



CROMAR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING on 10th January 2024

Present: Simon Welfare (Chairman), Dave Ellis, John Rogie, Sandra van Heusden, Councillor Sarah Brown, Hilary English (Marr Community Planning Officer) and 1 member of the public (Linda Moffat).

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Joyce Lovie, Janet and Stuart Urquhart, Andrew Wilson, Councillor Geva Blackett and Councillor Anouk Kloppert.

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 29th November, were approved. Acceptance was proposed by Sandra van Heusden and seconded by John Rogie.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Police Report

The latest Police Report appears to show an increase in crime in Tarland. Members hope to discuss this with Police Sergeant Allan Masson at a later meeting. The Community Council asks residents to be aware of the increase in attempted fraud by telephone and online means.

4. Councillors' Reports

Following the Christmas break, Cllr. Sarah Brown said she was following up on a number of matters. These include questions from the Floods Group; bike racks in Tarland Square; the resurfacing of Tarland Square and safety improvements regarding Coull Bridge.

Cllr. Brown thought that stakeholders' approval was still awaited before the repairs to the bank on Burnside Road could be undertaken. Members pointed out that following the last storm, an emergency repair was needed because traffic was at risk of going into the burn. The Chairman asked Members to report it again and Cllr. Brown said she would also take up the matter once more.

5. Cromar Report Bridges, Roads and Flooding

Members heard that a report and photographic evidence of recent flooding in Tarland had been submitted to Aberdeenshire Council. The Viewfield wetland, Melgum Road, Mill Road and Burnside Road were again impacted. Residents had coned off part of a nearby road to prevent any traffic from passing by and making waves that might have overwhelmed the defences that they had erected to protect their properties

The Flood Group has requested a meeting with the MacRobert Trust estate to discuss the maintenance of the Viewfield Wetland. The Chairman said that the estate had claimed that the culvert that runs under Melgum Road is too narrow to cope with the volume of water coming from it. Clarity was also needed about the roles of the Tarland Development Group and the MacRobert Trust estate in the maintenance of the Viewfield wetland.

Flooding on the A97 at Boultonstone had been reported. Cllr. Brown said she had already passed on this information to Aberdeenshire Council's roads department.

John Rogie raised concerns regarding the growth of trees beside the main bridge into Tarland. He asked Cllr. Brown to ascertain how often bridges are inspected and she said that she would find out.

Work on the repair / replacement of the foot bridge across Burnside Road has not yet been started. The Chairman said he would contact the MacRobert Trust estate about this.

Resilience Plan

The resilience plan Z-cards have been delivered to over 65% of residents in Cromar. The reception has been favourable and social media will be used to elicit feedback once the distribution is complete. The total cost of producing and distributing them means that there is currently a £500 shortfall in the funds available.

Community Action Plan vs Place Plan

Hilary English explained her role at Aberdeenshire Council and described the areas where she can lend support. The Chairman and Sandra van Heusden will arrange a future meeting with Hilary to discuss the right approach for Cromar regarding a Community Action Plan and/or a Local Place Plan.

Social Media

Sandra van Heusden said that she had been unable to offer support to the community via the Community Council facebook page during the most recent storm because both her mobile signal and electricity were down. Linda Moffat volunteered to assist with communication during emergencies, since neither power nor connectivity had been lost in her area.

Christmas Lights & Hanging Baskets

Members reported very positive feedback regarding the Christmas lights and an offer to raise funds for more lights next year had been received. Thanks were given to Dave Ellis for organising the new lights and to Gordon Ross and his hard-working team for installing and dismantling them.

6. Treasurer's Report

The account balance will stand at £921.15, once all the bills are paid. The latest spend has

included the Z-Cards, envelopes and associated distribution costs, thank-you gifts for the team of electricians and floral gifts for the team watering the hanging baskets.

7. Logie Coldstone Trust

The Ceilidh in the Hall at Hogmanay was a great success and the Trust is hoping to repeat this type of event in February. The Trust has secured funding for 15 days of path consultancy work to look into the feasibility of developing paths linking Logie Coldstone to Tarland and Dinnet.

8. Tarland Development Group

There were no updates or minutes from the TDG. Linda Moffat asked for clarification regarding the role and governance of the Tarland Development Group. She was advised to write to the Tarland Development Group directly.

9. Planning Applications

There were no new applications. The application for the proposed Farm Shop near Logie Coldstone is scheduled for review at the end of this month, although this is not yet confirmed.

Linda Moffat raised the difficulty in finding information relating to Planning for Forestry. She would discuss this further with the Chairman, and he and Cllr. Brown hopes to report back on this at the next Community Council meeting.

10. Any Other Business

Aberdeenshire Council is devolving responsibility for insurance to Community Councils. It is unclear why the block policy organised by Aberdeenshire Council cannot continue. Members feared that it might have undesirable consequences. For example, insurance policies need to be in place by 1 April, but the money to pay the premiums will not arrive until July or August. In addition, Community Councils will lose bulk purchasing power, which may result in increased costs. Neither Cllr. Brown nor Hilary English were aware of this situation and they promised to raise the issue with the Leader of Aberdeenshire Council and the Marr Area Manager respectively.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be online at 19.00 on Wednesday 10th January. Face-to-face meetings will resume from March.