



CROMAR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ONLINE MEETING 25th August 2021

Present: Simon Welfare (Chairman), Dave Ellis (Secretary/Treasurer), Joyce Lovie, Councillor Paul Gibb and 1 member of the public (Lesley Ellis).

Apologies: Andrew Wilson, Anne Heath, Cllr. Peter Argyle, Cllr. Geva Blackett

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2021 were agreed, proposed by Joyce Lovie and seconded by Dave Ellis.

2. Matters arising

Guidance had been received from the Area Office concerning online and in-person Community Council meetings. Online meetings continue to be the recommended format.

The Chairman said that he had heard from Lizzy Shepherd of the TDG that an application to the Scottish government for funding for a community worker who might assist with a Community Action Plan had not yet been determined.

3. Police Report

The Police Report from June had been previously circulated.

In earlier meetings, the Community Council had encouraged all residents to use the 101 service to report instances of anti-social behaviour. Cllr. Gibb provided an update on the performance of the operation of the 101 service, since there had been reports of long wait-times before calls were answered. The new process for information taking was now taking some seven minutes compared with three minutes previously. It was hoped that the response time would be reduced and developments are awaited.

4. Councillor's Report

Cllr. Gibb reported that engineers had visited the flashing signs near the school in Logie Coldstone. Confirmation was needed to confirm that these were now working correctly. Aberdeenshire Council would also check, but Cllr. Gibb hoped for feedback from local residents in the meantime.

A traffic survey was currently taking place in Aboyne. It was expected that the equipment would be used to survey Logie Coldstone at a later date. The survey would be used to inform the need for a pedestrian crossing on the road running past the Hall.

It was noted that an email had been received from Cllr. Blackett explaining her decision to become an independent Councillor, having resigned from the SNP. Cllr. Blackett said that, in her view, government policy ‘is being made with little or no understanding of the challenges that remote rural communities face’.

5. **Aboyne Hospital**

Cllr. Gibb provided a summary of the discussions concerning the reopening of Aboyne Hospital. Both Cllr. Gibb and Cllr. Blackett had been very active in seeking clarification of the plans for the hospital’s future. There was concern that the hospital might be permanently closed or that the services offered might be significantly reduced. Discussions had taken place with MPs, MSPs and other Councillors. A face-to-face meeting was planned for 31st August at which he hoped that additional information would be provided.

It was noted that NHS Grampian was conducting a survey on a plan for the period 2022 to 2028. This survey was not specifically seeking input concerning Aboyne Hospital, but respondents would be able to comment on the role of local cottage hospitals. It was agreed that the Community Council would provide input to this survey.

6. **Cromar Report**

a. **Covid 19**

The significant increase in cases locally was noted.

b. **Roads and Drains**

There had been an overflow of sewage from a drain in Aberdeen Road, Tarland. The problem had been dealt with. It appeared that this might have been caused by a blockage of wet wipes. Residents were encouraged to dispose of these appropriately and not via the foul drain.

c. **The Queen’s Jubilee**

The Chairman reported that an application for trees to be planted in the new Jubilee Wood has been granted by the Woodland Trust. The saplings are due to arrive in November and further details will be announced soon. Thanks were given to the Woodland Trust and to the MacRobert Trust who have generously offered to provide a site for the wood.

It was planned to set up a Community Council subcommittee “working party” to develop plans to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee in Tarland in June 2022. Joyce Lovie was asked to enquire if Logie Coldstone might also wish for help from the Community Council in holding an event.

7. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that online banking from NatWest was now set up. The TSB balance stood at a total of £2,221.19: This included some remaining Covid funds and monies collected for improving the Christmas lights.

Given the rapidly rising numbers of Covid cases, it was decided that it would be prudent to keep Covid funds in hand.

8. Logie Coldstone and Ordie

Joyce Lovie reported that badminton was the only activity using the Hall at the moment.

9. Tarland Welfare Trust

No report was available.

10. Tarland Development Group

The Chairman had received clarification that Tarland Community Housing was now a standalone organisation and no longer a TDG project.

11. Planning Applications

A recent planning application was discussed, but Members decided to offer no comment.

12. Any Other Business

Dave Ellis described his recent experience of trying to donate items for reuse at the Crow's Nest recycling site at Banchory. The containers provided by the Magpie charity were now locked and there were no alternative ways on site for donating items for reuse. Cllr. Gibb offered to follow this up with Aberdeenshire Council and see if the Magpie service could be resumed.

Since the last meeting, more information had become available about the R100 plans and the timescale for installing faster broadband throughout rural areas. Dave Ellis said that it appeared that improvements in broadband provision in Logie Coldstone were still some years away. This was especially disappointing given that there was an earlier plan (part of Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband) to improve connectivity in 2018. He offered to provide an update to the Logie Coldstone Trust on the R100 information available.

A "drop in" meeting was planned for Monday 30th August to discuss possible uses for the Tarland Pavillion.

Lesley Ellis gave an update on the plans for the Cromar Future Group. The Everything Electronics youth club had continued to operate online throughout the pandemic. Face to face meetings were planned to restart at the Tornaveen Hall on Monday evening 20th September, following a launch event that was planned for Monday 6th September.

The way the Cromar Future Group operates was also changing after discussions with local head teachers. After-school science clubs had faced a number of difficulties and had been unable to reach all pupils. So the Group now aims to support primary school teachers by training them to run structured science sessions using individual hands-on kits for all pupils. The CFG will deliver, collect and maintain these and teachers can request them when they want them. This will allow the CFG to give better support to a wider number of schools and ensure that all experiments supplied by them have sufficient packs for every child in the class to have a go.

Given the recent resignations, Members agreed that new volunteers should be sought for the Community Council. They could be co-opted on to the Community Council pending the elections in 2022.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Cromar Community Council will be held online on Wednesday, 29th September at 18.00.