

## **Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council**

**Minutes of the Virtual Meeting at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

### **Present:**

William Sell (WS), Robert Frost (RF), Craig Melville (CM), Cameron Campbell (CC), Jane Ormerod (JO), Police Sergeant Ricky Burr (RB), Councillor Martin Greig (MG), Councillor John Cooke (JC), Councillor Ken McLeod (KM).

### **Apologies:**

Keith Watson, Margaret Meikle, Karen Reilly.

### **Police Report:**

Antisocial behaviour – RB reported that kids have been climbing on the roof of Woodend hospital. There is an NHS meeting tomorrow to arrange to secure the roof and prevent further damage and injury.

Two Garages were damaged. CCTV footage of the incidents was obtained. There was an incident of vandalism during which a window was smashed.

Acquisitive crime – Two incidents of shoplifting occurred at the Springfield Road filling station. One male was charged.

An elderly resident of Densat Court narrowly avoided a scam involving Amazon vouchers. They were prevented by staff from using the vouchers. A scam email requesting money was sent to a resident of Hazledene Road. They were told they had won a “prize of £1000” in a competition, but first they had to transfer £70 into a named bank account.

Road safety and road crime. A male driver was injured during a road traffic collision on Springfield Road. The driver required medical attention at the scene.

Traffic offences being committed by cyclists on electric power assisted bikes are a daily occurrence. Although they are being ridden antisocially, current legislation does not enable prosecution because there are too many loopholes around the type of bike, e.g., there is no requirement for them to be registered with the DVLA.

During recent Police checks on road traffic, one motorist was charged for driving without a licence. Another was charged for driving without insurance.

Community engagement – There was a very low crime rate during the reporting month, compared to other surrounding areas. There were only 80 calls. In comparison, there were 3600 in one month in the south of the city; less than a third of them were crime related.

Questions - CM previously reported that young kids were climbing onto the roof of Airyhall clinic.

RB explained that this is not an issue, currently. Police push any such incident back to the owner of the building.

CC- Incidents in Macauley Drive. He witnessed an altercation between residents.

RB explained that Police cannot speak about it in detail. The specific incident has a history amongst those involved. It doesn't come under a category of community report.

Countesswells Road and Springfield Road. Sounds of high-powered cars in the evening.

RB replied that he is currently working with the Road Traffic Unit. There has been an increase in traffic in this area.

### **Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> August.**

Proposed by CC

Seconded by RF

The motion to adopt the minutes was carried.

### **Treasurer's Report.**

CC reported that the bank balance is £1325.86.

The amount remaining after pending payments = £1163.88

Festive Season decorative streetlights – MG reported that he has been trying to get the increased costs for festive lights reduced.

He is pleased to say that the additional cost for Christmas lights this year will be less than previously advised. There is no longer an expectation of paying the full amount of electricity charges

The likely increase will be around £50. This increase represents a contribution towards electricity. He hoped that this will be acceptable to the Community Council. The £300 charge for the 3 features has been static for some years. The precise increase will be notified to the Community Council as soon as possible.

JC commented that further detail will be sought on the Christmas lights payment. The key difference this year is that the Council budget requires a £2000 saving on Festive Season lights.

CC advised the members to keep the £350 cost for lights in mind. We have also been spending funds on the purchase of the Church Christmas tree and the

contribution towards the Seniors' festive party.

Could we only choose one area to fund? If we continue to provide funding for the Church, in addition to the street festive lights, we will be £700 for both. We will receive next tranche of funding in March.

MG – The Church can apply for Festive Fund support. The amount varies, £2-300. It depends on the number of applications received by the Council. The Church may request funding for the Festival of Light rather than other Christmas funding. He will speak to them about this, and then update the CC.

### **Correspondence:**

ACC boundary change proposals – WS reported that he was in receipt of an email from the Community Council Liaison Officer headed, “Aberdeen City Council. Council’s review of Community Council Governance - opportunity to submit comments about the consultation documents.”

At its meeting on 23rd August the council approved the revised scheme of establishment and associated guidance documents and approved that those as well as some boundary proposals be issued for public consultation.

The consultation is open until 20th October giving eight weeks to submit any comments we have on the documents.

For those community councils who are affected by these proposals, it would be good to have feedback on them to ensure that the right choice is made for their communities. This e-mail was forwarded to all members.

### **Matters Arising from the Virtual Meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> August.**

Securing Funding for Core Paths Improvements in Partnership with the City Council – Completion of the residents’ survey report for the City Council -

Core paths survey.

CM reported that the statistical data from the survey forms has been collated and analysed. CM will send the completed document to WS.

Dog Fouling notices - Official council signs are faded and require replacement. No action has been taken by the City Council. MG will remind the relevant Council department.

Erection of Notice Boards at the Entrances of the Core Paths - Progress Report. MG replied with reference to the team headed by the Environmental Services Manager of Aberdeen City Council.

Contacting Friends Walker Dam - no progress has been made, so far. They are not on social media, but they have a website.

The Friends of Johnston Garden are more active. Both separate groups. Might they be willing to work together with us?

Issues on the site of the Hazlewood Development - The north SUDS pond has not yet been fully completed. The core path beside the SUDS pond and Countesswells Avenue still needs to be upgraded.

