

Draft Minutes of the February meeting of Banchory Community Council.

Present: Harry McNabb, Lynn McNabb (Treasurer), Christopher Milligan, Chris Luby, Mary Lennox, Alistair Murison, Tony Tulett, Andrew Marshall, Maggie Dornan, John Wills, Linda MacPhee, David Conroy (Chair), Vivika Kerridge (Secretary)

Apologies: Cllr Eileen Durno, Cllr Rosemary Bruce, Cllr Ann Ross, David Milner (Vice Chair), Anya Law (Co-Opted)

COUNCILLORS' REPORT

In the absence of our Councillors, Cllr Bruce sent a brief statement updating us on the ongoing vandalism around HoB. She reminded us of the importance of reporting each incident to the 101 police number so that a pattern of evidence may be established.

The IT fault in trying to report pot holes at the town end of Corsee Road has been fixed, along with the pot holes themselves.

Tony Tulett has raised some concerns regarding the safety of the Aberdeen Incinerator project. Harry will look into the online report on this and these concerns will be brought to the councillors.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

January's minutes were proposed by Mary Lennox, seconded by Harry MacNabb and approved without amendments.

David Conroy then addressed the council in his capacity as chair to discuss appropriate use of social media.

In the wake of the recent official opening of the Sports Village there have been some false comments made on Facebook by a community council member clearly identifying themselves as such. These half truths have painted the Community council, the Chair and the Secretary in a negative light, and have since been removed by the admin of the group where they were posted. Behaviour of Community Council members must at all times adhere to the law, the constitution, the scheme of establishment and the community council code of conduct.

The appropriate place to air grievances is at the public meetings of the community council and NOT on social media.

The public has a high expectation of its representatives, which the community council are. Our behaviour as individuals must be above and beyond reproach at all times.

Our duty is to the whole community and to its best interests at all times. We must be selfless and not hold the interests of one group above the community as a whole. We must retain our integrity, and place ourselves under no obligation to other groups or individuals. We have Accountability and Stewardship for and of our own actions at all times.

We will consider all issues individually and on their own merits.

Our meetings are an open forum, all processes and decisions are open and honest at all times. Issues will be resolved openly and honestly (as with this discussion). Falsehoods and half truths will not be allowed to stand. Our actions must at all times serve to show leadership in strengthening and growing public trust in Banchory Community Council and our councillors. Insulting BCC on social media will not achieve this, and is first and foremost an insult to yourself and your own competence.

Mary Lennox added from her own experience that there is a further process that can be undertaken to address specific complaints against community councillors. This is a three stage process culminating in a panel of three community council chairs. The scheme of establishment and the constitution will cover most eventualities and occurrences.

TALK BY DISTRICT LIBRARIAN

We were joined by Carol Doig, the District Librarian, to give us an overview of the upcoming renovations planned for Banchory Library.

Carol has been the Network Librarian since August and covers the academy and the town branch. A public consultation on library services is currently running and has received over 400 responses. Although these are all very helpful, they are primarily from active library users and it would be helpful to get the perspective of non library users to see what could entice them. They are seeking to discover what the community needs from its library in terms of opening hours, activities, and how might people want to use the library space.

A discussion on the plans for the refurbishment followed. There were strong views on both sides with concerns about reduced space for physical books, losing the word library from the name and diluting the primary purpose of a library. On the other hand, increasing accessibility with a new lift, offering more opportunity for adult learning and other local interest groups and an improved community space with the library and museum coming together as one were all seen largely as positive. Plans to include a fire tender as a permanent exhibit to link to past and future of the building proved to be polarising.

Resources will be dedicated to branding the new space and to being smarter with resources, making sure the stock of books on-site are what is currently being read and making good use of the intra library loan system.

Steps would be taken to ensure a good local relationship to avoid duplicating services already available, for example in Number One cafe.

It was deemed important to note both that the primary purpose of a library is to store and disseminate information and that children are important to provide for as they are the service users of the future.

A public event to seek feedback will be held in the library tomorrow, February 11th, from 2pm until 6pm with another planned for the future.

PLANNING

In the last month, Harry MacNabb has submitted a response to the proposed redevelopment on the Glen O' Dee site, and an objection to the plans for a three story building of flats near Morrisons. Both of these were discussed at January's meeting.

Most planning applications this month have been minor household submissions. There has been an increase in tree reports, which is probably seasonal and weather related. We tend to leave these to the wisdom of the council arboreal experts. If a tree is found down and blocking a path, the first port of call would be to the Roads Department, as many of the core paths around Banchory have

been council adopted. They may also fall under the remit of the environment team or the forestry commission depending on location.

