

**MINUTES OF THE 312th BUSINESS MEETING
OF THE
STONEHAVEN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

HELD IN THE COWIE LOUNGE OF THE INVERCARRON RESOURCE CENTRE AT 7.30PM
ON TUESDAY 9th January, 2007

PRESENT:

David Fleming (Chairperson), Ian Balgowan, Peter Bellarby, Raymond Christie, Lynda Digney, Ian Hunter, Michael Innes, Lyn Jardine, Lenny Lawrence, Ditta Neumann, Isabel Parkes, David Wood.

Kincardine and Mearns Councillors: George Swapp, Wendy Agnew

Minute Secretary: Sharon Hall

Also present:

3 members of the Press, 2 members of the public.

Item	Description	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, sederunt, apologies and declarations of interest Apologies were received from Jane Davidson, Sarah Dickinson, James Cleves, Steven Hurrell, Cllr. Sullivan, Cllr. Morrison, Sgt Grant Wallace</p> <p>Cllr Agnew stated a declaration of interest in regard to Item 11 & Item 12 but had to leave the meeting before these items were discussed.</p>	
2.	<p>Previous Minutes In answer to Ian Balgowan's query, David Fleming confirmed that when a vote is taken the Minutes should show all members' names and how each member voted, unless the vote is unanimous.</p> <p>Raymond Christie stated that the political debate that took place under Item 3 had not been recorded in the Minutes. It was agreed that he and Ian Hunter would provide a written adjustment to the Minutes, to be presented at the next meeting.</p> <p>David Wood pointed out that the heading of Item 10 should read "Sewerage Upgrade Report" i.e. not "Sewer".</p> <p>Approval of Minutes: Proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by Ian Hunter. Approved</p> <p>Matters arising and follow up of action items not dealt with elsewhere: Lynn Jardine stated that, as the end of year accounts will shortly be due, all members' expenses need to be submitted.</p>	<p>Raymond Christie/ Ian Hunter</p> <p>All Members</p>
3.	<p>Crime Prevention - Report by Police (included in the agenda papers) There was no police representative available to attend the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Meeting with senior police officers – David Fleming This meeting was held in early December and was attended by David Fleming, Peter Bellarby and George Carr, Secretary of Kinneff and Catterline Community Council. One of the outcomes was that specific points of information will now be submitted to the police by David Fleming for their comment and response. Minutes of the meeting will be issued to members by David Fleming.</p> <p>With regard to the police crime bulletin (Page 2, Agenda Papers), Ian Balgowan asked for clarification about the funding referred to for patrols in hot spot areas. David Fleming advised that this funding referred to overtime and not to additional officers. The question of how police resources are distributed was one of the issues raised by him at the meeting..</p>	<p>David Fleming</p>
5.	<p>Update of Committee Activities Future of Stonehaven – Sarah Dickinson Sarah Dickinson was absent due to illness but had emailed a report to David Fleming. The final report is not yet finished but will be produced at the next meeting. She had also produced a separate report for the Transport Committee and is working on a report about youth issues. There is to be a window display about "The Future of Stonehaven" in the library window next week. The committee will be meeting before the next S&DCC meeting, after which Sarah</p>	

Dickinson advises she will be standing down as Chair of the committee.

6. Strategy – David Fleming

The report can now be viewed on the S&DCC website and David Fleming also has a paper copy available. Comments on the report can be made up to the end of February after which it will then be revised in time for the next meeting.

7. Transport Committee – Peter Bellarby

The committee had met on 8 January - a report was circulated to members.

1. Buses

(a) Long distance bus services

The issue of long distance buses stopping on the bypass has been ongoing. The Bus Forum had reported that this would not be feasible as there were no suitable, safe locations. However, the issue would be discussed with the new operators of the Aberdeen/Glasgow service. It was recognised that safety must be a prime concern.

The committee proposed the following:

The Community Council is asked to agree

- (i) *that a survey is carried out to ascertain what support there would be for bus services stopping at some point on the bypass, with the proviso that this could only be done if infrastructure works were carried out to ensure that this could be done safely.*
- (ii) *that the Transport Committee organise this survey in such a way as to ensure that it is available to potential users who may not, for instance, be connected to the Internet.*

Ian Hunter said the the demand is for faster bus services and if buses stop in towns this makes for a slower service and would not encourage use of the service. Out of town bus stops have been successful elsewhere. Lenny Lawrence emphasised the point that any bus stop on the bypass has to be safe. He advised that two such locations have been identified on the north and south carriageways.

