

Feughdee West Community Council
Online Meeting
Approved Minutes
24th September 2020

Present: Simon Richards (Chair), Jill Randalls (Secretary), Ross Clephan (Treasurer), Marijke Stallaert (minutes), Ian Bertram, Cecilia Rogers, Peter Tyrrell, Iain Adams, Sam Wylde
Banchory and Mid Deeside Councillors: Cllr Bruce, Cllr Ross
(No members of public present as online meeting)

1) Apologies: Lynsey Craig, Ian Brockie, Katy Rumbles, Sam Wylde

2) Approve minutes of the August meeting: proposed by Iain Adams and seconded by Ian Bertram.

3) Police Report:

The secretary circulated police reports on 06/09/2020

The police advised to report suspicious activities linked to drug dealing. Vulnerable people are being targeted in local villages and towns.

Cllr Bruce added that Identity theft is a current issue with personal information being stolen from blue recycling bins. Other local scams include Amazon membership telephone calls, refunds re speeding convictions, TV licence scams etc.

I.B was aware of suspicious offers of bitumen road resurfacing via door-to-door sales.

Cllr Ross advised to contact Trading Standards and report any door-to-door sales people in order to safe guard vulnerable people.

4) Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer has sent out the monthly report by email (date 22.9.2020).

Total funds as of 24/09/2020 = £2,608.90.

Balance of unrestricted funds = £1,287.67.

The Glendye Snowgate Webcam is still not working, despite heroic efforts by the Treasurer. Waiting on BT to fix the DSL line.

5) Councillor's report:

Cllr Ross reported that she had attended a full council meeting (online) earlier that day in which the council's performance over the past year was reviewed. She had been contacted by a member of the public re the amount of potholes along the Garrol Road. However, due to budget constraints and Covid, potholes must now meet certain criteria before being fixed.

Cllr Bruce reported back that the Council's work is continuing despite restrictions and that savings will need to be made for the foreseeable future. This may involve sharing services and spaces.

Fetteresso windfarm application is to go before Marr Area Committee on 29.09.20. Aberdeenshire Planning department are recommending an objection.

Kincardine and Deeside Befrienders continue to provide a great service via the phone line. Details are available from Cllr Bruce to pass onto anyone who might benefit from this type of support.

The Secretary asked on behalf of a local resident about 'the science behind the traffic cones on Banchory High Street'. The Cllrs sympathised with frustrated residents and business owners. However they explained that although there may be some room for movement and flexibility, and possibly more attractive planters replacing the cones, the Spaces for People Initiative is here to stay. Details will be sent to the secretary to pass on.

6) Secretary's Report:

All correspondence received has been forwarded where appropriate.

- Blackhall Woodland creation : a response has been submitted to the agent based on the salient points put forward by IB. The response was also sent to John Mackie of Scottish Forestry who would like a further discussion with FWCC.
- Consultation Aberdeenshire Roads dept. - comments have to be received by the 2nd of October.
- Infrastructure spending. A request from the King Edward CC for comments regarding the councils funding of maintenance for bridges
- Digital Skills Pilot: The secretary has put her name forward to take part in this
- Updated Guidance from Marr Area outlining how CC's should be operating during the pandemic.
- Chair of Mid Deeside CC had asked for an update on the boundary change relating to 5 properties in Mid Deeside. An email has been sent outlining where we are in the process of dissolution and that a boundary change would not be considered until the new CC's were formed.

7) Junior Councillor Report: No junior councillors present

8) Dissolution :

Following a phone conversation with Marr Area the following points were noted:

- ERO have been contacted but won't release the electoral roll until an election date has been proposed.
- The mapping Officer has been contacted and will draw up the new CC maps with the boundary as agreed. He will work with the ERO regarding the boundaries of each new CC.
- The two village halls have been contacted re the possibility of holding elections. FWCC will work with the two Halls to risk assess and plan how elections can be safely carried out within government guidelines.
- Poster advertising the election is currently being developed.
- Nomination forms are usually placed in public places such as the library as well as being sent out electronically. Thought to be given as to how nominations forms can be made available to those not able to access a computer.
- Draft constitutions for the new CC's should be commenced. It should be noted that constitutions might be amended during the life of the CC. Marr Area to be kept informed of progress of draft constitution
- Voting is normally during a two hour time period. Consideration needs to be given to the most beneficial timings.
- A possible timetable could be as follows:
 - 1) Call for nominations (ie the day that the notices are displayed advertising the election) 13th Oct
 - 2) Closing date - 10th November (20 days after call for nominations).
 - 3) Ballot date - 24th November
 - 4) First meeting of new CC (must be within 15 days of the ballot) 8th Dec

- If the number of nominations received is equal to or less than the number of available seats on the new CC then a ballot does not need to be held.

