

Minutes of July's special Community Council Meeting

Monday 13th July, 7:30pm.3

via Zoom

Present: David Conroy (Chair), David Milner (Vice Chair), Lynn McNabb (Treasurer), Viv McKie (Secretary), Harry MacNabb, John Wills, Andrew Marshall, Mary Lennox, Maggie Dornan

Apologies: Chris Luby

Welcome and Apologies

David Conroy opened the meeting, and Viv McKie reminded attendees that this evening's proceedings would be recorded for minuting purposes and then deleted.

The officers have been meeting via online conferencing since March, but this is the first time we have been able to meet as a wider council. We are able to do this because we have spent the money (roughly £14 per month) to upgrade our Zoom package.

Social Media Usage and Conduct

We have received a complaint from Aberdeenshire council regarding comments made on social media by one of our councillors. The member in question is not present tonight and will be contacted directly. On this occasion, Aberdeenshire council have decided not to pursue the matter further but as this is a second complaint it could potentially have been very serious and any further offences will result in more severe sanctions. We are all reminded again that when commenting on social media we are seen as representatives of the Community Council as a whole and must not bring this body into disrepute or risk losing the confidence and respect of the community we are bound to serve and represent. These guidelines were minuted earlier this year.

Councillors' reports

Reports from Cllr Durno and Cllr Bruce were circulated regarding the Spaces for People changes to the High Street. These will be attached after these minutes.

There has been a rumour that due to opposition from the community, Banchory will be exempt from the pavement widening, but there has been nothing official regarding this. Viv will contact the councillors to ask if there is any truth in this.

June minutes and matters arising

No matters arose from the June minutes.

Update and Future of the BCRT

As Scotland moves into Phase three of the Coronavirus recovery plan, the main reason for tonight's meeting was to discuss the future of the Banchory Community Resilience Team.

David Milner provided an update on our current activities. As restrictions have eased significantly since March we are really only providing deliveries and support for those with a shielding letter. The guidance presently is that those people continue to shield until the end of July. We have contacted the two village chemists and asked what their plans are delivering medication ongoing as that is the vast majority of our work. Davidson's have confirmed that is a service they provide and David Milner will visit Mitchies to discuss their plans. Contacts to the phone and email are rapidly decreasing and we look to wrap up the team at the end of July. Viv McKie will take over the mobile phone this week. Over the last few months we have handled approximately 280 deliveries of medication, food and supplies so the team has been well worth it. We will discuss with our volunteer groups exactly how to bring the service to a close, as we do not want to leave anyone in the community stuck. It was unanimously agreed to hand over the decision of when and how to end the BCRT to the BCRT itself.

The duty phone and number that has been used exclusively for BCRT contacts will be retained by the secretary and used as a point of contact for the Community Council in general going forward. This will cost approximately £10 per month.

Planning

i)LDP

During lock down there has been an extension period granted for the LDP consultation process. The current deadline is 31st July.

Harry MacNabb has drafted a response based on the points and concerns minuted in our June meeting. This has been circulated to the officers and will be forwarded to the rest of the council after a proof read. HE also points out that the LDP was developed for the pre covid community and a refocusing may now be required as we move into the "New Normal". Particularly in regard to green spaces which have been widely enjoyed by our community during the crisis and are more important than ever. These may need to be afforded specific protection and upkeep.

Mention is also made of the need for a new academy, and the hope that the improvements made to the learning plaza do not push us further down the list.

The former Glen O Dee hospital site remains a concern, being the only derelict site within Banchory and potentially contaminated with asbestos. After our June meeting an email and letter were sent to the Environmental Health department but we have had no reply to either. We are not against development on the site, but concerns continue about the suitability of current plans.

Areas of natural beauty and interest should be preserved and protected within Banchory. There is a potential project to reintroduce the Loch at Locton of Leys. Eco tourism may be a viable way in the future to encourage the local economy. (Note that Mary Lennox and Maggie Dornan would be willing to serve as our representatives on any committee formed regarding the Loch project).

Harry's statement in full will be added to these minutes.

As well as a Community Council statement, we are reminded that we can all comment ourselves as individuals on the plan. The absence of physical meetings during lock down has made it more difficult to engage with the wider community and seek opinions on the LDP.