Motion proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by Ian Hunter. Agreed unanimously.

(b) Local bus services. Various concerns are to be investigated.

2. Trains

(a) Aberdeen Crossrail (local trains between Stonehaven-Aberdeen-Inverurie)

The Regional Transport Strategy was published in December 2006 and suggests implementation of Stage One of this scheme by extending long distance train services. Peter Bellarby stated that this scheme does not address the problems and he sees it as a missed opportunity. Long distance services are notoriously unreliable and a dedicated service is needed on a local level.

David Fleming asked if the reopening of Laurencekirk station was part of these proposals but Peter Bellarby advised that this was connected to long distance service provision. Kintore was the only new station to be opened in the Crossrail proposal. Ditta Neuman commented on the excellent transport facilities within Europe which were based on the use of trams rather than trains. She felt that the opportunity to develop a proper commuter network here was being missed. David Fleming said that the outdated signalling system is a critical factor, particularly in dictating the frequency of trains, and it needs a complete modernisation.

The committee proposed the following:

The Community Council is asked to agree that letters be sent to NESTRANS and Transport Scotland indicating dissatisfaction with the stage 1 proposals and pressing for a dedicated Stonehaven-Aberdeen-Inverurie service with more stations at, for example, Newtonhill and Altens.

Proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by Raymond Christie.

Michael Innes did not support the proposal as he did not feel it would achieve any result.

However, Lyn Jardine argued for the need to be proactive and Ian Hunter said that it was important to demonstrate community pressure.

The following members voted in favour of the proposal: Ian Balgowan, Peter Bellarby, Raymond Christie, Lynda Digney, David Fleming, Ian Hunter, Lyn Jardine, Lenny Lawrence, Ditta Neuman, Isabel Parkes, David Wood. Michael Innes voted against the proposal.

The proposal was therefore carried.

(b) Cross-country franchise. Current proposals would not allow the renewed franchise to operate any trains on the west coast north of Crewe. This will add to journey times and would result in more changes of train to be made at Birmingham, which is already a very

congested station and creates severe problems to disabled passengers.

The committee proposed the following:

The Community Council is asked to agree

- (i) *that a letter is sent to Transport Scotland urging that it oppose the removal of the west coast main line north of Crewe from the cross-country rail franchise,*
- (ii) *that the letter should press for the continuation of cross-country trains from Aberdeen (Stonehaven) and Edinburgh through Carlisle and down the west coast main line,*
- (iii) *that the letter should press for most trains from the north, including the service through Stonehaven, to continue south of Birmingham.*

Proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by Isabel Parkes.

The following members voted in favour of the proposal: Ian Balgowan, Peter Bellarby, Raymond Christie, Lynda Digney, David Fleming, Ian Hunter, Lyn Jardine, Lenny Lawrence, Ditta Neuman, Isabel Parkes, David Wood. Abstentions: Michael Innes.

The proposal was therefore carried.

- (c) Local train travel issues at Stonehaven, including late running trains and use of the seated part of the Aberdeen sleeper

The committee proposed the following:

The Community Council is asked to agree

- (i) *that a representative from Scotrail be invited to attend a meeting at which these issues would be discussed, this meeting being open to the public,*
- (ii) *that representatives from other community councils be invited to this meeting.*

Proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by Raymond Christie.

On a point of information, David Fleming stated that the train operator is “First Scotrail”, not “Scotrail”. Ian Hunter said that it was important to get co-operation from other community councils in order to assert pressure and also to ensure that all train users are represented.

The proposal was agreed unanimously.

3. Transport Forum

The following motion was proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by Lenny Lawrence.

The Community Council is asked to agree that a transport forum be set up to look at transport issues, as they affect Stonehaven, this forum being open to interested members of the public.

