

3. Vote of thanks

The Chairman asked the Council to express their thanks to Cllr. Bellarby for the good advice and hard work he had put into the election procedures.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting (9th March 2010)

The approval of the minutes was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously.

Matters Arising

Rachel Shanks asked about the signposts for the Bervie Braes paths. The Chairman said he had spoken to Alistair McDonald, the council officer concerned. While the Braes walks were closed, the only alternative is the footpath up the main A957 road, and this only went as far as the Green Den. Therefore, they were reluctant to advertise this.

Ian Balgowan apologised that he would have to leave the meeting early. He alerted new members to the S&DCC noticeboards about the Town, and how they could be used.

Ian Hunter expressed thanks to Gemma Bull for all she had done at the Flood Support Centre.

4. Police matters

No issues were raised. No Police officer was present.

Public Issues

6. Skate Park

The Chairman welcomed Christine Western from the Skatepark Committee to give a progress report. Mrs Western said the skate park would be finished in time for the opening the following Saturday, and that it was already in use by many youngsters. As a result of the Sport Scotland grant, they had been able to finish the whole design at one go. There were final additions planned, such as flower beds and provision of adequate litter bins. She appealed for more adult supporters to form a committee to guide and channel the enthusiasm of the children.

Rachel Shanks asked if the Council outreach youth workers would go to the park in the evenings. In reply to David Fleming, Mrs Western said that Aberdeenshire Council would take over maintenance as soon as the construction was signed off. As far as graffiti was concerned, offensive graffiti would be removed, but it was hoped some artistic graffiti could be encouraged. Cllr. Clark suggested a public grant might be available.

Concern was expressed about the activities of some of the older children, the amount of littering and the installation of lights. Iain Noble asked if a pedestrian crossing could be put in at Beach Road, as many more people are now crossing there. Willie Munro promised to look into that.

A number of speakers praised the work, and felt that it was vital that the youngsters took ownership of the continuing work to look after and improve the facility.

Mrs Western concluded by inviting everyone to the opening celebrations on Saturday, starting at 12 noon.

7. Severe Flooding in Stonehaven on 1st November

7.1 Meeting with Colin MacKenzie, Chief Executive of Aberdeenshire Council

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the meeting held, attended by himself and Alistair Lawrie, with Colin MacKenzie, Ian Gabriel (Director of Transport and Infrastructure) and Willie Munro.

At the meeting:

- Willie Munro had reiterated that 1st November was an exceptional event
- The Bervie Braes evacuation had been dealt with more appropriately, possibly because of lessons learnt
- The Community Council's 55 questions would be answered
- Colin McKenzie could not assign the responses to the Grampian Strategic Coordinating Group (GSCG) report (referred to as the Multi-Agency Debrief Report, Report 6 on the Community Council's list) to individuals as that would be done in partnership
- Willie Munro preferred not to issue answers in dribs and drabs, but would be reporting in full to the Area Committee on 27th April. This would constitute Report 5: Analysis of Events and Action Plan.

7.2 Reports received

As on the agenda, 2 (Reports 2, 4 and 6) out of the 6 reports had now been received.

7.3

Reports due

Report 1, 3 and 5 were awaited. It is known that Report 3, from Stephen MacFarland is being worked on, and requires the completion of various technical studies by external consultants and the Aberdeenshire Council Flooding Engineers into the flooding.

Ian Balgowan asked why the arrangement was made to see the Chief Executive. The Chairman answered by saying that, because the GSCG report (Report 6) was addressed to the Chief Executive on 11th December 2009, but all knowledge had been denied up until it was traced in March, it was appropriate that the Chief Executive was asked for comments.

Ian Balgowan further asked why the report had not been made public. Willie Munro replied that it was sent to the Scottish Government who had requested it. He queried when it had been sent, and the Chairman reported that Colin Gray of the GSCG, the author, had said it was issued to all responder agencies on 11th December 2009. Phil Daniels asked the Councillors if they had asked for it, and Cllr. Bellarby replied that they had not.

Ian Hunter asked Shire Councillors how they felt about the fact that the community expects a report, and they have not been sent it. Cllr. Bellarby said he felt very disappointed. A member of the public asked if the GSCG report (Report 6) was Aberdeenshire-wide. The Chairman said it was, and that Roseanna Cunningham had referred to it as such. Cllr. Sullivan asked if this was same report as was presented to the Policy & Resources Committee on 14th January. The Chairman said it was not, and indeed the 14th Jan. report did not appear to refer to the GSCG report or any of the issues or recommendations in the GSCG report.

Cllr. Melling noted that the Area Committee had had a number of updates

throughout the period. The Chairman acknowledged this, but noted that the 55 Questions asked by the Community Council on Nov 13th had still not been answered, and this was now 5 months on.

A member of the public said that people were worried about not knowing the answers and that the value of their property was affected. The Chairman pointed out that the Area Committee report (Report 5) will be in the public domain when the agenda for the Area Committee is issued about 6 days before the 27th. There will be a chance for public participation, but after the Area Committee meets. Willie Munro said he considered it to be a factual document.. A member of the public asked if it will make recommendations. Willie Munro said that a full technical evaluation of the flooding situation was the subject of a separate report by Stephen MacFarland, the Flooding Engineer, (Report 3) which is nearing completion. That report will look at the capacity of the Carron, and flood alleviation measures over and above the immediate works that have now been completed.