Correspondence

i) Marr Area Office

We have been contacted by the Marr Area Office seeking our input into how to hold the upcoming elections. The AGM, postponed from June, must go ahead in October to approve accounts but they are seeking our input on whether to hold elections then or delay them until June next year. We have five members up for re-election and all have agreed they would be willing in principle to remain on until June 2021 in absence of elections this year. There is a broad preference within the Community council for some sort of election sooner rather than later, although a concern about how to have meaningful engagement with the community under the current restrictions. Online systems are available, but these may not be easily accessible to all. A ten percent community engagement is seen by the council as meaningful, during the last few months our Facebook page alone has regularly vastly exceeded this. Post Covid and the New Normal, Banchory faces some potentially difficult times and a strong, engaged community council is vital. We have fed this back to the area office, and they are currently collating feedback from all community councils.

We are following all guidance we are receiving from the Area office concerning operating during this period.

At the moment we do not have a venue for after the summer. The Academy are not accepting bookings, although our application is in, and Christopher Milligan has been investigating the Town Hall and meeting the same result. The British Legion and the Guide Hut were both floated as potential meeting places, Andrew Marshall will investigate the Legion and Maggie Dornan will investigate the Guide Hut. These alternative meeting venues would have a cost associated. We have in the past had trouble being quorate, and we may have difficulty attracting new members in the current, online only world. Also the current situation means many people may be more involved in the community than ever so perhaps good potential recruits. However if we leave this until next June they may no longer be interested.

It is also worrying that we have had so few attendees and apologies for tonight's zoom meeting. IT is understandable that things slip "out of sight out of mind" and it has been a very strange year. Moving forward we may have to be more proactive in chasing up attendance and reminding people to RSVP. Other meeting software has been mentioned, and tested by the officers, and Zoom was the one that came out best.

ii) Recreational Area Development

We were contacted by Paul Wilson of the Banchory Tennis Club initially in regards to Wind farm money. However on closer examination it may be instead a larger project to reinvigorate the entire recreational area there- Tennis, bowls, multi use surface and putting green. It was agreed this would be an excellent proposition for the community at large just now, and we are scheduling a meeting between Paul and the Officers next week via Zoom. Also worth noting that the Skate park should potentially be operation around Q2 or 3 next year and the two could work together to make Banchory a really attractive destination for families.

Treasurers Report

Wind farm applications have been sent to the area office for including on the website (after the links became obsolete during a website reboot) but don't seem to be live yet. Also of note, Nick our Marr Area Representative has resigned and will be moving to Aberdeenshire council. There is also consideration being given at the moment to bringing these area offices back under the council umbrella. This would likely not happen until 2022/23. These changes would be

something to bear in mind if we decided to move forward with any community investment in windfarms in the future.

As of June 29th the account totals are as below:

Main account 5775.76

Y2K main account 3010.38

Y2K checking account 231.51

The green shelters have been being used more lately, with barbecues being held again but all use seems to be very sensible family groups at the moment. Further repair would wipe out the checking account but we could transfer money from the main account.

There is one outstanding cheque to the Hill of Banchory School for £625

As minuted last month, the plan is currently to offer each school (Hill of Banchory and Banchory) a second cheque for £625 later in the year to allow them to continue their work supporting vulnerable families in the community. This is not to be spent on computing equipment. The funds for both cheques issued to each school come from the council coronavirus recovery fund and the donation from Scott Birse HIIT. These donations will help support these families through the summer.

Nothing else is outstanding although we will be due an invoice for £200 from Norma Makin for our Calendar advert.

AS of 3rd December 2019 we had 20,600 in the Wind farm fund. We used 16,200 leaving 4400. This new total seems low so we suspect we have missed a quarter payment or two somewhere during the previous year due to furloughed staff. Another payment into the fund is due end of September. Lynn will seek clarification. WE have no applications currently in.

Discussions regarding a thank you tea for the volunteers who worked alongside the BCRT for the last few months are ongoing. David Milner will contact the volunteer coordinators and gauge interest.

BCC representatives

Police reports have been circulated in advance of this meeting. Since then there has been a serious assault at the golf course that is currently being investigated. There has also been a possible increase in opportunistic theft of bicycles, electric bicycles etc. from unsecured property.

There has been no activity from the BDI

The KGV are planning another round of funding to be released towards the end of the summer.

The Town Team have not met recently.

The Patient Participatory group continue to discuss the possibility of a Banchory Voucher Scheme. While funds are available to aid the start up of this, all schemes seem to require a monthly fee to run which at approximately £500 per month is prohibitive.

A new 205 town bus service has begun in the village. Public transport use has been slow to pick up again, but people are conforming to the new mask guidelines.

The next meeting will be held on the 10th August with the format and venue confirmed closer to the time.