work patterns.

Mr Foster reported on the following matters;

1. The Cromar Community Housing project is being spun off from the Tarland Development Group and it will become a stand-alone charity in order to raise funds. The Housing Project now has three Trustees: Annie McKee, Aileen Longino and Mike McMillan. The group also has members.
2. CCH has abandoned its earlier plan to build affordable houses on the Village Farm site, due to ground conditions and the projected high costs of building on this type of ground. The site at the Estate Yard is being explored with the MacRobert Trust, along with other village sites. It is now reckoned that Tarland needs around 25 homes, and that they may not all be built in the same place.

Three activities are planned in June 2021.

1. Community Engagement in a 'Virtual Village Hall' meeting on 1 June.
2. A one-to-one online drop-in forum on 9 June.
3. A Tarland walkabout on 16 June to identify possible development sites, which could include the upgrading of existing buildings for homes.

General discussion followed and Mr Foster confirmed that there was a list of members of the housing project actively seeking housing. The renting and purchase options and procedures were explained.

Members agreed to Mr Foster providing regular updates about the project and the Chairman thanked Mr Foster for his most helpful report and wished him well with his ongoing work.

b. Covid 19: volunteer groups & restrictions

Cromar Community Help has now suspended operations, but is ready to return to action if needed. The Community Council recognised the dedication and helpfulness of all the volunteers and coordinators and expressed a hearty vote of thanks to them. Thanks were also expressed to the local shops and their staff who were able to stay open for the community during the lockdown period. Members of the public were encouraged to continue to support these businesses and to support those reopening as the restrictions continue to ease.

c. Recycling Areas

There were no specific issues to report, but Councilor Gibb reminded the Community Council that a new household waste collection scheme could be starting soon.

d. Roads and Drains

There had been some flooding from the drains on Aberdeen Road and sandbags had been needed to protect at least one driveway.. A supply of sandbags would be requested for the village from Aberdeenshire Council.

e. Hanging Baskets and Bedding Plants

The Chairman reported that volunteers were in place to assist with the planting and watering of the baskets in Tarland, liaising with the Primary School for the planting project. Transport was needed to bring the plants from Banchory to Tarland.

f. The Queen's Jubilee

It had been suggested that the community takes part in the national tree planting initiative to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen. A meeting is being organised with interested parties in Tarland to discuss proposals for this. Logie Coldstone Trust will also be invited to take part in the tree planting scheme.

A further suggestion has been made to hold a street party in Tarland Square in 2022, similar to that held to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. This idea was warmly supported by the Community Council.

6. Treasurer's Report

In the absence of the Secretary/Treasurer, there was no report to this meeting.

7. Logie Coldstone and Ordie

Joyce Lovie said that the Trust is now looking at the requirements for reopening the Village Hall, which has remained closed throughout the lockdowns. No summer events had as yet been planned for the village, there still being caution in the community about gatherings.

8. Tarland Welfare Trust

Nigel Healey reported that bookings were now being taken for the MacRobert

Memorial Hall, mostly at present for exercise classes, but the outlook for future bookings is positive. There was a mixture of community and commercial lets. The Trustees have, however, put in place one standard system of charging, as all commercial lettings were deemed to be community-based.

9. Tarland Development Group

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

10. Planning Applications

One planning application was discussed and the Chairman asked Members to contact him with any thoughts on the matter after they had read and considered it further.

11. Any Other Business

Nigel Healey drew attention to a recent scam affecting Hermes customers. Members of the public are encouraged to remain watchful of the many current scams, among them Post Office delivery charge scams.

The Chairman congratulated the young members of the Everything Electronic Club of the Cromar Future Group on winning a third of the awards at the national Youth Climate Film Awards and the Community Council warmly thanked Cromar Future Group and its leaders Mr & Mrs Ellis for their much-valued contribution to the life of our community.

Andrew Wilson moved that Cromar Community Council note within its minutes it's warm congratulations to its Chairman on the publication of his book Fortune's Many Houses with its unique historical significance for Cromar. This was unanimously approved.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Cromar Community Council will be held online on Wednesday, 23rd June, following the Annual General Meeting which will start at 6 pm.