

Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council
Minutes the Meeting of Tuesday 3rd September 2024 at 7pm in the
Douglas Lounge, Springfield Church

Present.

William Sell (WS), Margaret Meikle (MM), Robert Frost (RF), Craig Melville (CM), Cameron Campbell (CC), Karen Reilly (KR), Caroline Walker (CW), Councillor Martin Greig (MG), 2 Residents.

Apologies.

Keith Watson, Jane Ormerod, Councillors John Cooke and Ken McLeod.

Police Report.

This report was forwarded to all members.

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of 6th August 2024

Proposed by CM

Seconded by MM

Treasurer's Report

CC – The bank balance is £1,547.04. There has been one transaction: a direct debit of £35 to remain compliant with the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulations.

CC has been in touch with Raemoir Garden Centre. The cost of the replacement tree is £100, including planting.

Other uncosted projects: -

MM reported that she has no data from the second core path survey.

In respect of tree planting on the green space known as the 'Coulter Bypass, MG has had a preliminary meeting with the contractor. He will look at the planting plans when they are made available.

CM reported that he has a map of the empty tree pits.

CC reported that we must not exceed £1000 in our account at the end of the financial year. We must spend £550 in the next three months. We will fund the Christmas lights for another year: this was agreed. We can also spend £100 for each of the youth organisations, the Boy Scouts, Brownies, and Boys Brigade. The final decision will be made by the October meeting. CW will ask for a donation from Malcolm Allen.

Correspondence.

All Items of correspondence have been forwarded to the membership.

Matters arising from the Virtual Meeting of Tuesday 6th August

CSCC members are to propose locations within the area that would benefit from tree planting.

Two areas have been identified:

The green space known as the ‘Coulter Bypass’, and the area opposite Craigiebuckler Church where mature Cypress trees were felled a couple of years ago.

MG reported that this is a planting programme that has already been working.

CSCC Members are to propose a prioritised list of path upgrades in the area (see Minutes of May meeting) by using data from the 2022 survey.

WS has been modelling a report on this project, modelled on the 2022 survey’s summary report.

Speeding on Springfield Road.

During the August meeting, MG confirmed that Springfield Road does not qualify for any intervention from the police or ACC at this time.

It was agreed that we would continue to monitor this and other roads in the area at this time.

MM reported that she saw a van on Hazledene Road doing 30 to 40 mph.

MG reported that there is a variation of speed limits on Hazledene Road. It would be helpful to have a uniform speed limit.

KR commented on the state of Hazledene Road. A number of vehicles have been speeding on it. She said that the road is dangerous, narrow and unfit for traffic of the volume that is presently using it

Protected trees felled by developer on the site of the former Treetops Hotel. William Sell to follow-up with David Dunne, ACC’s Chief Office for Strategic Planning

WS advised the August meeting that he had emailed Mr Dunne on the 12th May and received no response and as a result sent him a letter. An acknowledgement email and an apology were subsequently received, and a detailed response will hopefully be forthcoming.

Eventually, WS received the following response from Mr Dunne: -

“Dear Mr Sell

We can confirm that all trees within the boundaries of the former Treetops site are protected by Tree Preservation Order 260.

Within and outside the site, 147 trees and eight tree groups were surveyed as part of the planning application process (reference 211528/DPP). Of these, forty-eight trees and two tree groups (at the front part of the site and on part of the southern boundary) were consented to be removed to allow for the development to take place.

A small section of tree group 4 (TG4), less than 10% of its area, at the north west corner of the site was also to be removed. TG4 comprised a group of fragmented trees, including poplar and sycamore, with an under storey of rhododendron and laurel. The recommendation in the Arboriculture Impact Assessment for TG4 was that 'the rhododendron and laurel are removed and that this corner could be bolstered by new boundary planting of medium sized broadleaf species such as hornbeam, whitebeam, and rowan.'

In terms of recent works being in compliance with the planning permission and the removal of trees, the matter has been investigated and what has in fact occurred is the unauthorised removal of all trees and undergrowth within TG4. The Council are in the process of considering the detailed landscaping scheme for the site and will be requiring that the area is replanted with trees as part of the scheme to compensate for the loss of the trees. Once a scheme is agreed it will be published on the planning portal.

On this occasion, there would be very limited benefit in pursuing formal enforcement action against the applicant, however they have been reminded that it is an offence to remove trees in contravention of a tree preservation order. Going forward the development will be closely monitored as it progresses and reviewed on completion for compliance with the approved plans".

MG reported that he has asked the Tree Preservation Team for an updated tree survey on the site.

Sale of Land in Hazlehead Park.

At the August meeting, MM referred to an action earlier in the year regarding the sale of land in Hazlehead Park, which had been the subject of an application to build a hotel and country club near the Hayfield Riding School. The application number was 141026.

The sale had been rejected by ACC. With support from MG, but it was subsequently agreed that CSCC should write to ACC and recommend as part of the local development plan process that the land is re designated as Greenbelt.

WS reported that, on 1st September, he had written to Mr Andrew Brownrigg, Team Leader, Development Plans, Aberdeen City Council, requesting that the land be re designated as Greenbelt as a crucial part of the public green space of Denwood and Hazlehead (please see the Planning Officer's Report).

Planning Officer's Report.

RF reported that there were no local planning applications on the weekly bulletin.

He informed the meeting that Andrew Brownrigg, ACC, is working on the 2028 local development plan. RF expects consultations during the development plan

process. During this process the Community Council can apply for the land of Denwood and Hazlehead to be re designated as Greenbelt.
MG reported that the £1M play park in Hazlehead is completed.

Matters for Discussion with Ward Councillors

MM reported that the bus timetable was changed on the 18th of August. She travelled by bus on the 19th. Her fellow bus users were furious because the changes to the timetable were never posted. There was no information from First, not even on their website.

MG Replied that there has been a failure at posting new timetables. It is the Council's responsibility to post timetables at bus stops

MM informed the meeting that she was prepared to do a survey of the residents to see their views about the service provided by First Bus.

A civil engineer, who attended the meeting, informed the Members that a battery storage unit (Battery Energy Storage System) is proposed for land to the south of Countesswells Road. He also commented that “there has been a lot of fires with these installations.”

Braeside Mannofield Community Council have submitted an objection to the planning application. There are over 100 objections to this application.

Bielside Community Council have also objected. He advised us to attend the Planning Committee hearing, as a unit, to object.

Nearby to the site of the proposed installation is the Robert Gordon College Playing Field. He contacted Scottish Water, who told him that they had not been informed.

He anticipated that, during construction, there will be a lot of heavy traffic on Countesswells Road. There is also a flooding risk in the area surrounding the site of the proposed installation. Leakage from the battery's chemicals can cause contamination of the ground and endanger the health and safety of the resident population.

The resident also reported that it is also proposed to be installed on a Greenbelt area, near a school.

MM Reported that she already has problems with flooding and that there are significant issues with the water table. If the water table is contaminated, it may impact on her property.

CC Reported that the new road, which links the Hutton Research Institute campus with Countesswells Road, is complete. Ancient yew trees that had to be moved to make way for the road have been replanted. The Hutton Institute will ask for planning permission to make their temporary car park permanent.

A.O.C.B.

There being no further business, WS thanked all present for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

Date of Next Meeting. Tuesday 1st October at 7.00 pm in the Douglas Lounge, Springfield Church.