



Responding to community needs

**CRATHES, DRUMOAK & DURRIS COMMUNITY COUNCIL (CDDCC)
MINUTES OF MEETING
19:30 WEDNESDAY, 28th SEPTEMBER 2016
KIRKTON OF DURRIS HALL**

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Community Councillors: Mike Taylor, David Reaich (Acting Chair), Peter Renwick, Mark Ansell, Howard Scholey

Aberdeenshire Councillors: Graeme Clark, Linda Clark

Members of Public: Tina Milne, Dr John McKeown .

Minute taker: Howard Scholey

Apologies: Cllr Raymond Christie, David Morrish, Marion McNeil, James O'Flynn

2. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES

Mark Ansell proposed approval of the minutes of the Community Council meeting held on 7th September, which was seconded by Mike Taylor. **Action MM to post minutes at standard locations**

3. POLICE REPORT

There had been no police report this month, but a number of issues were raised by members.

David Reaich reported that there had been a hit and run accident on the A93 in Drumoak a few weeks previously involving a cyclist and a white van. The van driver had subsequently been identified..

Graeme Clark reported that there had been an accident the previous day on the A957 Slug Road, with a vehicle overturned in a field, and he asked members to remind local residents of the increased risk of skidding on roads becoming wet after a prolonged mainly dry period.

Linda Clark reported that she had been made aware of an increase in the number of cold-calling informal traders recently, particularly with offers to remove unwanted material and waste, which was giving rise to an increase in fly tipping. She asked people to ensure that they only dealt with identifiable legitimate traders and avoid offers from anonymous cold callers whether for services or goods.

4. DURRIS INTERNET

Mark Ansell reported that he had been liaising closely with Durriss resident Amanda Meyer who had been in contact with Community Broadband

Scotland in an effort to see what could be done to improve the broadband connectivity in Woodlands of Durriss and the surrounding area. He urged all residents in the area to register their interest in improved broadband performance by visiting the **Digital Scotland** website. It is understood that the more people who register from a given area, the more likely it is to move-up the queue for enhanced connections.

Dr John McKeown said that he had been pursuing this issue since before Drumoak had been connected to fibre optic cables. He was a leading campaigner for faster broadband connections to the general Durriss area, representing as he does a community of NHS professionals and academics in the vicinity who are critically dependent on good internet connections for their professional life. The whole community is currently severely handicapped by low download, and particularly upload speeds. He pointed out that Kirkwood, the developer for the small new housing development in Woodlands of Durriss had arranged to get fibre connection, but no attempt was made to piggy-back wider connection to surrounding areas. Several efforts have been made to involve **Community Broadband Scotland**, but so far with little tangible result. He pointed out that a conduit had been laid from a fibre cabinet on the South Deeside Road to Woodlands, but to date no attempt had been made to utilise this infrastructure to deliver faster broadband to the wider Durriss area. Graeme Clark informed the meeting that he would be attending a meeting between Aberdeenshire Council and BT the following day. He would use the case of Durriss and its community of NHS professionals and academics living in rural locations as a prime example of the need to implement better broadband connections to meet Aberdeenshire Council's policy of encouraging rural business development.

It is proposed to set up a sub-committee of the Community Council to pursue the issue of high speed internet connectivity within our communities. The subcommittee will be chaired by Mark Ansell, who will be recruiting interested members of the local community to serve with him and raise awareness. **Action MA.**

Graeme Clark suggested that the CDDCC should write to Stephen Archer to point out the internet connectivity problems in our area, stressing the direct connection with Aberdeenshire Council's stated policy to encourage rural home working. **Action MA**

5. FINANCE

Peter Renwick reported that no payments from the CDDCC account had been made in the last month, but he was aware that there were outstanding amounts owing to members who had been conducting business on behalf of the Council. He urged members to submit bills by Monday 24th October in order to close the accounts before the AGM in November.

6. WIND FARM FUNDS

The Meikle Carewe wind farm fund administered by KDP will be holding a funding award meeting in November, but there do not appear to be any applications from our area

There are three applications from the CDDCC area for the Midhill wind farm fund, all of which have been reviewed by the Community Council. These were for:-

Woodend Barn for funds towards the community allotments	£1,000
Drumoak Church Hall	£1,150
Drumoak Community defibrillator and case	£1,900

Mark Ansell stated that all the applications appeared to meet the criteria for funding and requested approval, which was unanimously given. He pointed out that there was still a significant surplus for the CDDCC area in the fund. Eligible community based organisations should be encouraged to take advantage of this facility.

