

Lochgelly Community Council

Wednesday 13th January 2016

1. Welcome & Apologies

BS welcomed everyone along to the Community Council meeting and hoped that everyone had a lovely Christmas and New Year period.

Apologies: Rab Miller, John King, Jon Magee & Cllr Linda Erskine

Present:, Brian Schulz (BS), George Kinnell (GK), Tam Durham (TD), David Hemseed (DH), Alan Gardiner (AG), Jim Mann (JM), Carol Mackie (CM), Jean McDonald (JMc) and Stevie Murray (SM).

Councillors Present: Councillors Mark Hood (MH)

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Proposed as accurate CM, Seconded JM

3. Matters Arising

DH asked about the Lizzie Brae. LE confirmed that the work had been completed.

DH asked about the pantomime tickets, BS will arrange a paper for discussing at the September meeting.

BS advised that he had received an invite to the Burns Supper which he had declined. He had thanked Mossmorran for the tickets.

Agreed to renew the website for now. Look at using FifeDirect and a facebook page

Lochgelly Health Centre sub-group arranged to meet on Monday 17th January at 6pm in the 385 Social club.

Common Good Fund – SM had circulated the area paper which had been presented to Councillors at the previous ward meeting. He explained that the paper sets out the principles which would be followed using the investment from the Common good funds across Fife.

MH explained that whilst he isn't an expert in this area, Officers had provided a brief summary of how these schemes operate. In effect the Community Councils can choose to invest as much or as little as they decide and it is retained in an investment fund for a set period of time. Communities could withdraw the money at any time, however it would need to be clarified about the penalties which may be incurred. MH advised that it is really down to the Community Council to decide.

GK advised that he would rather retain the money in the bank account, that there was no guarantee that any investments would give a return.

TD suggested that we invest £30k with the project and that the remainder is retained for community common good funds.

SM agreed that there was a great deal of uncertainty with investments, although as we had witnessed with the banking crises there are no guarantees with keeping the money in a bank either. SM asked that we get someone from Fife Council to attend a future meeting and explain how the money would be managed and how accessible it would be.

Agreed that we ask for a briefing from officers before further discussion is held and that in the meantime all applications are frozen.

4. Post Office Services

CM highlighted that there had been numerous complaints made to her about the standard of the service that is being provided. She had received several complaints from various people across the town. The complaints range from the opening hours, staff being unable to deal with the request, running out of stamps and general customer service.

CM also advised that people are travelling to Lochore or Cowdenbeath to get their services which is completely unacceptable.

Cllr Hood advised that he had also had various complaints about the post office and would pass on the contact details to SM.

5. Financial Matters

The current financial balance is:

- General Account = £956.39 subject to expected expenditure
- Special Projects = £3541.39 (Jubilee Park)

Floral Grant for 2016 has been cut to £429. General discussion took place about this and disappointment at the level of the reduction. SM to raise this with the Council.

GK advised that the new environment group growing Lochgelly had been allocated £1500 which has to be used for improving the main streets through the town. They were looking at specific flowers from Lumphinnans road through to Auchterderran Rd.

BS suggested that that the CC look at focusing on specific areas, e.g. the Lochgelly Round-a-bout. SM to get prices for tubs etc.

DH advised that there used to be nice flower barrels opposite the High School, it is sad that these are no longer there. DH suggested that the Lochgelly Heritage group do the same as Benarty and link the trails.

6. Communications

- Planning Applications for Fife (emailed)
- Update of Web Site domain name (agreed to purchase)

7. External Groups which CC attend

a. Public Park Improvement group

SM spoke through the most recent discussions at the group meeting. He advised that the Sod Cutting was scheduled to take place on Thursday at 2pm. Members of the CC were invited to attend.

The resurfacing work in the Children's play area was agreed and we are working with the Council Officers to arrange dates for commencement of the work.

Picnic benches will be installed next to the childrens' play area, the wild flower area and close to the new MUGA court. The group are also seeking discussion with Police Scotland and Fife Council about the security camera's for the MUGA area.

The group are seeking to engage with the local community to see what ideas they may have about the Red Ash area. This is currently only used once a year for the gala day and for the remainder of the time is unused. Additionally, the group agreed to look at planting trees on the grass panels running alongside the road & red ash and wildflower areas as well.

The Sensory garden will also commence this year with the top level tennis court being grassed over in preparation of the raised bedding. The lower level tennis court would be planned for the older children's play area.

- b. Mossmorran Safety Liaison Committee – No meetings BS to get dates of future meetings
- c. 4 Wind Development Trust – SM reminded councillors that a members meeting had been arranged for Monday 1st February. No further meeting has been scheduled.
- d. Living Lomond Hills Trust
Next meeting being arranged for w/c 24th January.

8. Councillors Report

MH advised that Rockgelly would be commencing between April and May for completion in April 2017. They are keen to get representatives of the community involved and will liaise with him in the first instance.

MH spoke about the budget pressures faced by the Council following the Scottish Governments settlement in December. The situation was particular poor prior to this, however we now need to look for a further £18 million pounds of savings for 2016/17, in total this makes about £38 million to be removed from balances. Over the three year period it is anticipated that the savings will equate to £91 million. There is no way of making this level of cuts without impacting on services and reducing staff numbers.

The budget is currently available through Fife Direct and it is important that people express their views on these cuts.

The Council will consider increasing Council Tax by as much as 7.5% to help with this shortfall. This would cover the penalty that Fife Council would face by not freezing the tax (£4.6 million) and would on average be an increase of £2 per month.

MH explained that the outcome of the recent Equal Pay cases against Fife Council has exacerbated the situation, however it is correct that inequalities are dealt with and people paid properly.

There was a general discussion on the budget situation and dismay that the settlements forced upon all Councils in Scotland is far worse than the austerity measures were anticipated to be.

9. AOCB

- a. Accessing the Public Park from Auchterderran Road – MH to contact transportation about bollards or barriers being erected to stop access next to the bungalows.
- b. Date of next meeting –
 - i. **Wednesday 10th February 2016, 6.00 in the 385 Social Club**