

**14 06 04**  
**Crathes, Drumoak & Durris Community Council (CDDCC)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**4 June 2014 at Crathes Hall from 19.30 hours**

**1. Sederunt**

**Community Councillors:** Howard Scholey (Chairman), Ann Ross, David Morrish, Linda Murray, Mark Ansell, Geoffrey Atkinson, Maxine Smith, Les Bray, Angela Bichan

**Aberdeenshire Councillors:** Linda Clark, Raymond Christie, Graeme Clark, Wendy Agnew

**Scottish Police:** PC Allan Paxton

**Members of Public:** David Foote, Eric Insch, George Philip

**Minutes Secretary:** John Hopkins

**Apologies:** Jill Webster, Daniel Wake

**2. Approval of Previous Minutes**

The May minutes were proposed by David Morrish and seconded by Angela Bichan and accepted as an accurate record.

**3. Police Matters**

Allan Paxton noted that, since the most recent report, there had been 11 policing incidents in the CDDCC area, leading to 5 investigations (mostly road traffic offences, but one assault). Just outside the area, there had been two recent housebreakings.

Police Scotland had continued Operation Zenith (advice to motorcyclists) and the Stay Safe Online campaign (on the Police Scotland FB and Twitter pages).

Howard Scholey asked about progress with the issue brought up by Ann Ross at the May meeting. This was the results from the temporary speed camera erected in Crathes some weeks before, between the crossroads and Durris Bridge. It was understood that a notice about the results had been displayed in Banchory.

To provide feedback by email - as the next CDDCC meeting is not until August - in respect of the above, plus the following items raised with Colin McKeen in May (**Action: Allan Paxton**)

- police foot patrols making a high visibility appearance on the beat, but ignoring instances of parking on pavements
- the vehicle crash which had taken place in Park on 7 May
- outcome of reports to 101 about bikers and off-road vehicles in Durris Forest.

David Morrish mentioned that he had reported a substantial recent incident of fly-tipping to the Police. He had been able to retrieve some addressed envelopes from the piles and had given these to the Police interviewer. He commented that the deposit had been so deep into the forest that it would have been appreciably less trouble to take it to the official dump. He had also been offered victim trauma counselling: this incited mild derision from CDDCC.

**4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

**4.1 Infrastructure Problems in Drumoak**

It was again noted that no useful action had been taken by Aberdeenshire Council on any of the items reported earlier in February. Howard Scholey had submitted a formal complaint on behalf of CDDCC to this effect and had received what he considered to be an unhelpful and unacceptably-terse reply, from which – notwithstanding the attempt by the writer to keep it secret by marking it “Private and Confidential” – he summarised extracts. It concluded by stating that Aberdeenshire Council regarded the issue as closed.

Graeme Clark decried the apparent recent trend by Aberdeenshire Council staff of avoiding the need for action by simply declaring the correspondence closed. He surmised that:-

- there might be some new internal performance indicator for “clearing-up” issues and/or
- legal department staff were taking over correspondence from other officers

David Morrish said that the same tactic had been tried by the planners in relation to the Crathes Housing matter, but that the objectors had simply ignored this – and indeed there was a forthcoming meeting with the Council on the subject in the near future.

The most serious of the infrastructure complaints related to the outflow of the burn in Keithmuir Park. This had repeatedly flooded over recent years, partly perhaps due to debris build-up at the grille at the entrance to the culvert. This had led both to the flooding of the adjacent houses and to an imminent drowning danger for children playing in the Park.

Related conversations had suggested that certain departments of Aberdeenshire Council might be trying to evade responsibility for addressing this problem by claiming it was not within their responsibilities.

Les Bray said that the Deeside Resident Group would be taking the specific issue further, with a picture on the FB page, by building a pressure group and via a possible petition.