Peter Bellarby advised members that he intends to resign as chairperson of the Transport Committee. He has been in this role for several years and would give full assistance to his successor. There then followed discussion as to who would run the Transport Forum. Ian Hunter suggested that it could be set up at the proposed meeting with First Scotrail and the chairperson may not necessarily be a member of the community council. Ditta Neuman queried if both a Transport Committee and a Transport Forum were needed and suggested that people could be co-opted onto the committee instead. Lyn Jardine asked how the community council interests would be represented if there was no longer a Transport Committee. David Fleming stated that there would be a transition period and suggested that transport issues could be dealt with by a Kincardine and Mearns Transport Forum that could include one or two community council members. Ian Hunter felt that a Forum could tap into people with a specific interest in and knowledge of transport issues but who may not be interested in wider community council business.

The following members voted in favour of the proposal: Ian Balgowan, Peter Bellarby, Raymond Christie, Lynda Digney, David Fleming, Ian Hunter, Michael Innes, Lenny Lawrence, Isabel Parkes, David Wood. The following members abstained: Lyn Jardine, Ditta Neuman.

The proposal was therefore carried.

4. Roads

- (a) Concerns about safety on the B979 (Netherley Road) were raised by Michael Innes following the recent bus accident. After discussion, the following motion was proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by David Fleming.

The Community Council is asked to agree that a letter is sent to the Direct of Education at Aberdeenshire Council urging that the existing contracts for the provision of school bus transport should be renegotiated to include the provision of seat belts in all buses used, and that this requirement be included in all future requirements.

Agreed unanimously.

- (b) Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR)

The recently published proposals show a late change to the design of the Stonehaven spur junction at Mains of Ury with the introduction of a roundabout and traffic lights. Full details and a sketch map were included in the committee report. Peter Bellarby stated that this new design would create both congestion and a conflict in traffic movement.

Referring also to Agenda Item 13, Peter Bellarby said that a meeting had been held with David and Richard Strang Steel, the sons of the owner of Field 52, (also attended by David Fleming and Sarah Dickinson), who had presented a different idea for the junction. Their sketch map shows the traffic streams kept separate by new bridges and keeping access to Field 52 open for possible future supermarket development. Peter Bellarby stated that the committee was not advocating this particular plan as a solution as the owner clearly has a vested interest, but argued that the whole junction design needs to be better thought out and alternatives looked at. He therefore proposed the following:

The Community Council is asked to agree that a letter is sent to the Managing Agent of the AWPR objecting to the design of the junction of the AWPR spur with the A90 immediately north of Stonehaven and urging that an alternative design be chosen that avoids the conflicting movements.

Isabel Parkes asked about possible closure of the golf course road and the impact this would have on the Cowie sewage plant. David Fleming advised that it was not part of the brief of the AWPR design team to consider this aspect.

Ditta Neumann proposed an amendment that the letter also indicates that it is felt the proposed design would create a potential accident blackspot and highlighting the traffic lights in particular as a dangerous aspect. The amendment was accepted by Peter Bellarby who proposed the amended motion. Seconded by Ian Hunter. Agreed unanimously.

Ian Hunter asked if members could get proper advice on what would be the best solution for the junction design. Peter Bellarby advised that he has a contact with professional expertise in road traffic management, whom he would contact. David Fleming said he would also invite the AWPR team to talk to members.

**Peter Bellarby
David Fleming**

{Post meeting note: A public exhibiton has been arranged by the AWPR Team in the Town Hall on Tuesday 23rd Janaury all day, when plans for the road would be on display}.

5. Park and Ride. Not discussed

6. Regional Transport Strategy. Copy of summarry attached. The deadline for responses is 23 January.

The Community Council is asked to agree that the transport Committee prepare a response, dispatch it and report what they have done to the February Business Meeting.

Proposed by Peter Bellarby, Seconded by Lenny Lawrence. Unanimously agreed.

7. Transport Matters brought up by the Future of Stonehaven consultation

One matter highlighted by the consultation was the interest in walking and cycling routes. The committee therefore proposed the following:

The Community Council is asked to agree that a meeting open to the public be organised to discuss walking and cycling routes in and around Stonehaven.

Proposed by Peter Bellarby. Seconded by Ian Hunter. Unanimously agreed.

