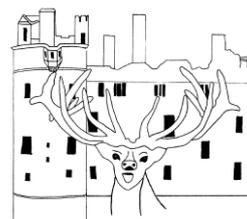




HUNTLY COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Minutes of the January 2014 meeting of Huntly Community Council held in the Council Chamber, the Stewart's Hall, Huntly on Thursday 16th January 2014 at 7.30 pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Hilda Lumsden-Gill (Chair); Tony Gill (Vice Chair); Freda McRae; Rev Norma Milne; Bob Ness; Bronwyn Gall; Mary Burgerhout (Secretary)

Others: Cllr Joanna Strathdee, Pat Scott (Huntly Express); PC Amanda Whyte (Police Scotland)

Apologies: Hazel McIntosh, Cllr Moira Ingleby, Cllr John Latham

Hilda welcomed members and also Cllr Strathdee, Pat Scott and PC Whyte to the meeting and wished all a Happy New Year. She began with a tribute to Professor Maurice Aldridge who passed away in November. Professor Aldridge had been a CC member some years previously and was described by Hilda as intelligent, well-travelled and a true gentleman who had overcome personal obstacles and who had taken the people of Huntly to his heart. Hilda had sent a card to his wife and family on behalf of the CC.

A list of correspondence received since the November meeting had been circulated prior to tonight's meeting, some items from which would be referred to during the meeting and some which were put on the table.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting The November minutes were proposed for acceptance by Bob Ness and seconded by Norma Milne.

3. Matters Arising

A. Police Issues PC Whyte presented the police report for the period 21.11.2013 to 16.01.2014. In the period there were 21 crimes/offences recorded within Huntly for a variety of petty assaults, minor thefts and other anti-social behaviour. 9 of these have been detected and some have lines of enquiry which may lead to detections. Sgt Neil Binning has now retired following 30 years with the Police and he and his family are wished all the best for the future. He will be replaced in February by Sgt Andy Sawyers who served as a PC in Huntly some years ago.

Bob raised the perennial issue of parking on street corners and PC Whyte advised that dayshift officers had been placing notices on cars last week, and in fact one person had been charged with a parking obstruction. Hilda noted the dire situation in Duke Street where parked cars and the presence of a delivery lorry meant she had to make a three point turn in the Square this week as she could not get down Duke Street. Tony raised the issue of yellow lines (repainted after tarmacking works) stopping at the hump in the road near the ironmongers when it would have been logical to have carried them on up to the top of Duke Street. Re the repainting of road markings, we are aware it is a work in progress and weather-dependent, but not of when the work will recommence across the town.

A discussion ensued on the presence of traffic wardens. Hilda read a letter from Police Scotland advising that following a consultation exercise, their Traffic Warden provision is being removed

(wardens are being moved to other duties) so that core activities can be concentrated on. Only Council provision will remain. The police will continue through their officers to enforce parking regulations, bring prosecutions etc. PC Whyte said that the police appreciated the CC and other groups advising them of particular problem areas so that these can be targeted. She will make Sgt Crichton aware of our concerns re areas such as Duke Street and the Costcutter junction.

PC Whyte left the meeting at 7.55 pm. Hilda thanked her for her contribution.

B) Huntly Topics

i) Current Issues

Application for Premises License RS McColl have applied for a license to sell alcohol from 10 am to 10 pm. While it was appreciated that the shop may need to do this to survive, reservations were expressed about over-provision and drinking in the Square. It was agreed the CC would write to the Council stating it would not object to the application but that the introduction of an off-licence would require to be well-managed - we will watch developments with interest.

Tree Felling Mature trees have been felled in one or two areas in the town, with the felling in the Avenue being raised as a concern. It was acknowledged that this is probably due to disease, the risks from strong winds etc, but Mary will write to Steven Gray for clarification.

Access within Stewart's Hall Hilda read out an email from Les Allan (in response to our discussion of this item in November) stating that an additional meeting room had been created downstairs in the Stewart's Hall to comply with Disability Discrimination Act legislation. This was an alternative to a stairlift which would have been problematic to install. Hilda made the point that there was still an issue about the popularity of the SH as a meeting venue and thus the desirability of all rooms being accessible.

Dog Fouling This continues to be a problem. It was noted that there are new signs at the Market Muir, and that a bin has been installed at the north end of the industrial estate. Tony and Norma had heard a Radio Scotland report mention that CCTV cameras may be installed in Aberdeenshire to counter the problem. Cllr Strathdee advised that the issue is constantly on Council agendas and that 30 Council employees have been trained to help tackle the problem. Bob advised that dog fouling had been evident in the cemetery recently, a situation that had distressed him and his family. Cllr Strathdee advised that we can contact Environmental Health if there is a problem in a particular area.

ii) Road Issues

Signage The Gateway signs were installed in early December and look impressive. It was felt they are a good advert for the town as the 2014 tourist season approaches.

Market Muir Junction The build-outs are now complete and appear to be a permanent structure, although we were advised last year that they were being installed on a trial basis. A number of people have expressed their doubts about their effectiveness to Hilda, with several preferring that traffic lights be installed.

iii) Clashindarroch Community Fund Hilda and Mary attended a meeting with Foundation Scotland and the other CCs/community groups involved on 26th November at which the "community conversation" and associated consultation work required of us was discussed. This was followed by an email on 6th December from FS providing the detail of what is required. Hilda and Mary felt the work done by ATP in 2006/7 where the community was consulted on their vision for Huntly over the next 20 years was sufficient albeit that an update might be required; FS subsequently advised that we do require to carry out further consultation work. As a result of concerns expressed by Hilda at the 26/11 meeting re the associated workload, and a similar representation made to us by another CC, it was suggested by the latter that a meeting be held between the various CCs/community groups in advance of the next scheduled meeting with FS (11th February). This meeting will be held on 6th February. A discussion ensued with Hilda seeking members' views on FS' expectations of us. It was agreed that the ATP findings were still relevant and some felt that FS should be carrying out any consultation work necessary. Strathbogie CC also apparently has concerns in this regard. Reference was made to the meeting held in June 2013 by Vattenfall at the Gordon Arms where the public submitted a host of ideas on what they believed were the priorities for their community; this along with the ATP

findings, was felt to be sufficient evidence of community consultation. These and other concerns will be discussed at the meeting on 6th February. Meantime, we require our CC members to peruse the draft Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the Community Trust and accordingly Mary will circulate these documents to members.