To draft and circulate a letter to Dennis Robertson MSP, drawing his attention both to the unacceptable nature of the Aberdeenshire Council response and to the particular Keithmuir Park culvert problem (**Action: Howard Scholey**)

Because it also related to an infrastructure problem in Drumoak, Howard Scholey invited David Foote to describe the issue which had motivated him to attend the meeting.

David Foote commenced by observing that, having heard the previous discussion, he was now sceptical whether there were any point in raising the matter. Encouraged by Howard Scholey, however, he explained that since the road islands (central refuges) had been created in the main road through Drumoak, there had been a major road noise/vibration problem for residents.

This problem – which predominantly affected the western carriageway - was caused by inadequate resurfacing and a deteriorated gully grating. This unevenness caused severe noise from passing lorries, particularly empty lorries. In his opinion, the surfacing had been inadequately done by the contractor and could only be rectified by planing it off and relaying. An engineer from the Roads department had attended to inspect the problem and had taken photographs (not that the surface irregularities are easily visible) some months before, but there had been neither action nor response since then.

In response to a question by Howard Scholey, CDDCC agreed that it should take this issue forward. To send to Howard Scholey an email, detailing the problem (**Action: David Foote**). To draft and circulate a letter to be sent to Roads Department, asking for action on this issue (**Action: Howard Scholey**)

Eric Inch raised a query about how to progress a complaint about unusual foul smells from the local sewers. Wendy Agnew replied that he should contact the Environmental Health department of Aberdeenshire Council.

#### **4.2 Car Park for Durriss Primary**

Howard Scholey had been in contact again with Melissa Coutts. It was noted that the planning application for the car park for Durriss Primary had now apparently actually been submitted. However, it did still not appear on the Council’s planning website.

#### **4.3 ID Badges**

Howard Scholey had been told by Willie Munro that K&M Area had a contingency fund, which would be suitable for the funding of ID badges. He had sent a relevant application form. Howard Scholey wondered aloud whether – in view of the changes which would happen with the forthcoming elections to CDDCC – the matter of ID badges might better be deferred until thereafter. Maxine Smith responded that the need was now. To send to Howard Scholey passport-type electronic images of themselves for this purpose (**Action: those CDDCC members wanting ID badges**). To procure the ID badges (**Action: Howard Scholey**)

#### **4.4 Commemorative Tree for Jenny Watson**

David Morrish said that Jenny Watson had responded favourably to CDDCC's proposal of a commemorative tree and plaque, requesting a beech tree, to be located in the Crathes Hall Car Park.

To agree this with the Hall Committee and make the necessary arrangements (**Action: David Morrish**)

#### **4.5 Laminated Maps**

Howard Scholey said that he had now completed two mark-ups of laminated maps. One had been distributed some long while ago, although it was not now known where. A second was ready. The other maps were not complete. To roll the production of these maps into the request for funds from Willie Munro (**Action: Howard Scholey**)

#### **4.6 Master Plans**

The Appeal in respect of the Crathes Houses had been due to report on 2 June, but had not yet done so. To investigate with the Aberdeenshire Planning Policy Team whether funding could be available for Planning Aid for Scotland to assist with the development of a set of Terms of Reference, as a means of helping to decide whether or not to develop a Master Plan for Crathes (**Action: David Morrish**). As a matter of principle, it was agreed that – if Master Plans went forward - they should be for all parts of the CDDCC Area.

#### **4.7 Bowling Club alley lighting**

Graeme Clark reported that the alley to the east side of the Drumoak Bowling Club was not an Adopted Road. For that reason, Aberdeenshire Council would not provide lighting. The Bowling Club itself would therefore seem to be the only candidate for so doing. This might be a suitable project for Deeside Residents' Group.

#### **4.8 Subcommittee Remits**

The drafting of the remit (terms of reference, powers, duration and composition) for the Community Engagement sub-committee, for consideration by CDDCC, would be done after the Deeside Residents' Group was further advanced (**Action: Maxine Smith**)

### **5. Planning**

#### **5.1 Crathes Housing**

David Morrish and Howard Scholey would be meeting with the planners and Piers Blaxter on 5 June to discuss the outcome of this. As part of the Main Issues Report meeting, they had attempted to persuade the planners that the whole Crathes issue should be made part of the next Local Development Plan (in 2016). If the current Appeal by Stewart Milne succeeds, this will however become irrelevant.

Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the Appeal was granted, subject to conditions. For details, please see <http://www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk/Document.aspx?id=201143>

#### **5.2 Current Local Planning Applications**

Howard Scholey said that, after a period in which there had been relatively few local planning applications, there were now a substantial number. Most were apparently not contentious, with the exception of the proposed erection of a very large wind turbine (160 feet to blade tip) at Rashenlochy Farm, Glashmore AB31 5HL

David Morrish mentioned that there were some “dotted areas” in the projections for the next LDP, which would seem to permit windfarms to advance further towards populated areas.

Howard Scholey said that the immediate question was whether CDDCC should object to this particular application. In view of its very large size and location, Maxine Smith and Les Bray felt that it should. There was general agreement to this. It was felt likely to affect views of - and from - Crathes (and possibly Drum) Castle.

It was noted that the applicant had appeared in front of CDDCC in October 2013 to ask for support to overcome the Planners’ objection to the location of a proposed house for an agricultural worker. No mention was made at the time of any proposal to install a wind turbine, although it seemed probable that such a proposal was already being worked on.

John Hopkins noted that:-

- domestic-scale wind turbines could be installed without planning permission
- for sites away from sensitive areas – which would perhaps relate to the new “dotted areas” - industrial scale wind turbines were looked on favourably by the planners

He felt that, between these two extremes, the installation of industrial-scale wind turbines was inappropriate.

Howard Scholey said that – for CDDCC to oppose the application effectively – it needed a volunteer to take the task on. **Les Bray** undertook to do so. To send to Les Bray copies of the Denside of Durris turbine application and the objections thereto (**Action: Mark Ansell**)

David Morrish proposed that he also raise the issue of planning for wind turbines with Piers Blaxter at his meeting on 5 June. This was agreed.

## **6. Correspondence**

It was noted that there would be a meeting at Woodland Barn on 7 June to learn about Community Asset Transfer.

## **7. Priorities for 2014**

### **7.1 Kirkton of Durris Speed Limit**

It was noted that most paths of progress appeared to have been blocked, but that did not mean that the issue would be dropped.

To raise the issue at the DRG meeting on 5 June (**Action: Les Bray**)

In the absence of Cliff Grover, to investigate further the effect on the decision of progressing down the other side of the decision tree - the side not taken by Aberdeenshire Roads Department (**Action: Howard Scholey**)

## **8. Subcommittee Reports**

### **8.1 Wind Farms**

Mark Ansell said that he had received – and would circulate - a poster advertising the next round of Meikle Carewe grants. He and Linda Murray had updated their latest hand-out, which would appear in the current local Newsletter. To put information also onto the [www.durris.net](http://www.durris.net) website (**Action: John Hopkins**)

## **9. Referendum Debate**

Maxine Smith noted that she was working steadily through the Action Plan. She distributed copies of the double-sided A4 handbill advertising the event, meanwhile encouraging people to take and distribute additional copies.

Howard Scholey asked what help she would need from CDDCC nearer to the date. Maxine Smith said that she would recirculate the Action Plan once more, since this listed all the needful tasks. She re-emphasised that – this task once having been committed to – it was essential to deliver it properly. This would require volunteers for all of the tasks listed.

Howard Scholey said that he would be out of town for much of the interim period, but was at her disposal for the week leading up to the Debate.

David Morrish asked when CDDCC should have a meeting to finalise all arrangements. Maxine Smith responded that a date ten days before the Debate would seem right to her.