David Fleming advised that in addition to Sarah Dickinson and Peter Bellarby standing down as Chair of the Future of Stonehaven and Chair of the Transport committees respectively, Lyn Jardine is also to stand down as Chair of the Communications committee. He thanked them all for their hard work. These positions would need to be filled and members were asked to consider nominations for the next meeting.

All Members

8. Hannah Dyson Award – Raymond Christie

This award was initiated in 2004 and is awarded to a young person under 18 years who has demonstrated excellence or merit in some way, for instance - academic, sporting, act of bravery or special achievement. This year it was opened up to all schools in Stonehaven and not just Mackie Academy. The only nomination was received from Mrs Janice Stewart, Head Teacher of Mill of School who nominated one of her pupils, Chiara Rose Venditozzi. Raymond Christie read out the nomination letter which gave a very moving account of the medical condition from which Chiara suffers – epidermolysis bullosa – and the courageous and wholly admirable manner in which Chiara deals with it. Raymond Christie proposed that S&DCC should contact Chiara, and her parents and head teacher, to arrange a suitable time and place to present her with the award. David Fleming seconded this proposal and it was unanimously approved by all

Peter Bellarby

members.

9. Christmas Decorations Awards

Isabel Parkes announced the winners of the awards as follows:

Shop – Purdies. Runner up - The Spectacle Company

Public Building – Market Square (Stonehaven Business Association). Runner up – Barclay Street (Stonehaven Business Association)

House – Glenton Croft, Slug Road. Runner Up – 26 Ann Street.

The awards will be publicised and the winners invited to receive their prizes at the next meeting.

Peter Bellarby

10. Actions of Planning Committee on planning applications

David Fleming stated that the applications listed on the report were local applications that had no wider issues. Peter Bellarby said that the objections had been lodged on the previously agreed basis that the Planning Committee had the authority to deal with such applications and then to report back to the community council.

11. East Newtonleys Supermarket

The letter of objection had been issued as previously agreed.

12. Loop Road Supermarket

David Fleming advised that the enquiry had commenced on 8th January and reported that there had been various discussions about the evidence that was being presented. He highlighted one particular point about a strip of land 26m wide lying between the application site and the cemetery, that was labelled on the plans as “extension to cemetery”. The owners had previously refused to sell this land to Aberdeenshire Council but, under the planning application, would now sell the land as part of the “planning gain”. David Fleming described this as “blackmail” on the part of the owners and had argued at the enquiry that it was not appropriate to make this link. The Reporter had noted this and would not look at this area of land as part of the planning application.

13. APWR/Field 52

This had been dealt with under Agenda Item 7.

It was pointed out that Field 52 was very important in terms of possible future supermarket sites because of the “sequential assessment” aspect of the planning development process.

14. Windfarms – replies from other Community Councils

There had not been many replies so far from other Community Councils about a joint meeting so it was agreed to defer this item. Cllr. Swapp advised that the Glenbervie Residents Association would also be interested in attending a meeting.

Peter Bellarby

15. Meikle Carewe Wind Farm

Peter Bellarby gave the background to this application, which is sited on a ridge along which the boundary between the area covered by S&DCC and the area covered by North Kincardine Rural Community Council runs. There had been a previous application made in 2000 for 10 turbines, to which S&DCC had objected. The present proposal is for 12 turbines at a slightly reduced height of 70m compared with 78m in the original proposal. There has been considerable public objection to the proposed windfarm, which would be situated on a prominent ridge rising to 246m at Curlethney Hill and 267m at Meikle Carewe Hill and would therefore be visible from Stonehaven. Peter Bellarby said that there were several grounds for objection to the application, including the visual impact, the fact that it is on a prominent ridge and the visual effect on what are considered to be “locally important views”. There is also the impact on local residents on the North Kincardineshire and south side, as well as the presence of archaeological features. Peter Bellarby stated that he would not object to every windfarm but there was a need to consider each one on its own merit. He proposed that a letter of objection be sent with regard to this application. Seconded by Lenny Lawrence.

The following members voted in favour of the proposal: Ian Balgowan, Peter Bellarby, Lynda Digney, David Fleming, Michael Innes, Lyn Jardine, Lenny Lawrence, Ditta Neuman, David Wood. Abstentions: Raymond Christie, Isabel Parkes. Ian Hunter had left the meeting before this vote took place. The proposal was therefore carried.

