

Whitehills & District Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 19th February 2015
at 7.00pm in Whitehills Primary School.

Present: Ross Balharry (Chairman), Robert Mackie, Duncan Leece, Anne Balharry, Stuart Ironside, Bill Bain, Chas Findlay, Alan Stewart, Mick Moloney, Alistair Wiseman and Mattie Verster.

Apologies: Cllr Michael Roy.

Police Issues:

Policeman, Gerry Ferris from Banff, said that there has been rural theft of diesel reported a couple of times. He will follow up the parking issue of a caravan causing an obstruction opposite Keystone in Banff. The barrier at the Whitehills main road junction is outwith our area but is not safe and Policeman Ferris said he would mention this to the roads department. Shona McGregor will update Mick about the drug matter. There is a new inspector, Colin Taylor, who intends coming to one of the meetings himself.

The policeman kindly sat through / partook in the filling in of the 'Police Priorities response form from April 2015' and took the form with him. We are fortunate to have negligible anti social behaviour but people should still be vigilant and responsible. It is good to see Police presence in the village and the committee asked that this please be maintained.

Minutes of the last meeting, 15th January 2015:

Minutes were approved as correct, proposed by Bill and seconded by Anne.

Matters arising not dealt with elsewhere:

1. Sandie Cummings, our representative on the Aberdeenshire Council, said we are to let her know if she can do anything for us.

The pathway to the Low Shore is still blocked.

Back path: Bill needs to replace some rotten wood. The one bench needs replacing. Bill will remove the dilapidated bench. Aberdeenshire council keeps the pathway tidy but is not responsible to maintain it. The path looks drab and run down. Alan will ask Stuart Geddes for hardcore.

Treasurer's report:

Anne explained the financial activity since 15th January. Cleaning of the Redwell has increased considerably but has been the same for a few years and thus quite acceptable, especially as it is always done without ever needing to chase up anyone. Doggy bags available at the harbour are being used as Anne has not needed to order so many. £8833.80 was paid to Seivwrights for the steps by the harbour and Anne will pay Neil Wilson £3750 for the railings. A bench seat has also been placed at a cost of £372.00 making a total of £12,955.80 for a job well done, for which the Windfarm application can now be completed. The fixed rate deposit matures on 20 March 2015 and has earned £907.50 interest. The committee agree that the whole amount be rolled over at the best interest rate available -

There is a balance of £2721.79 in the main account. With bank interest of £4.75, there is a balance of £35021.36 in the Gift Account and £49893.03 in the Windfarm Account including interest of £7.96. Anne was thanked for her report.

Whitehills / Ladysbridge pathway:

Ross wrote to Margaret Jane on 2 February but has had no response to date. The path from the rear of Ladysbridge village has been extended to the Whitehills Portsoy road. Ross wrote it was not at our request and hopes it is not detrimental to the whole desire to have a pathway along the main road. The £70,000 planning gain mentioned has to be used for a new hall only. The

Director, Stephen Archer, responsible for the roads, is very difficult to contact. All very disappointing.

There is a new Chief Executive, a Mr. Savage, who started on Monday and “is all ears and ready to hear.” Decision: Ross and Duncan will write a letter to Margaret Jane and Stephen Archer copied to the new chief executive, requesting a face to face meeting.

Christmas lights - repairs and new purchases

Robbie had a quote for two new lights including VAT and carriage for £764.88. It costs too much to repair the old faulty lights. Robbie was thanked and asked to please go ahead with the purchase.

Anti-dog fouling issue / initiative.

The dog ranger, Alison, is still to visit the school. Dog fouling is less, but still going on. If people are fined they will know this is a serious matter.

New Steps and Railings on ‘The Braes’

There has been very good feedback. The steps and railing look very good. The soil is very clay but Duncan will find out what plants will be suitable to plant there and then they can be bought from Boyndie Centre. Mick Bill and Alistair volunteered to plant the plants. Thank you. A plaque reading “In memory of George Lovie, a great benefactor to the village” will be screwed to the bench. Please ask for four holes to be drilled by the manufacturer.

Questionnaire for Community Councils from Aberdeenshire Council

The questionnaire was completed for submission.

Planning Applications

Duncan said there was nothing for us. Under the old system, there was always something going on. Mick mentioned that there are many trees being chopped down at the Ladysbridge new development and wondered if that was all part of the planning.

Correspondence received, sent or discussed:

1. Whitehills public toilets have again been awarded a Gold Loo award for 2015. Congratulations and well done to all the volunteers. We are deeply grateful for all the effort and work of the volunteers. Two volunteers are leaving to live in Glasgow and Judith Armstrong is starting as a volunteer. Freddie looking for another volunteer to complete the team.
2. Margaret Patterson sent a letter thanking WDCC for the generous donation of £5000 toward the Public Hall’s new kitchen - a good job done.
3. Piers Blaxter sent a draft of the Ab. Council Development Plan for comment. It is very dry but a very important document nevertheless.
4. Ross received a review of the Community Council establishment and has commented on point 31.1.15 on behalf of the WDCC. It is not democratic for a paid council worker to decide if someone should be an office bearer or not. This is not the way to encourage more people on board.

AOCB:

1. The information board at the Falka has been blown over by the wind and needs stabilizing, Stuart will look into it.
2. The information board at Redwell has blown off and needs to be fixed again. It was a very expensive Perspex board damaged by a firework. Bill will look into it. It needs to be drilled and screwed.

Date of next meeting:

Next meeting will be held on Thursday 19th March 2015 at 7.00pm in Whitehills School.