

**MINUTES OF THE 300TH BUSINESS MEETING
OF THE
STONEHAVEN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

HELD IN THE COWIE LOUNGE OF THE INVERCARRON RESOURCE CENTRE
ON TUESDAY 10 JANUARY 2006

PRESENT:

Community Councillors: Derek Stewart, Douglas Dykes, Pamela Dobbie, Sarah Dickinson, Raymond Christie, Ian Hunter, Duncan Cursiter, Mary Jackson, Jane Davidson, Ditta Neumann, Margaret Ross, Allan Cairnduff, Peter Bellarby, Sean Fraser and Lyn Jardine

Kincardine & Mearns Councillors: George Swapp – Mearns North; Mike Sullivan – Stonehaven North and Fetteresso; Jack Morrison – Stonehaven Central; Councillor Wendy Agnew – Stonehaven South.

Minutes Secretary: Monica Haddock

A Sergeant from Grampian Police and two members of the Press were in attendance. Approximately 60 members of the public were also in attendance for the item on the new waste management system.

Item	Description	Action/Date
1.	Apologies An apology was received from Isabel Parkes.	
2.	Minutes of Meeting held on 13 December 2005 The Minutes were proposed by Sarah Dickinson and seconded by Allan Cairnduff following a change to the wording to the third line of Item 8 on page 3 – the word “every” should be changed to “some”.	
3.	Crime Prevention A Sergeant from Grampian Police gave a report, stating that from 15-18 December there had been 1 assault, 6 thefts from cars and 6 vandalism to cars. For the period 19 December to 1 January there had been 19 thefts from cars. There were 73 crime reports in total for December. Christmas was a relatively quiet period and Hogmanay brought no more problems than normal. After giving his report the Sergeant left the meeting.	
4.	Refuse Collection & Recycling Arrangements See attached note of points made during the discussion on this subject. After most members of the public had left the meeting, discussions continued amongst the Members of the Community Council. Pamela Dobbie said that the Community Council had to convey to the Council the strength of feeling amongst the public in Stonehaven. She said that the officers would require to come up with some answers. Jane Davidson advised that there is no collection of plastic from the Leisure Centre and that this should be rectified. Allan Cairnduff wanted the list of possible questions he put together from letters to the Mearns Leader included in the letter to be written to Councillor Audrey Findlay.	

Ian Hunter said the meeting must be set up correctly and they should invite the highest authority to come to the public meeting.

Douglas Dykes said that solutions were required from the officials. Ian Hunter said that when writing to the Council the attitude of officials should be mentioned. He suggested that the Community Council write to William Munro, the Kincardine and Mearns Area Manager, and let him decide who would be the most appropriate officials to attend the public meeting.

It was agreed to write a letter to Councillor Audrey Findlay, copied to Council Alison McInnes, Chair of the Infrastructure Services Committee, and also copied to William Munro, advising them of the public opinion in Stonehaven.

Jane Davidson went on to say that people had been leaving their rubbish beside the skips in the Leisure Centre car park and some of it was blowing around the park. Douglas Dykes advised her that any Member of the Community Council could phone the appropriate Service within the Council and ask for a collection of rubbish to be made.

Margaret Ross said that there was no recycling point at the west end of Stonehaven and she suggested that one should be established at the Redcloak shops.

5. Christmas Decoration Displays – Announcement of Winners

The winners of the Christmas decoration displays were announced as Best Domestic Garden – 29 & 30 Farrochie Park; Best Shop – Robertson the Bakers; Best Building – Kincardine Community Hospital.

The winners will be invited to come along to the next Community Council meeting to be presented with their awards. Secretary to write them invitations. Secretary
17/1/06

6. Scottish Executive Discussion Paper on Role of Community Councils

Raymond Christie said he thought this item should be deferred to the next Members meeting as he felt the full Council should discuss it. Derek Stewart asked everybody to gather their thoughts for the next meeting on 7th February.

Peter Bellarby then reminded Members that Craig Whyte from the Kincardine & Mearns area Partnership was also invited to speak to members at this meeting

7. Grampian TV Programme for Hogmanay

Douglas Dykes said the public had been very disappointed by this broadcast as it had been advertised as being “Live from the Fireballs” when clearly much of it was not. He asked the Community Council to write to Grampian TV to express those sentiments. This was agreed. Secretary
17/1/06
Mary Jackson said she had e-mailed her own comments to Grampian TV the day after the broadcast. She also said that they had their facts wrong about the population of Stonehaven etc.

