



COLLIESTON AMENITIES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FRIDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2007

Before the meeting began, Chairperson Niki Tait opened the meeting by introducing Steve Scott, Regional Manager and Martin Hayward from Scottish Water.

Steve explained that the planned improvement scheme had been delayed as land purchase had not been finalised as had been hoped. However some progress had been made toward resolution.

Martin gave details of the work that will be carried out during the scheme. A pumping station will be built. Chambers will be below ground. There will be a bigger kiosk above ground. All sewage will be pumped up to septic tanks where it will get treated before going out to sea. There will be inevitable temporary inconvenience as the sewer goes up the road. Hoped for a January start. A car park will be made at the T junction before the harbour road. Mike Earlam asked what size the kiosk will be? 3mx2mx1, and will be tight against the wall.

Abi Stott hoped that the work would be done before the summer.

Martin Hayward replied that it should be ok as they have six months to build it, but they will let the village know as soon as the start date has been agreed.

Margaret Swan asked if installing septic tanks will help the growth of the village? The capacity had already been agreed.

Fiona Chaplain asked questions about disabled people having access during the works.

Other questions included whether account had been taken of winter storms, when the road is reinstated will it be adopted, has the scheme been finalised, how often will the septic tanks be emptied?

Both Steve Scott and Martin Hayward will be in contact with the village before the work begins to give an update and answer any outstanding questions and or concerns.

Apologies: Steve Rainey, Ruth and Craig Leuchars, Roger Berl, Gill Moir, Shona Penny

Minutes were proposed by Mike Earlam and seconded.

Sue Somner asked why the previous years' accounts had not been handed out before the start of the meeting, as this had been previously agreed. The accounts were duly distributed.

Nikki Tait gave the Chairperson's address covering the previous year's events.

Trish Davidson then gave the Treasurer's report.

Laura Junor, representing Collieston Action for Teens then presented Margaret Swan with a bouquet of flowers. She said this was in recognition of

the huge support and help by Margaret and her family in running the Coastal Café over the past two years.

Peter Somner raised a point that it might make the figures look even better if the Gala income and expenditure were to be put on the front sheet. Trish said the Gala profit had always been shown like this but she would take Peter's comments on board.

Mike Earlam suggested that some money should maybe be put into premium bonds. Trish said that Roger and her had done a mid-year review of the accounts and had decided that this wasn't really an option at the time, mainly because of uncertainties over funding pier repairs and the survey. An interest-bearing business investment account is available to us at the Clydesdale Bank and the Committee will discuss how much Pier Fund money will be put into this account.

Fiona asked whether a new mower could be purchased. She also felt that the pier survey should wait until the winter storms had passed.

Fiona raised a point that she felt the wellbeing fund was out of control. Rob Nash asked if this included the cost of the senior citizens Christmas party and whether we should give them something cheaper instead. Trish said that the wellbeing monies did not include the Christmas party, but would be included in the future, along with other similar expenditures.

Sue Somner agreed with Fiona. Fiona said that it is not inclusive, with some people getting and some not.

However Lewis Cowie said that if we do not invest in people there is little point in anything we do. He said that individuals who give their money through buying raffle tickets etc, and it was right to give something back to them.

Lesley suggested as an alternative that something from Loaf Face could be given to people.

Ellie Ingram also agreed with Fiona.

The well being fund is to be discussed by the Committee at their next meeting.

Mike Earlam said that we should trust people on the Committee to act on our behalf and to be sensible.

Debra Storr said that she thought that the Committee was unique in consciously giving something back to individuals in this way. She said it might be useful in future to record how many people receive something over the course of the year. She commented that in general we are quite poor at saying thank you and that it was nice to see a community where people go out of their way to help and recognise others.

Debra Storr, in her position as a trustee, also commented that we have the ability to soon improve the harbour and pier situation. For now we will operate the status quo being open and transparent as we do so.

Sally Sheehan then spoke about the reasons why the Committee felt that now might be the time to move toward community council status.

Mike Earlam asked how the community council would operate, with Peter Robinson asking if there were any new tasks out with the village that would have to be taken into account. Debra Storr replied that community councils are statutory legal bodies and as such are the first tier of government. This means we would have formal recognition which can be useful. Would this help our funds? It would - through insurance and an annual grant. Community Councils can tailor their constitution to suit their needs. They were set up in 1977. Elizabeth Hay asked if they were likely to be disbanded in future? Debra Storr knew of no such proposal saying that in fact Aberdeenshire Council nurture Community Councils knowing the valuable role they play. A Community Council is responsible for managing it's own funds. Viv Easton asked about bonfire insurance, Sally replied that an additional premium would have to be paid for this and other events like the Gala, in the same way that already happens.

Fiona asked what would happen in the event of dissolution. Debra Storr replied that Aberdeenshire Council would retain funds until such time something else replaced the dissolved Community Council.

Could the funds be accessed again? Debra replied that in the event of a general dissolution some arrangements have to be made, but the funds would always belong to the community.

Fiona Chaplain commented that many of the houses are holiday homes. To be eligible for a community council people have to be on the electoral register which would mean they wouldn't be allowed to vote. Debra Storr replied that people can register to vote in two places at the same time, although they can only use one vote in elections. We would have to encourage people to register.

Elections for a community council are a formal process, which can either be undertaken by the council or the community can do it themselves.

Bibi Rainey asked if the community council area included the whole of Collieston and Slains – it does.

John Easton asked how much control the Council would have, as he would not want to see Collieston lose its autonomy. Debra Storr replied that this would not be the case. Peter Somner asked Debra to explain what she meant by legal entity. She replied that a community council has a constitution. They would also be required to do things that the Amenities Committee does already, such as having the accounts audited independently. Things have to be done formally, which gives more force behind what they do and also adds structure.

Peter Somner felt that there had been short notice but that it appeared that it was the right things to do.

Debra Storr said that the village was not being asked to establish a community council immediately, but to begin a process of transmutation with an opportunity to discuss things and make amendments etc.

Nikki commented that as a Committee we have been dealing with this issue for some time and as such are already familiar with the concept. As a Committee we have yet to find a down side.

Bibi Rainey said that CASCT could possibly holding Committee money as it is already a legally defined entity, a registered charity and eligible for gift aid.

Peter Robinson said that he felt the community was too small for two committees and should we rather operate as one?

Mike Earlam felt that the roles of the two committees are quite separate – CASCT for the new hall and social enterprise and the Amenities Committee for the day to day running of the village.

Suggestions were made that the Committee should inform the community of the full implications of becoming a community council before proceeding to the next stage.

Comments were made about the delay in Committee minutes being posted on the website. This would be addressed.

Following some further comments from the floor, Duncan Bell gave a very interesting and informative presentation on his research over the summer for the East Grampian Coastal Partnership.