There was a call to draw attention to and express gratitude for the excellent work done by Banchory Paths Association. The community council regularly post updates and thanks on our Facebook page.

CORRESPONDENCE

This month we have received a request from an individual looking to organise litter picks throughout Banchory, this has been circulated among the community council and any members with an interest should contact him directly. We also recommended he contact Bonnie Banchory.

Russ Crichton got in touch with an update on the Skate Park project, and a request to investigate funding for security floodlights. He has been invited to address our March meeting, and has accepted.

There has also been a request for venue nominations for September's ever popular Open Doors event.

YOUTH CONCERNS

In the absence of our youth representatives, this will be discussed next month

TREASURER'S REPORT

The account totals are currently sitting at :

Main account £1112.46

Y2K treasurers Account £231.51

Y2K Business Account £3008.17

£200 was transferred to the main account from the Y2K Treasurer's Account to cover the bill for the work done to the Y2K shelters.

We are still waiting for our annual council grant, which is due imminently. Our Data Protection Registration has been set up as a direct debit, £35 will be paid to this on the 18th February. Our insurance is due in April, but this is dealt with directly by the council.

Lynn MacNabb has spoken to Lucy Roberts, our Fred Olsen contact for the Mid Hill Wind Farm money, and she has been advised that the Trampoline Club grant is making its way through the system and should be in the bank account in the next few days. She also discussed the possibility of receiving quarterly reports on the total wind fund money available, but Fred Olsen would prefer to keep it to as and when updates.

Russ Crichton from the Skate park project has requested the forms for Wind farm funding, he will discuss this with us further in March.

The RDA will be resubmitting their form for the grant total that was agreed. It is important to note that as per the conditions of this fund, each group may only make one application per calendar year.

Finally, as Lynn may be away for the month of March, a small number of signed cheques will be left with another signatory for safe keeping. In the event they are needed, a second signature will then be required.

YOUTH 2000

The paint chip taken was found to be too small for B&Q to colour match. Linda MacPhee has offered to take on obtaining the green paint for the shelters. The colour is Crown Balmoral Green.

BANCHORY COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Significant progress has been made on the BCAP, and it is important to bear in mind that the Local Area place states that projects must be featured in the Community Action Plan to receive funding. This is relevant to our ongoing need for an updated Academy and Health Centre. Improvements have been made to the town centre and the recreational projects such as the bike trails and skate park are moving forward well.

It is now moving towards time to consider a new Community Action Plan. Lessons have been learned from our first plan which required a huge amount of work to reach the required community engagement. Other communities have had to reach a lower target for numbers of responses from residents.

Something that may be helpful to us is the new direction the Town Team are planning to take. As the original focus, the 'tesco money', has all been spent, the group are looking to potentially develop into a Banchory Forum designed to foster communication and information sharing. The plan could be to meet three times a year, with one of these meetings being an open event. The community council could possibly piggyback onto this open meeting to seek responses to an update BCAP. This would be far more efficient and less time consuming.

The community council will plan to begin the process within the next year.

KEITH WHITE YOUNG CITIZEN AWARD

It was agreed to continue to solicit applicants, while also looking ourselves for likely candidates and considering with the White family's input the possibility of making a charitable donation in the absence of any suitable recipient.

We also considered asking our councillors to serve as judges, while also redacting names from the applicants to create a blind judging environment.

Finally we decided that any work undertaken for school projects or similar would not be suitable as to be true volunteer work the candidate should do it for the good of others with no expectation of payment or other rewards.

TOWN HALL

Christopher Milligan has returned to the community council with plans to increase usage of the

Town Hall regardless of ownership.

Goal One would be to transfer the location of the Community Council meetings to the Town Hall. Janelle Clark has been contacted for further information and we are awaiting her reply. We could also talk to the Janitor Mike Stevens who has an office on site. While we would need to check for clashes, there is also a certain amount of wriggle room in setting the dates for community council meetings provided we continue to meet roughly monthly and the dates are advertised in advance. Other community councils use their town halls for meetings, and it would be an excellent location for improving our accessibility to and visibility/profile within the community.

A secondary aim would be to look at using the Town Hall to host movie nights which have proved popular when run by other local community councils. We should plan to ask Russ Crichton for advice when he speaks to us in March as he has successfully organised and run these events to raise funds for the skate park.

CC REPRESENTATIVES

POLICE LIAISON

In the absence of David Milner, Tony Tulett served as Police Liaison this month. As well as seconding Cllr Rosemary Bruce's update about vandalism throughout HoB, he also highlighted staff changes currently happening in the Banchory branch with some members retiring or moving on and some returning.

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

There is no update on the safety forum this month.

TRANSPORT

Tony Tulett will attend a meeting at Aberdeen Bus Station tomorrow and report back to us.

