

# Crathes, Drumoak & Durris Community Council (CDDCC)

## Minutes of 2012 Annual General Meeting

**5 December 2012 at Drumoak Church Hall from 19.30 hours**

### 1. Sederunt

**Community Councillors:** David Morrish, Geoffrey Atkinson, Jim Williamson, Gill Bruce, Molly Atkinson, Howard Scholey (Chairman), Trudy Harrison

**Aberdeenshire Councillors (Ward 16):** Graeme Clark

**Aberdeenshire Councillors (Ward 18):** Linda Clark

**Members of the public:** Ann Williamson, John Hopkins

**Apologies:** Ann Ross, Jenny Watson, Jill Webster, Raymond Christie, Hamish Taylor, Ryan Bond

### 2. Chairman's Report.

The report was distributed to those present. Howard Scholey summarised the main points of his report, reproduced here:-

#### 2012 Community Councillors

CC Office	Community Council Area Represented		
	Crathes	Drumoak	Durris
Chairman	Howard Scholey		
Vice Chairman	David Morrish		
Treasurer			John Hopkins*
Secretary			
Minute Secretary			John Hopkins*
Planning	David Morrish	Geoffrey Atkinson	James Williamson
K&M CC Forum			
Marr CC Forum	Howard Scholey		James Williamson
Website			John Hopkins*
Press Officer	Ann Ross		
General		Gill Bruce	
General		Molly Atkinson <sup>+</sup>	
General		Jenny Watson	
General	Trudy Harrison <sup>++</sup>		

\*Non-member  
November 2012

+Co-opted September 2012

++Co-opted

### Resignations:

Gill Bruce - notification received October 2012, effective January 1st 2013.  
Jim Williamson – notification received December 2012, effective January 1st 2013

### **Community Councillors**

The Community council has maintained the statutory minimum number of councillors or more throughout the year. Durris remained under-represented and with James Williamson's resignation, we need to find members to represent Durris. Ann Ross was appointed Press Liaison Officer in January, a post which she has discharged with considerable success, achieving publicity for us in written and broadcast media, both regionally and nationally.

### **Priorities for 2012**

CDDCC priorities for 2012 were:-

- Roads/road safety
- Schools
- Development & Planning
- Community Engagement

### **Road Safety**

Road safety remains a matter of concern for the Community Council, with accident rates on rural routes remaining at a level we would all wish to see reduced. In our area, it has been noted that the sightlines on the Myrebird junction on the A93 have suffered a deterioration this year due to vegetation growth. The 40mph limit introduced in Crathes in 2011 has been reinforced by the installation of reactive illuminated signs on the A93, but anecdotal reports suggest that too many drivers are still not observing the limits. The issue of lowering the Kirkton of Durris speed limit from 50 to 40mph remains a bone of contention between the local community and the Aberdeenshire Roads Department, who use arcane technical criteria to avoid re-examination of the case for lowering the limit. In October, further representations on behalf of the Community Council on this subject received a somewhat dismissive e-mail response. This is an issue about which the local community feels strongly, and we can not be content to let this rest. Last week there was a tragic road accident, in which a local resident was killed whilst walking at night on the B9077 South Deeside Road. It is unclear at present whether this accident occurred within the speed limit area or just outside it. The whole community would wish to join in expressing their sympathy and sincere condolences to the family and friends of the victim of this accident, and it must serve to strengthen the Community Council's determination to maintain our focus on improving all aspects of safety of our local roads.

### **Schools**

2012 has seen long overdue progress on building the new Drumoak Primary School. Following the K&M Area Committee's recommendation to the Policy

and Resources Committee that planning for the school proceeds to the next phase, it has been announced that construction is to start in April 2013, and we congratulate our local Councillors for their continued advocacy of this project.

Moves are afoot to provide car parking space for Durris School, and the Community Council will do what it can to support this. The prospect of new housing development in Crathes will have implications for the Crathes Primary School.

### **Raising our profile and Community Engagement**

We held public meetings on planning matters in Drumoak in February, and Crathes in October which generated substantial interest, but beyond this we have struggled to get much traction with Community Engagement. As noted in previous years, community engagement is constrained by the challenge of quite diverse settlement patterns, which straddle two different local authority wards.

In May an attempt was made to engage the local community in Crathes, with a community clean-up project, launched in the wake of a similar successful exercise carried out in Banchory in April. Despite efforts to publicise this in the Crathes area, the exercise attracted only two Community Councillors and one local resident. One upside to the exercise is that, courtesy of Aberdeenshire Council, we are now the proud custodians of six litter pickers, a stock of refuse bags and some yellow plastic tabards, and we will see if we can deploy these to better effect in 2013. The issue of community engagement remains a work-in progress, and the CC will be reviewing the use of social media to advance this process.