Hilda advised of a letter received by TCI Renewables outlining their plans for a proposed development of four turbines at Shanquhar, near the Glens of Foudland.

- iv) Entertainment Events in 2014 Hilda has been asked by Hamish Dean of Huntly and District Pipe Band if a mini-Entertainment in the Square can be held in 2014 to complement the Mass Pipe Band Homecoming event taking place on 30th August. It was understood that this meant an event in the Square but the recent article in the Huntly Express suggests that the intention is for the event to be held at TGS playing field, where the massed pipe bands will be playing. It was uncertain whether the PEL license which the Pipe Band as organisers have applied for will cover an additional EIS-type event; if so, this would reduce to an extent the work required of EIS organisers although there is still the issue of a lack of volunteers. Hilda will speak to Hamish Dean to clarify the situation. We have been asked by Fiona Alderson of The Gordon Schools Parent Council, who are organising a parade on 29th March as part of the school's 175th anniversary celebrations, if we can run on their behalf a Window Competition to coincide with the parade. A prize, provided by TGS PC, would be presented to the best war-themed window and the windows would be judged jointly by members of the CC and the PC. Members agreed to the request and volunteered to go round with TGS PC members during the weekend of 22nd/23rd March to do the judging. Mary to advise Fiona accordingly. Bob advised that there is to be a meeting at the end of January re the event planned for 4th August to commemorate the 100th anniversary of WWI.
- v) Town Flag/Coat of Arms Logo Mary has prepared and submitted applications for funding for the town flag accessories to both Aberdeenshire Council's Marr Area Committee Fund and the Glens of Foudland Fund; PC Neil McAdam's advice on what items to source is much appreciated. John Swan has complimented the CC on its part in the erection of the new Gateway signs and has requested approval for the use of the Coat of Arms on Huntly Minibus Association stationery and on TGS Former Pupils Association website, this approval having been granted as we are keen to see the Coat of Arms used as widely as possible. Neil McAdam had advised that his squadron of cadets are adopting a new crest, and asked if the shield part of the Coat of Arms could be used. Hilda confirmed that this cannot be done as the Coat of Arms must be used/displayed in its entirety and Neil has been advised accordingly. In 2014 we plan to ask Dean's and Rizza's to consider including the Coat of Arms on their products.
- vi) Planning Applications There were six applications in the period to 16.1.4, two of which drew significant comment. The first was for the proposed takeaway at 48 Gordon Street. It was felt there was over-provision of take-aways in the town and that the lack of external food waste storage facilities was a critical factor, particularly for neighbouring residences, as was the lack of parking facilities in the area. It was agreed to object to the application on these grounds. Also discussed was the proposed conversion of the property at 12 Granary Street. While it was a positive sign to see the building restored and occupied, the fact that there are plans for conversion into four flats, and that each flat is to have 2 parking spaces, with only 2 of these able to be accommodated in the building's courtyard, leading to concern that a further potential 6 parking spaces would have to be available on the street, and surprise expressed that the Council's Roads Dept have apparently sanctioned this. (NB. Subsequent to the meeting it emerged that in fact all 8 parking spaces are to be on the street.) The area is already heavily congested due to parked vehicles and indiscriminate parking, and indeed the nearby Hanover Housing Association residents have previously experienced problems with cars parked across their entrance.

vii) AOCB

Christmas Window Competition Congratulations were offered to this year's winner, The Linden Tree. The competition even got a mention in the Knock News! The displays by other businesses were commended by Hilda. AB54 Magazine Article Mary has prepared and sent an article to AB54 magazine for publication in their Spring issue. A photo was taken of members to accompany the article. Christmas Night Out An enjoyable evening was had at the Huntly Hotel on 13th December which it was noted appears to have subsequently closed down. Raffle License Renewal This has been paid and a copy of our new license received.

Cllr Strathdee and Bronwyn Gall left the meeting at 9.10 pm. Pat Scott left at 9.15 pm.

4. **Treasurer's Report** In Hazel's absence, Mary reported that the General Account holds £456.31, the Gordon Highlanders Account £496.35 and the EIS Account £3,721.74.
5. **Correspondence** Items highlighted:
 - a) Aberdeenshire Council – Licensing Board's Policy Review Consultation (closing date 17th January).
 - b) Community Planning - large response to the request for suggested topics for future Community Ward Forums; establishment of neighbourhood glass recycling points – suggestions sought for possible locations; Marr Area Partnership funding opportunity; Land Use Workshops (Hilda to attend one).
 - c) Other - a BBC Winterwatch programme is to be broadcast from Mar Lodge on 20th January.
6. **AOCB** Freda advised that signs have gone up in Meadow Avenue re the Huntly Flood Alleviation Scheme and the associated consultation exercise. Apparently the small bridge crossing the burn in the plantation (opposite the care home) is to be reinstated, as is the Elgin Bridge at the entrance to the Castle Hotel grounds. The latter however is to be a pedestrian bridge only.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm.

7. **Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday 20th February 2014.