

Whitehills & District Community Council
Minutes of the monthly meeting held Thursday 21 September 2017
at 6.30pm in St Brandon's, Whitehills

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

Also attending: Cllr John Cox, Cllr Mike Roy, D West, G Paterson, E Slater, C Marcus, T Pickard, A Lees, M Paterson, JP Lomas, I Findlay, L Findlay, A Yeates and Tony Wright.

Apologies for absence: Cllr Dr Glen Reynolds and Mick Moloney.

Police Report: Nothing to report

(The public is reminded to report anything suspicious to the Police by phoning 101 or Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111 or sending an email to the Community Policing Team (CPT) locally at BanffDistrictCPT@Scotland.ppn.police.uk.)

Minutes of the meeting 15 June 2017 were approved as correct, proposed by Stuart Ironside and seconded by Robert Mackie.

Matters Arising:

- Whitehills/Ladysbridge Pathway sign off: All is well even after all the rain.
- Ross contacted Eleanor Munro to ask if the roads department can please repair the back path. James Davidson replied that Aberdeenshire Council will only spray weed killer through the year. He suggested looking for funding from a website but this is only available after February. Duncan said Eleanor had told him that they appreciate what WDCC do and may help. Duncan will speak to Eleanor about this. A load of hard core would be most helpful.
- Duncan will speak to Alistair Ramsay to see if anything can be done to the overgrown Ladysbridge village path.
- An apology for taking so long to respond to Ross's email was received. At the current average of four plots per year, it is anticipated that the cemetery will only reach capacity in 20 years. The wall has been repaired.
- It is great to welcome a new volunteer for the cleaning of the Public Toilets making a team of 8. The toilet collection box had been broken into but has now been repaired and a new padlock fitted – thanks to Chas.
- Chas said that the Whitehills Public Telephone booth had been vandalised and Police are investigating.

Treasurer's Report:

Anne gave a detailed report of income and expenses since the last meeting in June. The main incomings included Aberdeenshire Council Admin grant of £486 and Toilet grant of £1200, with sums from the Loos and Christmas light collection boxes. Payments were made for doggy bags, data protection, vouchers for the Regatta, the cleaning of the Redwell and fuel for the lawnmower. Poppy wreathes have been ordered and paid for leaving the balance in the working account at £5468.89.

A bequest of £2000 was received from Margaret Lawrence deceased, who had asked for doggy bag dispensers to be put in two places. Anne ordered them along with doggy bags and one is already in place and the other still to be erected. This brings the Gift Account balance to £33221.06.

The Windfarm Community Fund balance stands at £75357.20 after receipt of the annual payment from Falck of £25562.06.

There being no questions, Anne was thanked for her excellent work. Ross will send a thank you card to George Lawrence.

Recent Flooding in Whitehills

A number of Whitehills residents attending the meeting were given the opportunity to express their experiences and concern about recent flooding in the village which caused damage and inconvenience/alarm. Various points were mentioned: There is a ditch (The Bund) behind

Reidhaven Street behind the church that needs clearing out. The ditch has a very small fall for drainage. When the ditch was cleaned, weeds blocked up the drainage pipes. Pipes are too small. Malcolm Jack was unable to attend but had said the water was running like a burn. Three of the five pipes at the low shore are blocked with stones from the beach. The Public Hall also had water gushing out of the stonework when there was a heavy downpour. Agnes said it was the third time her house has been flooded. There used to be a ditch that took water into Seafield Street but when the new house below the church was built, it is possible a pipe may have replaced it and has become blocked. Gordon said the drainage needs upgrading but he was told there is no money to do it.

Ross said that Lee Watson and John Stronach from Aberdeenshire Council were to investigate the problem yesterday but the residents said they should speak to the people affected and look at all the places to understand the problem.

Ross suggested the residents form a committee and Agnes, Terry, Tony, David and Bill were put forward. Ross and Duncan will arrange a meeting with this committee and the area manager from Council as soon as possible. Mattie gave contact details of the residents present to Bill Bain for follow up. Please invite the farmer too.

WDCC can help arrange a public meeting for all concerned parties if necessary. Margaret Patterson mentioned that the sea wall is very tatty.