Significant changes are proposed to bus services within the town and to and from Aberdeen and Braemar/Ballater. These would potentially begin in April, a public consultation is currently ongoing. Tony has responded on behalf of the community council, and the consultation is open until this Sunday February 16th. We will circulate the information necessary on Facebook.

Clarification is needed on the one way system in place on Raemoir Road during the upcoming road works.

BDI

There is no update from the BDI this month

WIND FARMS

There are no updates from Fetteresso or Glendye.

The third round of funding from the KGV wind farm fund is open for applicants from now until April. £5000 is available in total with a maximum of £1000 per project. Multiple applications per year can be made by an individual group, which is not the case with the Mid Hill Wind Farm. Lynn MacNabb intends to inform the RDA as they may find this useful in future.

The criteria for this fund has been revisited and the following guidelines have been set. Funding is available for projects operating within the AB31 postcode promoting social and recreational activities. Developments must be sustainable and inclusion and equal opportunities are vital.

TOWN TEAM

A meeting of the subgroup in charge of the future direction of the Town Team is upcoming, date to be confirmed.

PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED REPRESENTATIVES

Mary Lennox also had an update for us from the Patient Participatory Group. We are still sitting at the top of the list for a new and updated Health Centre, but no funds are available at present. They are hosting a Scottish Ambulance Service Educational event on the 4th March which we are promoting on Facebook.

Maggie Dornan asked why we don't have a regular slot for a representative from Banchory 2020 to speak. We agreed it was an oversight caused by the newness of this group, and that Cllr Ann Ross regularly provides us with updates. We have agreed to add it in as a recurring agenda item from now on.

The murals in Banchory that were paid for from the 'tesco money' are now in some cases in need of repair. The responsibility for this it has been discovered lies with the owners of the walls on which they are situated.

There are plans afoot for a 'top class restaurant' to open in the currently empty Chinese restaurant in Bellfield car park.

The Leader Funding that was recently advertised in the Deeside Piper has not seen a great uptake, with currently only two applicants. This funding is to pay for advice aimed at improving how your business is marketed, suggesting physical improvements that can be made and so on.

On a similar note, Visit Scotland are currently offering three grants of £100,000 each for digital marketing. Successful applicants for these should be tourist related, and understandably promote visiting Scotland.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With June's elections looming, Chris Luby will prepare a report for us for the March meeting.

We currently have spaces for 13 Full members, 2 Youth Representatives and 2 Co-opted members, all of whom bar co-opted members would have full voting rights. At present we are at our limit of full members but we would have the potential to amend our constitution to increase this numbers if we felt it was needed. We can also appoint Associate Members to sit for specific reasons or events, there is no limit as to how many but they do not have voting rights.

Community Council Members elected in 2019 or later serve a three year term. Members elected in 2018 or prior will serve a four year term. At the end of a term, the member may run for re-election. This June we have five members up for re-election, and one co-opted member, for five vacancies.

Community engagement is vital to the success of a community council, as is some degree of continuity. Chris Luby, Christopher Milligan and Vivika Kerridge have agreed to meet and discuss tactics to promote this.

AOB

Feughdee West Community Council will be splitting, with a new council being formed in the area north of the river. Inchmarlo Community Council will be our new neighbour, consisting of about 500 households and centred on Inchmarlo Hall. They are keen to actively liaise with us, particularly on issues affecting both communities.

Through her involvement with the Banchory Old Persons Forum, Maggie Dornan has heard that Ed Garrett of Aberdeenshire Council is looking into creating a 'Hill of Banchory profile' in conjunction with the Community Development and Learning Centre at Hill of Banchory Primary School. There is some suggestion that a shift is taking place towards Hill of Banchory becoming a new village centre away from the high street. Cllr Ann Ross in particular is extremely opposed to this idea. There is some concern that this is becoming an official council position of encouraging a split within the village. Further clarification should be sought.

Andrew Marshall was seeking updates on the proposed Craft Markets the BDI/BBA were planning from April. It was agreed that Cllr Ann Ross would be the best contact for more information.

In his role as Church Elder of Banchory Ternan East Church, John Wills sought permission to use the Coat of Arms on embroidered hanging to display seasonally in the church. After some discussion about whether granting this permission would violate the community council's non political and non religious nature it was agreed that this was a matter requiring a longer discussion and it has been added to the March agenda. Harry MacNabb will get in touch with Gordon Lochton to secure the loan of the Coat of Arms information posters in the meantime so this can be displayed and discussed with the upcoming 'Grand buddies' event where local school children are welcomed into the church and given the opportunity to quiz members.

The next meeting will take place on Monday March 9th, from 730pm until 930pm in Activity room