Councillor Wendy Agnew said they had also clearly used an old clip for part of the broadcast.

Ian Hunter said this was the problem with local media. He said programmes such as the quizzes that were on the television were exploiting the vulnerable and we needed to raise the quality of the broadcasts.

8. Reports and Projects Update

After some discussion it was agreed that all Committee Reports in future should be e-mailed to all Members prior to Members Informal Meeting each month and the Secretary would then send these out with the Agenda.

(a) Planning

Pam Dobbie advised that there were two plans for house extensions that the Community Council needed to discuss. One was 9 Dunnottar Avenue where Brian Watt said it was not approved and the other was at 19 Urie Crescent. Planning Committee 17/1/06

She also reported that there were plans for an extension to the car park at Dunnottar Castle but no plans for toilets to be built there. The Planning Committee will draft a letter for the Secretary to send to Planning Services and copied to Dunecht Estates. Planning Committee 17/1/06

Derek Stewart asked the Councillor present if they would back the Community Council in their bid to get Dunecht Estates to build toilets and Councillor Swapp said they would, although this was a separate issue from the car park extension.

Sarah Dickinson also pointed out that there was a DDA issue here as the toilets within the Castle were inaccessible to disabled people.

Ian Hunter asked if this item could be put on to the next Agenda. He also wanted to discuss the proposed development at Braehead. At this point Councillor Agnew declared an interest and left the meeting. Secretary 7/2/06

Councillor Swapp said there was still plenty of time for objections to be lodged against this development. He said some of the objections that had been made to him were loss of amenity; bad junction; pressure on schools and adverse effect on the scenic beauty of the area.

It was pointed out that although the Aberdeenshire Local Plan allowed for the building of 25 houses in the area, Stewart Milne were proposing to build 34. Planning Committee 17/1/06

The Community Council unanimously agreed to object to these proposals.

(b) The Future of Stonehaven

Sarah Dickinson said that new members to this Committee would be welcome and at that point, Lyn Jardine volunteered and was welcomed on to the group.

(c) Stonehaven Horizon Project

Derek Stewart had circulated a report on this.

(d) The Fossil Group

There was nothing to report from this group at this time.

(e) Disability Discrimination Act

The question of toilets at Dunnottar Castle was raised again and also wheelie bins were felt to be an issue both with regard to disabled people moving the bins and also with access problems in the town with wheeled bins being left on the pavements.

- (f) Youth Award
Duncan Cursiter advised that his Committee proposed to give this year's Hannah Dyson Youth Award to Sophie Ramsay of Westfield Park.

Sophie had a horse riding accident last April where her horse fell on top of her and she was left badly injured. Her injuries included a broken pelvis and she had to remain in hospital for 20 weeks. Her Guidance Teacher from the Mackie Academy put her forward for this award as Sophie's attitude and bravery were an example to all during the time of her recovery.

Duncan said he was looking for Members to support this proposal and all agreed that Sophie was a very worthy recipient. Duncan would make the necessary arrangements or award presentation. Duncan Cursiter
17/1/06

- (g) Visit to SACC AGM
Raymond Christie agreed to defer his report until the next meeting due to time constraints.

Douglas Dykes advised of correspondence received:

Proposed Windfarm at Clochnahill

Applicants have been invited to present their plans at our Members meeting on 7 February.

CC Forum – The Secretary asked for any items the Members wanted to be put on the Agenda for the next CC Forum which was due to be held on 23 February. Ian Hunter said he wanted the consultation process of the Council to be discussed and he also advised that he would attend the Forum. Pamela Dobbie asked for waste management to be discussed. Derek Stewart also said he would attend the Forum.

Airport Extension – There is a three-month consultation period for this extension, which was to be 300 meters. Peter Bellarby said the Transport Committee would examine the plans and report to Members.

Civic Governance Team – This is a website which keeps Community Councils informed. Everyone can go on and just tick the box to be sent information, newsletters etc. Douglas Dykes Secretary
17/1/06
agreed to pass the web address to all members.

The meeting was closed at 21.45 hours.