The subject of the poor acoustics of Crathes Hall was raised. To contact Karen McWilliam (of Willie Munro's staff), to see if we might borrow their new radio-mike PA system (**Action: Howard Scholey**)

In response to a plea for other resources, Graeme Clark said that it may be possible to get printing done for the Community Council – also via Karen McWilliam.

## **10. AOB**

### **10.1 Rotation of CDDCC Meeting Locations**

Howard Scholey said that this item had been requested by Maxine Smith. He himself saw various pros and cons. Two significant cons were that:-

- Crathes Hall provides a meeting room free, whereas other locations might well not
- Crathes Hall had reserved a regular monthly Wednesday evening slot for CDDCC, even to the point of turning down the opportunity of a remunerative weekly Wednesday booking, which they might not be prepared to do free – or even at all - on a less-frequent basis

There followed a general discussion, including whether:-

- there was value to rotating locations
- the forthcoming availability of the new Drumoak School made a difference
- the potential cost of rotating was within CDDCC's resources
- Kirkton of Durris should be left out because it was not on a convenient bus route
- Drumoak should be the only location, since the majority of the population in the CDDCC Area could walk to a meeting from there
- over the years, many permutations of location had been tried (one or more of the Drumoak Church, Drumoak Public, Crathes and Kirkton Halls, one or more of the Drumoak, Woodlands, Crathes and Crossroads Schools, the Irvine Arms) with zero apparent effect on public turnout.

Maxine Smith offered the views that:-

- the meeting should either remain solely in Crathes or should rotate to all three centres
- the question of money should not be allowed to dominate the discussion, as resources could be obtained from elsewhere

Howard Scholey stated that he would be uncomfortable about CDDCC taking money from third parties. David Morrish said that he agreed, because such a practice could lead to doubts about CDDCC's independence, particularly in respect of planning matters.

John Hopkins said that the cost of funding rotating meeting locations could probably be absorbed within the overall Admin Grant if CDDCC went back exclusively to unpaid volunteer minute-takers. He would be content to step aside.

Howard Scholey proposed that CDDCC members should take time individually to consider the issues further and that the subject should be discussed again at the next meeting.

### 10.2 Meeting to Discuss CDDCC Process, etc.

David Morrish reminded CDDCC that he had proposed that a private meeting of CDDCC members be held (outwith the normal cycle) to debate more fully “process” issues of the type aired in Maxine Smith’s email of 6 May. Angela Bichan made the point that the earlier decision not to hold a monthly meeting of CDDCC in July gave an ideal opportunity for this. To propose a date and venue for this, during July (**Action: David Morrish**)

### 10.3 Community Council Elections (November)

Howard Scholey said that he proposed to ask Willie Munro what assistance could be possible, with the task of attracting candidates for the forthcoming election. It was noted that – in the event that a vote(s) was required – Aberdeenshire Council already undertake to assist in the conduct thereof.

## 11. Next Meeting

Crathes Hall – 6<sup>th</sup> August at 1930 hours.

DISTRIBUTION				
EMAIL	EMAIL	EMAIL	EMAIL	WEBSITE
CDDCC Councillors	Kirkton of Durris Hall Notice Board (via Gillian Edward)	Insp. Stuart Ednie	Maureen Newlands (KMAP/MAP/STP)	<a href="http://www.durris.net/">http://www.durris.net/</a> (also for previous minutes)
Cllrs. Linda Clark, Karen Clark, Jill Webster (Ward 16)	Crathes Hall Notice Board (via Nicola Chambury)		Alison Ritchie, Community Learning	
Cllrs. Peter Bellarby, Graeme Clark, Raymond Christie, Wendy Agnew (Ward 18)	Drumoak Church Hall Notice Board (via Mary Robertson)	PC David Mitchell	<b>BY POST</b> Banchory Public Library	<b>BY HAND</b> Park Shop Drumoak Post Office
Mr W Munro, Area Manager, Kincardine & Mearns				
Mr L Allen, Area Manager, Marr	Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator - Alister Bisset	Local Newsletter Editor – Marion McNeil		