- At the closing date/time (for nominations to be submitted) Marr can report how many nominations have been received. However a nomination cannot be withdrawn after the deadline. They can withdraw up until the closing time but not after. In that case if more nominations are received than the max number of seats then it must proceed to a ballot.

- FWCC members would be available to help with the ballot.

CLlr Bruce suggested that a Saturday morning and afternoon would be a better time for the potential ballot, therefore allowing the ballot to happen on the same day in both Inchmarlo and Strachan.

Action – JR to approach Marr Area.

Natural Power have accepted FWCC's suggested changes to the draft legal agreement.

9) Transport roads and infrastructure:

No items discussed.

10) Mid Hill Community Benefit:

Feedback from the sub committee annual review –

JR gave a summary of the main changes to the Mid Hill Community Benefit paperwork, comprising of five documents.

1. Application forms (long and short forms) – Removal of independent reference requirement from both forms. Sections now run in order (not 1,2,C). A couple of questions amalgamated into a single question to reduce overall size.
2. Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair and Secretary - Limit to post holder time in office to 3 years in line with CC. Chair has to produce an annual report to present at the AGM which will then be forwarded to FO. Requirement for the Chair to provide training for FWCC colleagues and others (local residents) to ensure everyone is fully understanding of the process.
3. Sub Committee - Length of time of post holders in office.
4. FO Guidelines - a few formatting tweaks but main change is about the applicant being able to demonstrate community benefit and ensure a completion report is submitted at the end of the project, as this will be captured in the sub group annual report.

The Chair thanked LC for all the hard work she has put into this.

Vote to accept the changes was unanimous.

Application for continued funding for the Glen Dye Snow Gate Web Camera – It was agreed that as the web cam was of benefit to the wider community then the application for £1000 should be approved.

Vote taken to approve the application was unanimous.

11) Planning:

There were no planning applications this month.

On going Planning issues:

1. Castlewood

The Chair confirmed that FWCC submitted several questions to the Planning dept. regarding approval to change 25 holiday residencies to permanent residential use without the consultation of the local community.

CLLrs Bruce and Ross confirmed that they were not allowed to comment on this issue even though it was not a planning application.

2. Glendye Wind Farm - Additional information

The secretary raised the issue that some important comments made by FWCC in their response to this application, had not been included in the précis in the Council's report to Marr Area. Cllr Ross advised to contact the Planning Dept. and make them aware of the perceived omission.

11) Education and Youth:

Nothing to report (MS).

Cllr Bruce reported that discussions re. Strachan school are on going but consultations hampered by the pandemic.

13) Climate and Environment:

CR reported that the Local Climate Action Network in Banchory were proposing that Banchory become a wildlife friendly town and were currently looking into possible funding. They had responded to the NESTRANS consultation.

The Aberdeen Climate Action Network is now online. A link is available from CR.
Internationally the climate news is very concerning.

14) Communication :

IB reported that a sub group meeting took part two weeks ago. The main points discussed were:

- the quality and reach of local broadband.
- the need to revisit the topic of fibre optic cables.
- junior participation.
- the need to keep the notice boards up to date.

A further meeting is planned for mid October.

JR is to ensure that FWCC contact details are printed on the agenda for display.

15) Glendye Forest Management (deer fencing/ tree harvesting)

The Chair had a meeting with Derek Cowie, the forest manager for Glendye/Fasque estate. The notes of this meeting have been sent to all CCs. SR was of the opinion that we need more knowledge and understanding of the formal process. SR explained that the planned meeting with John Mackie from the Forestry Commission could help shape our understanding in forming a community response.

SR proposed we form a workgroup to work on a response to Glendye Estate. Simon, Lynsey, Sam, Ross and Jill agreed to be part of this.

Action - SR to arrange a zoom meeting between this sub group and John Mackie to get some advice on how to best respond.

Biodiversity Project in Strachan

JR explained that The Green Space Team (Aberdeenshire Council) are proposing to sow wildflowers, create a wetland and plant a community orchard in 186m² space to the east of Strachan play park. Members of FWCC are in favour of this, but would like to be involved in any consultation especially with regards to the type of wildflower mix, ideally a native wild flower selection. Cllrs agreed that local community consultation was a valid request, and reported that this was still very much at the initial stages of discussion. With current budget cuts it is uncertain if this project will go ahead.

16) AOB:

MS reported that the deer fence was now in place in the forest at Shooting Greens and the Hill of Gouche. Three gates have been put in place due to efforts of the local residents.

MS also stated that the Clan Strachan Trust has bought the Feughside Inn. The aim is to run as a tourist facility whilst keeping an ancient Inn within the community.

JR raised the issue of speeding off road motorcycles through the Bogendreip area, making the tracks hazardous for walkers, riders and cyclists. The use of off road bike on the estate should be reported to the police.

17) Date of next meeting - Thursday 29th of October 2020 – online.

Meeting closed at 21.02 hrs.