### **Development and Planning**

This aspect of our responsibilities engenders real engagement with the local community. The Local Development Plan was adopted by Aberdeenshire Council on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012, setting out the ground rules for the development of land under the land planning acts. Against this background, we have sought to solicit and represent the views of the local community on planning applications that have arisen. During the course of the year, the principal planning issues with which we engaged were:-

- 1 Kincluney Village <sup>1</sup>
- 2 Brodie Countryfare <sup>1</sup>
- 3 Drumoak Housing development (Stewart Milne)
- 4 Crathes Housing Development<sup>1</sup> (Stewart Milne)
- 5 Culter Car Centre –Woodside Farm
- 6 Crathes Crematorium<sup>1</sup>
- 7 SSPCA Rescue Centre

(<sup>1</sup> Discussed at February public meeting in Drumoak Church Hall)

Of these, items 6 and 7 are not strictly current planning issues. In December 2011, Leyes Estate produced a memorandum discussing the idea of a crematorium and cemetery at Baldarroch in Crathes. Following consultation at the public meeting convened in Drumoak in February, strong opposition from the local community was expressed.

Meanwhile, the SSPCA Animal Rescue Centre continues to generate complaints from neighbouring residents, due to intermittent but excessive and annoying noise levels from barking dogs. This problem arises from the SSPCA engineering an amendment to the original planning provision to build an earthworks bund to shield neighbours from the noise. An attempt by the SSPCA to solve the problem was ineffective. The SSPCA have been offensively dismissive of our attempts to raise this problem with them. The Aberdeenshire Environmental Health Department have repeatedly visited the affected area and fully recognise that this does indeed constitute a noise pollution problem. Clearly, we would like to see the imposition of some form of enforcement order to rectify the variation to the original Planning Consent.

The saga of Kincluney village has continued during 2012, where CHAP still appears to be trying to avoid the obligation to reinstate their quarry to agricultural use. It is disconcerting to observe that this is still an issue, in view of this project having been excluded from the Aberdeenshire Structure Plan and the subsequent Local Development Plan. In their October meeting, the Aberdeenshire Council Area Committee of Kincardine and Mearns, were “Unanimously of the view that the proposal by CHAP that the Strategic Growth Area should include the “Kincluney Eco-Village” should be rejected”. The need to monitor the situation continues.

Brodie Countryfare’s agents attended the February meeting of the CC to present their proposal for a retail and “Tourist Destination” development by the Cullerlie junction on the North Deeside road. This is essentially the same as a proposal initially brought forward in 1999, which was turned down by both the Marr and K&M Area Committees. This proposal was reviewed at the meeting held at Drumoak Church Hall in February, and received a mixed response from the public. The general view of the CC is against it for a number of reasons, not least of which is the negative impact it would be likely to have on retail businesses in the Banchory area, which already have to compete with similar outlets.

The construction of a showrooms and workshop by Culter Cars at Woodside Farm has been suspended, leaving a part completed eyesore beside the North

Deeside Road. Culter Cars have applied for a change of use to an “Offices with workshop” development, to which the CC has raised objection. Quite why the development was allowed to proceed in the first place is unclear, constituting as it does a further example of inappropriate incremental ribbon development along the North Deeside Road. The proposal for change of use is due to come before the K&M Area Committee next Tuesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

*(This topic engendered a general discussion of the effectiveness of conditions placed on planning permissions. To circulate a link to a recent document describing enforcement of conditions (Action: David Morrish))*

The Stewart Milne housing development on the northern outskirts of Drumoak is included in the Local Development Plan, and should proceed in tandem with the new primary school. Stewart Milne held a public consultation in Drumoak in mid-May, and subsequently met the CC to discuss the development in more detail. Our main concern lay with the fact that the 35 dwellings specified in the development did not occupy the whole site, suggesting that a significant extra incremental development was being kept in mind. This appears to be a prime example of developers “salami slicing” the planning process, which has been a tactic noted by the CC before, and one that requires constant vigilance. A letter raising these concerns has been sent to the planning department and Stewart Milne.

Finally, the oft-discussed Crathes Housing Development opposite the old Crathes Garage began to take shape this year. Stewart Milne unveiled a development proposal for 45 dwellings, which was outlined at a Public Exhibition in the Crathes Hall at the end of October. In advance of the exhibition, the CC held a public meeting to solicit views on how the local community would like to see this development proceed. The comments garnered at this meeting were collated and fed back to Stewart Milne to supplement the feedback that they received at their public exhibition. The CC were unanimously of the opinion that the level of information provided at the public exhibition was so sparse as to render it unacceptable as a public consultation in the planning process, and formally notified both the Planning Department and Stewart Milne of this view. The Community Council has set up a sub-committee to ensure that the local community’s interests are effectively represented. This committee will remain in continuous dialogue with the developers and all the statutory bodies involved with this potential development.