Following the vote Cllr Swapp pointed out that it is within the Local Plan policy that windfarms should not be sited on the skyline or on prominent ridges.

16. County Hotel site

David Fleming outlined the current situation – the appeal against refusal of planning permission for 25 flats had been turned down by the Reporter, whilst the appeal relating to the 27 flats was

awaiting determination by Public Enquiry. The site was in the meantime becoming derelict and David Fleming requested approval from members to approach Barratts to set up a meeting in order to discuss their plans for the site. He wished this to be seen as a way of S&DCC seeking solutions rather than to always appear to have a negative approach. Unanimously approved.

David Fleming

17. Rats in Bernham Avenue area – Michael Innes

Michael Innes had been approached by residents about the problem of rats in the area of the burn running from Farrochie Road to the back of the hospital. Previous complaints had been made to the Public Health officer in 1994 and 2001. Residents have been advised that they need to sort out the problem themselves. There was discussion about the responsibility issue. David Wood felt that it was an environmental health issue on which the local authority need to take action. Raymond Christie pointed out that the ownership of the burn side was one that had never been resolved and was an ongoing problem. His view was that Aberdeenshire Council should clear the burn and get rid of the vermin. David Fleming stated that he would expect that the Environmental Health dept. would have legal powers to take action and to charge householders accordingly. Michael Innes is awaiting advice from Aberdeenshire Council and will report back.

Michael Innes

18. Noise on Hogmanay – Ian Balgowan

Ian Balgowan congratulated the Fireballs Association on their excellent organisation and appreciated all their hard work. However, he felt that the noise from the drummers in particular had been too loud and other Old Town residents had agreed with him. The noise had made people feel uncomfortable in their own homes. There was also a view that Scottish music would be preferred at the event. David Fleming confirmed that no official complaint had been made to Viewmount about noise levels anywhere on Hogmanay. He suggested that it was the bass drumming that might have caused any noise problems. Alan Venters, Chair of the Fireballs Committee was invited to speak; he said that he appreciated all comments made about the event. The drum group had been brought in to entertain the crowds, particularly at the slipway area. He would bring up all comments for discussion at their forthcoming committee meeting and would seek a resolution of any complaints. Isabel Parkes said it was good to have live entertainment. Alan Venters said there was a need to keep as many people as possible happy. Cllr. Swapp congratulated the Fireballs Committee on the event. It was agreed that the Fireballs Committee themselves would resolve the issues that had been raised.

19. Kincardine and Mearns Area Plan

David Fleming asked for volunteers to look at the draft consultation, a printed copy of which was available, and to report at the February meeting. Ditta Neuman agreed to do this and David Wood and David Fleming will also give their input. Cllr Swapp advised that topics such as the Town Hall and the Gas works site could in particular be commented upon.

**Ditta Neuman,
David Wood,
David Fleming**

20. Aberdeenshire Community Planning Executive

Peter Bellarby advised that he would be resigning from his role as S&DCC representative on this group and a replacement would therefore be needed in the future.

21. MRI Heritage Project

Peter Bellarby has put MRI in touch with Adam Watson from Banchory who is doing a similar project. After discussion it was agreed that MRI would need to be proactive in asking for members' help on specific issues rather than S&DCC being "involved" in the project, as such.

22. Items from the register

No. 7: Peter Bellarby pointed out that the Aberdeenshire Local Plan is a crucial document informing the planning process.. Members need to read the document and take guidance from it in considering planning issues. Note: the Aberdeenshire Council weblink is at <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/finalised/index.asp> , where all members can view the Plan online. Peter now has a printed copy, as has David Fleming

David Fleming

23. Sewerage Upgrade Scheme

David Fleming advised that the Scottish Water method statement was not as he had expected and gave procedural information only. He is still await details of construction and the project timings

24. AOCB. None

25. Dates of next meetings.

Agenda meeting – 6 February 2007, 6.30pm, Dunnottar Lounge.

Business meeting – 13 February 2007, 7.30 pm, Cowie Lounge

The meeting closed at 9.56pm