- 7.4 A member of the public asked about the sandbags. Willie Munro said that they would be picked up later that week. If anyone wanted to keep theirs, they should be taken indoors or marked. However, there were better products than sandbags on the market at a modest cost. Further information was available at the Flood Support Centre.

Meetings of the Flood Support Group.

The “letter of comfort”, to be available from Aberdeenshire Council to anyone in support of arguments to retain existing premium levels, was awaited.

A special day entitled “Stonehaven’s Open day” was being planned for Saturday 15th May. An organising Committee had been set up from Stonehaven Town Partnership, Lions, Rotary, the Business Association and the Horizon Group.

8. Bervie Braes

8.1 Government Assistance

The Chairman read out key parts of an e-mail received that afternoon from Willie Murdoch, the Civil Engineer dealing with the Bervie Braes stabilisation work. He said that a report would be put to the Policy & Resources Committee on Thu 22nd April, outlining how the £1m Aberdeenshire Council part of the £3m scheme would be funded, and that work was progressing well. The Council welcomed the progress.

8.2 Evacuation Status

The draft letter on this subject was approved unanimously.

9. Beach Toilets

Michael Innes reported on a very positive meeting with Steve Kelly and Rab Birnie at which the arrangements to run the Beach Toilets for the next three seasons had been agreed. The agreement was tabled.

Willie Munro stated that the previous arrangements were not sustainable in that Aberdeenshire Council did not have a continuing budget for the facility.

Some members queried the insurance arrangements, and the Chairman said he

David

would check the meaning. Subject to that, the agreement was approved.

Fleming

In reply to a question, it was confirmed that the Leisure Centre staff should always allow members of the public to use their facilities, and they had been briefed accordingly.

10. Council Policy and the Law

Allan Sutherland reported on the progress of the discussions on the three subjects.

He was looking for volunteers to act to improve the situation by practical actions.

In the discussion about controlling the fouling of public areas by dogs, a number of members of the public spoke, giving their views on the appropriateness of various suggestions, such as

- putting flags in the dirts,
- approaching owners of offending animals,
- having more bins,
- always having dogs on leads,
- better education on the dangers particularly for children, and
- whether anyone had actually be caught and prosecuted.

The Aberdeenshire Council Dog Warden (Gillian Abel : 01569 768224) said she had to cover a large area of 1/3rd of Aberdeenshire. It was very difficult to be at a specific place to catch an offender, and she relied on information supplied. It was perhaps best to establish what time regular offenders walked their dogs, as any offence had to be witnessed. She could impose a fixed penalty of £40.

11 Planning applications

11.1 Mill O Forest House (APP/2010/0684)

The Planning Committee recommended that an objection is lodged against this application because:

- Access had to go across public open space
- The end of Forest Park would then not be available as a turning area
- A separate application appeared to block off the possibility of a direct access to Mill O'Forest Road

The Council concurred and authorised the Planning Secretary to write accordingly
Care Home on School Road Site

**Planning
Secretary**

A draft letter was tabled following the supposed public consultation meeting concerning the above site. Phil Daniels had also attended the meeting, and said the letter reflected the meeting. The Council confirmed that it was not against the idea of the Care Home on this site, just the current plans, and the manner of consultation. The letter was agreed.

Chairman

Keith Lodge (APP/2009/2670 and 2671)

The Planning Committee recommended that an objection is lodged against this application because of the changes to the gates at the entrance. However, the

Architect (Ciaran Bradley of NVDRArchitecture), who was present at the meeting, said that a number of changes had been made as a result of discussions with the planning department. He explained them.

It was decided not to pursue the potential objection.

Conservation Area status for Fetteresso Village

Several members of the public spoke to support the draft letter, urging Aberdeenshire Council to acknowledge that the Fetteresso Village area should have Conservation Area status, and that this should be recognised in the new Local Plan. On these grounds, they also wished Aberdeenshire Council not to put into the Local Plan the site K87 for 50 houses, as these would then dominate the village.

The Council supported their view, and asked that they draft a suitable letter to be sent to the Local Plan Development Team.

Replacement Site for Dunnottar School

The Chairman pointed out that the minutes of the 10th March Area Committee meeting (the second half of the Local Plan discussion) did not contain any reference to this site, which the Community Council supported and wished to be designated in the new Local Plan. Cllr. Bellarby agreed to look into this, and try to get the minute amended.

**Cllr.
Bellarby**

Business Matters

12. The documents described in the agenda were noted, and members were asked to respond if they wished to.

All

Future dates were noted.

The Chairman referred to the “Stonehaven’s Open day”. He said one of the competition ideas was for a “ShopaLot” in which one or more prizes would be offered to those who could show that they had spent money in as many shops as possible. Rachel Shanks felt that this sent the wrong message in that it expected people to make unnecessary purchases. She asked for a re-think, of which the Chairman took note. With this caveat, the Council agreed to put £100 towards the prizes for a suitable competition on the day.

A.O.C.B.

The Chairman said that the Secretary and he had found it impossible to get a Minute Secretary on a voluntary basis, and asked permission to advertise for a paid Minutes Secretary, on a similar basis to that used 3 years ago. This was agreed.

15. **Dates and times of next Business Meeting**

There will be an Officers’ meeting at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 4th May 2010 in the Invercarron Resource Centre followed by a Planning Committee at 7.30 pm, and then the Agenda Meeting at 8.00 pm.

On Tuesday 11th May, the Business Meeting will be held at 7:15 pm. in the Cowie Lounge of the Invercarron Resource Centre.