

## **Lochgelly Community Council Chairperson Report 2016**

This report is prepared for the 2016 Annual General Meeting to cover some of the areas which I have been directly involved with as Chairperson of Lochgelly Community Council.

### **Health Centre Campaign**

Earlier this year the Community Council agreed that something was needed to improve our health facilities in the town.

Lochgelly Health Centre is simply inadequate to provide the level and types of care needed! If we got a new build then there would be the opportunity to provide different forms of treatment which helps people to deal with whatever problems they have. The Social Prescribing care model developed within the Health Round Table, which has been widely applauded and is being rolled out across Fife, which the Community Council instigated. This holistic approach looks for ways of prevention as opposed to treatment of the symptoms by directing the patients to the correct specialist.

Since our campaign started we have held public meetings, forced the NHS to speed up their assessment process, had questions raised in the Scottish Parliament, received public support from all political parties and received assurances about land availability. We have also included members of the public through the online and public petition signing and preparing a template letter for them to send to the Health Minister.

### **Protecting our Town Hall**

The Community Council have continually raised our concerns about the future of the Town Hall. It is constantly under threat and we have called upon the Councillors to get assurances about its future. We have asked that if an alternative delivery model is sought that it needs to be community based ownership. The people involved must be properly supported and have the correct experience in this field. Our position has been, so far, supported the Councillors who regularly attend our meetings.

### **SURF Most Improved Town Award 2016**

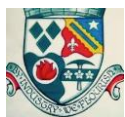
We were extremely pleased to have received the nomination for the most improved town in Scotland award and winning it was a tremendous achievement. This is clearly recognition of the work undertaken over several years to improve the town. The Community Council has played a significant part in the regeneration of the town. Some of the projects are mentioned in the Secretaries report, however there are many more areas of improvement including

- Town Centre development
- Removal of the old cinema
- Refurbishment of the Miners institute
- Ore Valley Business Centre
- Main Street Flats and shop development
- Redevelopment of the old co-op buildings

These are some of the physical projects which have helped the town achieve the nomination.

### **4 Winds Development Trust**

Lochgelly Community Council have continued to participate in the work of the Community Development fund. Over the last 12 months we have, as Trustees ensured that the systems which support the administrative functions of the Trust have been improved. The Trust have new members from the other



three Community Councils which is pleasing. Importantly though the funds provided from the Little Raith Wind Farm have been distributed to a wide range of community groups across the four towns.

### **Opposing Car Parking Restrictions**

Earlier in the year we were invited to comment on proposals for the enforcement of car parking restrictions on Main Street (West). We took the opportunity to use our new facebook and websites to generate interest from local residents to help inform our response. We received no favourable responses to the proposals, indeed we were given a petition with over 200 signatures opposed. We provided our response and used all of our local Councillors to support our position. Officers of the Council progressed with their plan and whilst Councillors from outwith the Town attempted to support its introduction, our position prevailed.

### **Transparency & Accountability**

This is an area which we have strived to improve upon over the previous 12 months. There is little doubt that accessibility to information has been an area which was sorely needing to be improved upon. The creation of the Community Council websites where members of the town can access all information pertaining to our activities is a step in the right direction. We have of course maintained the traditional form of minutes being retained in the community centre. Using social media to publicise our meetings is another means of encouraging community engagement and it is a method that we will continue to grow.

### **New Community Councillors**

This year we saw a number of new Community Councillors join (Raymond Wilson, Billy Baxter, Alex Dixon and Jimmy Mann). Although work and family commitments can restrict peoples' ability to attend the meeting it is pleasing that we have managed to continue with 15 Community Councillors when many communities across Scotland and the UK do not have active community Councils.

### **Remembrance Day – Flag Pole and Flag**

When the Town House was closed we were given assurances that the flag and flag pole would be sited in a location visible for Remembrance Day commemorations. Initially Fife Council were unable to identify funds to replace the damaged pole and flag for this years' event. Pleasingly though, through persistence funding was secured for anew pole and flag and discussions are ongoing about the permanent location of the flag pole.

### **Town Clock**

The town clock hasn't been working for a number of years following the refurbishment of the Co-op buildings. Continually this has been raised at the Community Council meeting, which was met with varying explanations as to why it couldn't be fixed and taking so long. We have maintained with the campaign for it to be fixed and after much persistence it was fixed this year.

**Brian Schulz**  
**Chairperson**