## **Policing**

Our local police force continue to attend our meetings to keep us informed of the policing and road safety issues as necessary, and this is greatly

appreciated. The regular Police News Letter appears to have lapsed this year, and we would encourage its reinstatement if possible.

I would like to thank all members of the 2012 Community Council for their work and support during this year, and express our appreciation to our local councillors for their continued support and advice.

I wish all the best to those in Crathes, Drumoak and Durris for Christmas and the New Year.

On behalf of all members of CDDCC, Geoffrey Atkinson thanked Howard Scholey for his very good report.

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

John Hopkins distributed copies of the draft 2012 accounts for CDDCC. He drew attention to the donations made at the start of the present financial year. These were to the Forget-me-not Club (£200), Crathes Hall Committee (£200, recognising their kindness in providing a venue) and the Drumoak&Durris Church (£100, to help cover the cost of the local newsletter). Howard Scholey proposed that a further donation of £200 be made to Crathes Hall Committee this year, recognising their continued support for CDDCC, even to the detriment of their strict commercial interest. This was seconded by David Morrish and carried by acclamation. To send a cheque to Crathes Hall Committee (**Action: John Hopkins**)

There were no other questions on the accounts. The accounts were proposed by John Hopkins, seconded by Howard Scholey and formally adopted and signed.

To submit the accounts to Aberdeenshire Council, with a request for the 2012/13 Administration Grant (**Action: John Hopkins**)

### **4. Status of CDDCC Membership for 2013**

Howard Scholey noted, in particular, that Durris representation needed to be increased. David Morrish mentioned two possible candidates, whom he would follow-up.

### **5. Meetings in 2013**

Howard Scholey said that future meetings would continue to be on the first Wednesday of each month, with the exception of the January 2013 meeting, which would be on 9<sup>th</sup> January.

## **6. Urgent Planning Issues**

### **6.1 Culter Car Centre**

Howard Scholey asked whether CDDCC should be represented at the forthcoming meeting. Linda Clark pointed out that it was much too close to the date to think about asking to speak at the meeting. She said that CDDCC could, however, email all 12 members of the K&M Area Committee, citing the problems that there had been in the case of SSPCA, when trying to control development via planning conditions. To draft and circulate a suitable email (**Action: Howard Scholey**). To check what notice period is required for those wishing to speak at a planning meeting (**Action: Graeme Clark**)

### **6.2 Housing at Crathes**

David Morrish reported that the sub-committee (himself, Trudy Harrison, Hamish Taylor, Ann Ross, Ryan Bond, Claire Webster) had held two meetings. He believed that the proposal that a decision on the road speed limit and the housing needed to be co-ordinated was supported by Aberdeenshire Council officers. Various members of the sub-committee were following-up good planning practice, affordable housing, sustainability of heating and planning gain.

There was to be a site meeting at 0900 on the morrow.

## **7. Next Meeting Dates**

7.30 p.m. on 9 January 2013 at Crathes Hall

**The AGM was then declared closed at 2032 hours.**

*Wine and cheese were then served.*

JFH

6 December 2012

<b>DISTRIBUTION</b>				
<b><u>EMAIL</u></b>	<b><u>EMAIL</u></b>	<b><u>EMAIL</u></b>	<b><u>EMAIL</u></b>	<b><u>WEBSITE</u></b>
CDDCC Councillors (excl. Jenny Watson)		Insp. Innes Coull	Diane Collinson (KMAP)	<a href="http://www.durris.net/">http://www.durris.net/</a> (also for previous minutes)
Cllrs. Linda Clark, Karen Clark, Jill Webster (Ward 16)		Insp. Stuart Ednie	Alison Ritchie, Community Learning	
Cllrs. Peter Bellarby, Graeme Clark, Raymond Christie, Wendy Agnew (Ward 18)		PC Gavin Clunie	<b><u>BY POST</u></b> Jenny Watson Banchory Public Library Drumoak Church Hall Notice Board	<b><u>BY HAND</u></b> Park Shop Drumoak Post Office Irvine Arms
Mr W Munro, Area Manager, Kincardine & Mearns	Kirkton of Durris Hall Notice Board (via Sheila Watt)	Crathes Hall Notice Board (via Nicola Chambury)		
Mr L Allen, Area Manager, Marr	Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator – AlisterBisset	Local Newsletter Editor (Marion Nixon)		