MG has contacted Dandara regarding these issues. He is awaiting a response.

J C explained that there is a proposal that the local authority will take over the suds ponds. This will happen but the timescale is unknown.

RF explained that Scottish Water will take over the suds ponds.

Resident's complaint about the poor surface condition of Groats Road.  
MG will follow up this matter with the Council.

### **Planning Officer's Report:**

This report was previously circulated to all members.

RF reported that approval had been granted by Aberdeen City Council to the James Hutton Research Institute to build an access road to connect it with Countesswells Road. The approval decision notice has been published on the Council website.

RF also provided a summary of all planning applications to date.

CM reported that he had attended the meeting of the Community Council Forum where the concept of a planning concordat was explained. An agreement between the Council and the Planning Department was outlined in a PDF document.

### **Matters for Discussion with Ward Councillors.**

WS - Complaint by a resident concerning the continued prevalence of drivers breaking the law by turning right from Hazledene Road on to Queens Road.  
MG will check the signage.

By email – Vice-Chair Margaret Meikle submitted a report relating to 4 main issues, as follows:

Can we have signage put up to alert/direct the public to the new Woodlands Care Home in Hazledene Road?

She had assisted an elderly person who wished to visit the care home but couldn't find it because of the lack of signage. Therefore, can we please ensure

that appropriate signage is installed in Springfield Rd. and along the pedestrian route from the bus terminus?

MG – Woodlands Hospital is the responsibility of a private organisation, but he will raise this question with them.

Garden waste permit renewal – When Margaret attempted to renew her garden waste permit in the Council office at Marischal College, the credit card payment machines were not working. Cheques are not accepted. One machine had already been down for 10 days and the 2nd one did not work on that day either. There are 13 booths at the counter and only two credit card machines. It had been reported by staff.

Many residents make card payments at the counter for housing, various permits, fines etc., and like Margaret, do not want to use the pay machines on the wall (which she was told are also often broken), or pay online. It is embarrassing for the City Council that such a basic service, intended to receive money, is regularly unavailable.

MG will raise this complaint with Aberdeen City Council.

15b bus service - It does not take same route as the daytime 15 service. This was unknown to Margaret. Consequently, she was left stranded in Airyhall.

Margaret reported that she believes that the times of the 11A & 15 buses are reduced from two per hour to one per hour. When the blue zone comes into play next year, combined the new bus gates, she will be unable to drive into town.

We have a poor bus service in comparison with other cities. Why?

Is it time for the city to take back control of our transport links?

If not, what are the Council going to do about the poor transport services in the West End?

MG – It is a privatised service with no competition and a need for profit. First bus dominates.

There followed a discussion about the challenges presented by competition vis-a-vis the Council's responsibility to facilitate an effective city bus service.

It was made clear that the Council has insufficient funds to subsidise the restoration of the bus service to its former frequencies.

Resident's complaint to Margaret about flooding in the gardens which back on to the wooded area across from the Countesswells Avenue bus stop at the Dandara Estate entrance –

MG is aware of this issue caused by flooding on private property. Dandara seem to avoid responsibility. There is a connection between the private land and the Dandara land, in respect of flooding.

**AOCB:**

Meeting with the Director of Operations at the James Hutton Institute on the morning of 22<sup>nd</sup> August – Summarised Report by WS.

“He informed me that there will be a public consultation, regarding forthcoming projects, at the Hutton Institute on the 20th and 21st September, from 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM. There are no changes to the current physical plans.

He would like to involve the Community Council to see how we would use the community space.

The Ranger Service is planning to locate on the campus. That will be a new base for them. They see the grounds as a teaching resource.

The new facilities will also (potentially) be an engagement space for the Community Council.

The green triangular space adjacent to Macaulay Drive could be better managed. That land is owned by the Macaulay Development Trust. Research projects are being looked at for the use of it.

It is hoped that the new road will be in place before any redevelopment is undertaken. A planning application will be lodged on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. If this is accepted by the Council, work will be started in April 2024.

There are plans to improve the pond and expand the nursery.

I was asked if the CC had any ideas about what we want to see around the redundant buildings next to the Scout hut. There may be an opportunity for Just Transition funding. Is there something we could jointly do to develop that area?

What can be done with Couper’s Pond? Is Government funding available to finance its improvement?

He informed me that Community Council meetings can be hosted at the Research Institute. There is a room for this purpose, but we must let him know so that it may be made available.

This was a productive meeting, during which Alasdair expressed his intention to attend a Community Council meeting.”

WS asked the members to consider the pros and cons of the CC’s involvement, described in his report, bearing in mind that there are development plans for the institute and its campus, and we are statutory consultees in the planning process, first and foremost.

CM asked the Councillors if the bins / dog bins can be relocated. He referred to the bins on the ‘Culter Bypass’ adjacent to Craigiebuckler Terrace.

MG will find out the costs associated with relocating the bins.

CC pointed out that there will be challenges with doing this.

With reference to the upgraded cycle / pedestrian path between Craigiebuckler Drive and Macauley Drive, CC asked if there will be guidance about the proper use of the path, i.e., a cycle lane?

MG replied, “Yes”.

**Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, commencing online at 7.00 pm.