Addendum:

A. Correspondence/Brochures IN for information only & available on file:

- a. Dec05 – Aberdeenshire Council Budget Briefing Papers 3,4,5 & 6
- b. Dec05 – Scottish Water Winter Warmer Campaign
- c. Dec05 - Grampian area Natural Heritage Newsletter
- d. 20/12 – Aberdeenshire Council Draft Art Strategy Consultation (by 16 January)
- a. 20/12 – Grampian Fire & Rescue Service Community Risk Reduction Proposals (by 19/3)
- e. 22/12 – Mrs. S McIntosh re proposed plans or residential development at Braehead
- f. 23/12 – Fetteresso Parish Church invite to meet 19 January re Future of Stonehaven
- g. 5/1 – Friends of outdoor Pool re Proposed Paddling Pool versus Skatepark proposals

B. Correspondence 'signed' OUT:

None.

STONEHAVEN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

NOTE OF OPEN DISCUSSION WITH PUBLIC ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Ian Balgowan said that the new system was discriminatory against Kincardineshire as people in Aberdeen City had their wheelie bins emptied every week. Why are we only having our emptied every two weeks? Where people were being told to put their rubbish out in black bags for the meantime, he said this would cause rat infestation. Also a lot of people had bought their own wheelie bins which we now no use.

Andrew Guthrie claimed that the only reason the Council had introduced the new system was for financial reasons.

Alistair Mitchell asked if a survey had been done. He said the Council was using a “one size fits all” policy that couldn’t work.

Richard Corbett asked why aren’t we the same as Aberdeen where there is no charge for extra collections.

David Fleming said he wanted to recycle more but the facilities here were poor. He felt there was confusion within the Council between reducing waste and reducing cost. He also said that the communication received from the Council had been upsetting and that there needed to be a change of style from officials.

Paddy Greenwood said he felt the whole thing had been badly handled. The Council has a duty to its customers. He wants a service that suits him. He said that the recycling facilities here were inadequate and there was no provision for disposal of garden waste. He suggested multiple wheelie bins.

Dave Smillie asked why there was no civic amenity in the town.

Mary Mitchell said she believed the dustbin lorry had come from Germany and so any spare parts would have to be brought from Germany if the vehicle broke down.

Sarah Wilson said that the bins were too heavy to move. She said that in Aberdeen City there was an advice line people could phone if they needed help with their rubbish. She also said that bins on pavements in the town were causing an obstruction especially to prams and wheelchair users.

Karen Forbes said that as the mother of two young children, both in nappies, her bin was going to be very smelly after two weeks. When she phoned the helpline she was told to put the nappies in nappy sacks, which she already does. She also said that all the rubbish lying around the recycling skips at the Leisure Centre were very unsightly and gave a very bad impression of Stonehaven, which is supposed to be a tourist town.

Frank Budd spoke about the tone of the instructions for the use of the wheelie bins sent out by the Council. He said it was very dictatorial and he strongly objected to it.

Andy Bell said he felt there was no point in talking until the appropriate people were here. He stated, “We are not going away”.

Douglas Cusine questioned whether Council officials would turn up to a Public Meeting?

Dr McIntosh asked if the four Councillors present had agreed to these changes.

Cllr Agnew said it had been the Infrastructure Services Committee who made the decision and none of the K&M Councillors were on that Committee. She said she had spoken to Jack Clark and Alistair Black who told her that the Scottish Executive had reduced the time for implementing the new system from 3 years to 7 months and this had obviously caused problems.

Cllr Swapp said he would take the strength of feeling on board.

Cllr Sullivan said if the Council reduced the implementation time from 3 years to 7 months this would produce funding. He said the intention was to reduce waste and was not financial. He said that the Council had set up a Waste Management Working Group that was made up of Council officials and a few Councillors.

Cllr Morrison said that there had not been enough time to organise things properly and he recognised there were problems but he felt that the Council would sort it out in time. He also said he was aware that in the Central Belt households were given multiple bins.

Diane Fleming said that she had phoned the Council Waste Management Service in the summer when she first heard of these plans so the Community Councillors couldn't claim that the first they had heard of it was in early December. She also said that the Council were going to take her wheelie bin away as her property was unsuitable for it so they had delivered a letter at 11am on a Monday morning stating that a van would come to collect her wheelie bin at 9am that day. She said this proved what a shambles it all was.

Neil Smith said that there were 1,000 properties in Stonehaven unsuitable for wheelie bins.