7. PLANNING

No planning applications that required attention from the CDDCC have been submitted since the last meeting.

Park Quarry Peter Renwick reminded the meeting that the Pre Determination Hearing on the proposal by CHAP for a 1500 house development at Park Quarry would be held at Drumoak School next Thursday 6th October. The texts for all submissions-in-person should be submitted to Karen McWilliam by tomorrow.

There followed a short discussion reiterating the several points of established planning policy that the Community Council believe are clearly violated by this application. It was stressed that where possible, individual submissions should avoid duplicating the points made in the CDDCC submission, the text of which had previously been distributed and approved.

Crathes Housing. All the submissions from the CDDCC and members of the community that had voiced their concerns had now been made, but as yet there is no date set for hearing this application before the Marr Area Committee. It was noted that submissions opposing grant of permission for the revision of the original planning application to build 45 houses at the site had been made from Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Policy Unit, Roads Department and Education. Peter Renwick reminded the meeting that although there appears to be a formidable array of opponents to the revised plan, the developer may yet go to appeal if the Area Committee turn down the application.

8. ROAD SAFETY

Crathes Castle In the ongoing conversations with the roads department the Community Council have submitted an e-mail supporting the proposal to extend the 40mph Crathes limit on the A93 to cover the entrance to the castle. It was felt that the response of roads to this issue, offering the possibility of some fixed "Slow Down" warning signs was inadequate, and generally in line with the rather dismissive and high-handed approach that the department tends to adopt in response to community requests to review the setting of speed limits.

Linda Clark undertook to speak to Karen Clark and Jill Webster on this matter, both of whom had expressed their strong support for the introduction of a speed limit around the castle entrance.

Graeme Clark commented that the Castle entrance was not the only hazard at this location. The increasing use of the show ground field on the opposite side of the road, along with the already popular Milton of Crathes site combined with pedestrians crossing the road to access the bus stops, all meant that leaving this stretch of road at the national limit of 60mph was clearly dangerous.

Kirkton of Durriss. No developments beyond an e-mail in July from Philip Leiper saying that it is under consideration.

Safe access to Drumoak School. Mike Taylor reported that he has had a series of e-mail communications with the Roads Department on the subject. Some of the requested alterations to 20mph signage appear to be waiting on the implementation of new Road Traffic Orders, but other issues such as the removal of an inappropriate barrier outside the church hall appear to be be batted back and forth between Roads Dept. and the James Gregory Road developer Stewart Milne.

Water on Sunnyside Drive Despite Mike Taylor having first raised this issue with Roads Dept. in February, the solution is still being debated between themselves and Stewart Milne. Meanwhile, autumn (and frost) draws-on apace!

Speed monitoring, Slug Road, Crathes No Developments

9. COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

David Reaich suggested that in view of the recent agreement of David Morrish and James O'Flynn to join the community council as co-opted members, it was appropriate that another call for public nominations to the Community Council should be made in time for the November AGM. This was agreed unanimously and Howard Scholey was asked to arrange the process. Linda Clark agreed to act as returning officer. **Action HS**

10. WEBSITE/E-MAIL ADDRESS

David Reaich announced that the new Community Council website and e-mail account were now both operational, and he urged all members to ensure that they were able to access the e-mail account.

11. AOB

The community Council learned with great sadness of the recent death of Jenny Watson. As well as being a well known and respected resident of long standing, she had served with distinction for many years both as an Aberdeenshire Councillor and as a Community Councillor. She will be remembered with affection and respect by the community and we extend our sincere condolences to Jenny's family.

Linda Clark apologised on behalf of herself and Graeme that they would be unable to attend next Saturday's Crathes Fly owing to Bye-election commitments elsewhere in the shire on that day.

Greame Clark reported that NESTRANS are proposing that the car park at Crathes Hall should be developed as a Park-and-ride site for Deeside. He pointed out that if this came to fruition, warning signs would need to be erected on the A93 because of the need for people to cross the road to catch Aberdeen-bound busses.

Peter Renwick reported that he had not yet arranged for Janelle Clark to address a meeting of the Community Council on the subject of affordable housing. He suggested that this should be arranged for the first meeting after the AGM in November.

There being no other competent business, the meeting was closed at 21:20