



SLAINS AND COLLIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 8th October 2008

Present: Keith Newton, Formartine Area Manager, Councillors Isobel Davidson, Rob Merson, Deborah Storr, Huib Attema, Roger Berl, Ewan Cowie, Patricia Cowie, Charles Esson, Nora Harper, Rachel Hitchcock, George Jamieson, Sheena Junor, Gillian Moir, Sally Sheehan, Julie Swan, Nicola Tait

Apologies: Councillor Owen, Sarah Gosden, Sian Earlam

In attendance: Richard Thomson, Parliamentary candidate

Keith Newton welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new Community Council, and congratulated everyone on their appointment.

Mr Newton then chaired the required formalities.

Chairperson – Rachel Hitchcock – proposed by Gill Moir, seconded by Julie Swan

Vice Chair – There were three nominations – Ewan Cowie, Roger Berl and Huib Attema. Ewan Cowie secured the position following a vote.

Treasurer – Huib Attema – proposed by Sally Sheehan, seconded by Sheena Junor

Secretary – Sally Sheehan – proposed by Nikki Tait, seconded by Gill Moir

Minutes Secretary – Decision deferred, following Councillor Storr's suggestion that some Community Council's pay a small retainer to their minutes secretary, who may be a young person in the parish.

Auditor – Roger Berl declined the nomination. Committee to approach either Debbie Booth (who had previously audited the Amenities account) or former Treasurer Trish Davidson.

Title of the new Council to be Slains and Collieston Community Council. All in agreement.

Members then went through the draft constitution amending and altering the content as required. When approved, the new constitution will be available on the website, in the hall or from the Secretary on request.

Mr Newton suggested that it is advisable that the Committee develops a formal process of dealing with planning applications. The Committee were asked to consider if planning applications will be the responsibility of the whole committee, a sub committee or one member with a specific responsibility. In any event, it is advisable to record the Council's response to all applications in the minutes. It is also advisable to have clear guidelines in the event of personal interest or involvement in planning matters. Community Councils are statutory consultees for all local planning applications.

Mr Newton advised that any letters of objection are sent direct to the planning department, not to the Community Council. Developers may approach a community council and request attendance at a meeting, it is up to the Community Council whether they accept or refuse.

Mr Newton will send a copy of Foveran's constitution which may be helpful.

Mr Newton then outlined a number of additional issues

The Community Council handbook outlines roles and general information. A copy is kept by the Secretary but is also available to view online at <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communitycouncils/handbook.asp>

Public liability insurance is available through Aberdeenshire Council but any unusual events out with the everyday remit of the Council will require an additional premium to be paid. Question asked whether the policy would also cover the harbour and pier. That is the responsibility of the harbour trustees.

Council pays for annual membership of the Association of Scottish Community Councils. AGM to take place in Edinburgh the 1st of November.

All Community Councils are required to register for the Data Projection Act. The £35 cost is reimbursed by the Council. All public bodies are required to register when they store personal information such as names and addresses.

The Community Council will receive an annual grant of £425 plus a balancing amount based on the number of electorate – approx 5p per head. Annual grant thereafter will be received at around this time of year when annual accounts have been submitted.

A Community Council forum takes place every 6/7 weeks at Meldrum Academy when representatives from around Formartine discuss items of common interest. Occasional presentations add to the information available.

Community Councils are automatically members of the Formartine Partnership, which is concerned with rural development. They administer Town and Village Enhancement Grants, £500 per annum, to improve the general environment. Rural Youth Transport Grants can pay up to £150 to allow young people from the rural areas to attend events and activities.

A Code of Conduct for Community Councillors and Standing Orders for Community Councils are guides to assist Community Councils in how they conduct their business. The Local plan is another useful guide to policies.

The new Community Council will require a new bank account. We will take advice from the Clydesdale Bank, who hold the account for the Amenities Committee, on how to proceed. Agreed that two out of four signatories will be sufficient to sign cheques on behalf of the Community Council, these would be Chair, Treasurer, Secretary plus one other.

Mr Newton was thanked for his helpful support and advice. Rachel Hitchcock then took the chair.

Other matters discussed by those present were as follows:-

Collieston Pier – a partial survey had now been received. Unfortunately this only relates to above the water line. With this information, decision made that a meeting be held inviting all interested parties to attend. Provisional date of 23rd October.

Huib asked whether alternative solutions to the pier's long term protection had been sought. He is willing to investigate this further. Deborah Storr explained the differences in the Council's liability to north east piers and harbours, and although Aberdeenshire does not own Collieston pier it has committed some coastal protection funding towards its report.

When a new reform called Scottish Charitable Incorporate Organisation comes into being, it may then be possible to re-establish the Harbour Trustees. At present this would be unwise as individual trustees have no protection in the event of any claim. (The main purpose of a SCIO is to give a charity the benefits and legal protection of an incorporated body - specifically the limited

liability of its 'members' - but without the hassle associated with being a limited company or some other type of incorporated body.)

Formartine in Bloom – Trish Cowie and Susan Taylor had attended the award ceremony where Collieston had been given an Achievement Award. Trish reported that she had picked up some very useful advice and information which should help us to be even more successful next year!

Bus Shelter – Councillor Merson has successfully negotiated with the Council on our behalf, and a new bus shelter is to be erected at the Crossroads in the next few weeks. All present thanked Councillor Merson for his intervention as this has been a long standing issue. Mention was also made that it is hoped that the informal path across the fields into the village can be established on Aberdeenshire Core paths routes in future.

Niki passed on a donation of £70 from First Zipper from the Collieston Gala T shirt sales.

Sally reported that the Council will be installing a new lighting pillar soon for the Christmas tree lights. Previously agreed by the Amenities Committee - this will cost £300 + VAT.

Arrangements in hand for Bonfire night, with similar arrangements to last year's.

Over 60's party at the poachers booked and arrangements in hand.

Burns Supper – Gill Moir agreed to organise this. May apply for a homecoming grant to assist in funding.

Hogmanay party in the hall discussed. Open house format with people bringing food/drink etc. General agreement.

List of future meeting dates given out. Also to go in Blether and website.

Sally asked if people could think about any projects or local amenities that needed input. Ideas for next meeting please – possibly the play park, notice boards etc.

Julie Swan commented that the Amenities pages on the website would now require updating. Gill suggested that we ask Kay Hallet for her advice.

Suggestion made that a letter and card be sent to former Committee members, and also those who were unsuccessful in the election, thanking them for their involvement and support. All agreed.

Following some discussion, decision made that the Chair should approach CASCT to ask that Community Council members attend future CASCT meetings. George Jamieson, Roger Berl, Ewan Cowie and Huib Attema volunteered to attend on behalf of the Community Council.

Deborah Storr suggested that at the next meeting, a system be devised to enable a rotation of Committee members. Community Councillors are elected for a three year term. As everyone for the new council have all been elected at the same time, lots can be drawn to bring this into effect. Those who retire in this way will still be eligible to stand for re election the following year.

Date of next meeting: 19th November 2008