Norman Banski said that in Laurencekirk there were still problems with the wheelie bins despite there being a recycling centre there. He wanted to know who had made the decision to change the existing system and why were commercial properties still having collections from old style bin lorries. He also said that Ellon weren't changing to wheelie bins so questioned why Kincardineshire was being singled out.

Frank Budd asked if the Community Council had been in favour of the changes.

Derek Stewart replied that initially the Community Council had been in favour but since then lots of problems had come to light. He said they were not sitting on the fence but instead they were gathering information.

Frank Budd said the Council's plans had been public knowledge since September so the Community Council had had ample time to protest to the Council.

Mary Mitchell said that nobody was against recycling but this had been handled very badly.

Ray Faulkner said she objected to Jack Clark's attitude and when she had phoned to speak to him about the new system he told her to stop buying newspapers and instead to go to the Library to read them and he also told her to buy a shredder.

David MacDonald asked why Kincardineshire was being singled out and why had our Councillors let this happen.

Stuart White from the Westhill Resident's Association said that wheelie bins were not in the pipeline for Westhill at all.

Norman Banski said that Jack Clark's threat to prosecute people was not helpful. He wanted it minuted that the men on the ground should be commended and none of this was any criticism of the workers who actually collect the rubbish.

Frank Budd said that a member of the Community Council had told him that only £28 per annum from Council tax payments was actually spent on waste management.

Derek Stewart said that £80 was spent on this by the Scottish Executive.

Mike Walton said that he had noticed that no street sweeping was being done in Stonehaven. He also said that Councillors and officials should come to the Public Meeting with improvements and not just to listen to what the public was saying.

Jane Davidson said that the Community Council was in the process of consulting with the public in Stonehaven.

Sarah Davidson elaborated on this by saying she was Chair of a group called the Future of Stonehaven and they were looking forward for 15-20 years and planning lots of improvements to the town. She said in normal circumstances it was very hard to get feedback from people in the town.

Quintin Clark questioned if a public meeting would achieve anything.

Dr McIntosh asked if the Councillors were listening and that they should pass on to the Council that the new system was unacceptable.

Cllr Swapp said that he lives in Stonehaven too so we should all work together.

Sarah Wilson said that the Public Meeting should be well advertised so that people knew about it. She said that shops would put up posters and flyers.

Norman Banski said that the Mearns Community Council was very alarmed too and that Stonehaven and District Community Council have their support. He also asked the four Stonehaven Councillors to ensure that this topic was discussed at the next suitable Area Committee meeting and be fully debated.

One member of the public said that SEPA should also be invited to the Public Meeting.

Derek Stewart agreed to write to Cllr Audrey Findlay asking for a Public Meeting to be held as soon as possible and for the Council officials to come armed with solutions to the problems.

List of possible questions formulated from the points extracted from the Leader:

1. Why was the new system implemented prior to Christmas/New Year, the worst possible period of the year when packaging, excess food and Christmas wrappings increased the volume of waste by as much as 100% and not planned to be introduced on the second week in January, for example?
2. What research was carried out into the following problems: -
 - Aged and infirm residents
 - Difficulty of access by the new vehicle on narrow roads leading to private dwellings
 - Need for smaller bins for town dwellings or flats with limited access
 - Need for more than one bin for larger families. Is there a problem with either supplying a second bin or the householder purchasing one?
 - Bins causing congestion on town centre pavements for disabled etc.
3. Why is collection fortnightly and not weekly as in comparable towns in other Council areas, such as Angus?
4. Why was top priority not given to the construction of a central recycling point at Redcloak? Could the planning problems not be fast streamed?
5. Whose responsibility is it for bins stolen or damaged, outwith the householder's control, prior to or after being emptied, or when the Council is actually emptying the bin?
6. The concession for householders to use overflow black bags for a limited period will cause seagull nuisance again. Is there any possibility of the existing bins being utilised for overflow? Is there any mileage in positioning a skip at the Leisure Centre car park, for those who have an overflow and the availability of transport to take it there (similar to the enclosed skip previously used for newspapers)?
7. Is it possible for one or two Council employees to accompany the new vehicle, to act as loaders, assisting with those areas and situations listed in question 2 (aged and difficulty of access) or utilise the old refuse vehicles in the rural areas which the new one cannot access, until some alternative solution can be found.