There being no further questions, the residents were thanked for their attendance and were free to leave or stay.

Finalised Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils – clarification of

- a) Legal Liability of Chair and Vice Chair and relevant insurance cover and**
- b) safety of bequests in event of demise of C.C.**

Ross and Duncan met with Margaret-Jane and Anne Overton, a member of the legal team and talked through everything WDCC does. There is a problem with Community Councils owning assets and the insurance package not providing for key office bearers in councils. Ab Council needs to reword the new rules to accommodate CC owning assets. They meet again on 11 October. Ross and Duncan were pleased that Margaret-Jane and Anne understood the issues and now wait to see how it is brought forward.

Cllrs Cox and Roy said they meet next week and could still make amendments. As of next year Community Councils will be responsible for arranging their own Insurance cover and at that time we shall require to add liability cover for C.C.officers and pay any increased premium from our Admin Grant. Alistair Wiseman mentioned that Gail Watts had said if legal services were required for any reason they could do it cheaper than the major firms.

Planning Issues:

Duncan went through the planning consent applications. No objections.

Duncan had circulated an email to WDCC members in July about a proposed travellers caravan site at the Carpet sales place on the A98. There were 47 accepted objections. Cllr Cox said it was referred for flood designation. There is no known time scale. It needs to go through the process.

Various items around the village requiring attention

- Redwell car park needs weedkiller.
- The picnic tables at the Falka require painting.
- The information board past the Redwell needs repair.
- The last seat before Banff Links has fallen apart. Ross will speak to Alex Kemper about a replacement.

Correspondence:

- Alistair Millar from the Traffic department said the Yellow Lining for Seafield Street and Loch Street is going through the planning process but it looks like their proposed single yellow line on the North side of Loch Street will overrule our preference.
- Ross filled in the request for flowers/plants from Ab Council for next summer.

- The Public Toilets have again been awarded Gold Loo Award for 2017. A big thanks to the toilet cleaners.

WindFarm Community Fund Application

Two students from the Banff Academy want to go to Tanzania in June 2018 as volunteers with the Vine Trust for two weeks. Duncan said we cannot contribute from the Windfarm Account for individuals but can make a donation from the Gift Account. The air tickets cost £2700 each. A sensible amount of £250 each was agreed upon. The girls would be asked to make a wee presentation on their return.

AOCB:

- The RAF Memorial stone on the A98 has been shifted slightly as agreed.
- New road markings at Ladysbridge crossroads will require changing.
- A New Community Action Plan needs to be made. Duncan will organize a date for a public meeting to be held here in Whitehills in November/December.
- There is an Aberdeenshire Council public meeting on Wednesday 27th September in the new Banff Community Sports Centre at 6.30pm for 7.00pm for a presentation of the local area development plan. All welcome.
- On Saturday 11 November Bill is holding a coffee morning from 10.00am to 12noon in St Brandon's to fundraise for Erskine. The Remembrance Day Memorial service will be held from 10.45am at the cemetery and then those attending are invited to St Brandon's for tea/coffee after laying the wreaths. The usual services will be held on Sunday.
- There has been a slight hiccup with the project at Annie's woods due to staff changes. In the meantime, Bill will investigate the pricing of a shed/store to house equipment and the project can be followed up thereafter.
- If it is possible Bill can move the unused seat at the bottom of the back path to the far end at the Low shore.
- The railings at the sea wall need repainting. Bill will ask Mick for contact details to get community workers to help from the pay back scheme. The cement pillars need attention. Bill will follow-up with the Roads department.
- Chas said there are cones in the way in Grant Street. Ross will contact Alistair Miller.
- Stuart said bushes in a garden by the Lollypop crossing at Wilson Crescent and Loch Street are obstructing vision of motorists and children. Stuart can ask the lady if he can please trim them.
- It is good to see the residents working in the village and sharing responsibility for lawns and gardens etc.
- Alan Stewart said due to low numbers, there are no longer Cubs in the village. Alan has done Cubs for over 20 years but sadly it is no longer feasible. Thank you Alan.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 19 October at 6.30pm in St Brandon's Centre.

The WDCC website can be found at www.whitehillsandboyndie.co.uk