

GRANTOWN ON SPEY and VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 17th March 2020 at The Grant Arms Hotel Grantown –on – Spey at 19.00 Hrs

Present: Linda Coe Chair (LC)
Ewan MacGregor Vice Chair (EM)
Declan Gallagher Treasurer (DG)
Martin Bradshaw Secretary (MB)
John Halliday (JH)
Bill Sadler (BS)

Apologies: Apologies were received from Laurie MacLeod and Muriel Cockburn who were unable to attend

1. Welcome:

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending

2. Declarations of Interest:

EM declared that he would be ceasing to work at the Co-Op with almost immediate effect as he was about to start work in the Scottish Parliament as a member of Edward Mountain's team. BS added by way of information that he was in the process of retiring from the Co-Op Local Forum part of the Co-Op Community Programme.

3. Police Report:

There was no Police presence at the meeting but EM reported on what he described as a really helpful conversation with Inspector Tough from the station in Aviemore. Inspector Tough confirmed that they were now using unmarked police cars to patrol the town and he was in a position to continue to use the cars from Dingwall for this purpose. He had advised EM that they now had a list of 12 cars which have been causing problems a number of which now have ASBOs registered against them and one whose owner had only recently passed

their test already had 3 points on their Licence and were facing a period of disqualification.

He had requested that EM should stay in regular contact with him and that they should continue to liaise closely as Inspector Tough confirmed that he would continue to prioritize Grantown for police presence.

Finally, it was confirmed that one apparently abandoned car had been removed and crushed and that it was hoped that the vehicle in The Square could be similarly dealt with.

EM confirmed that he had advised Inspector Tough that the current police action had been recognized by the community and that it was very much appreciated.

4: Presentation on Ourack Windfarm:

LC advised that, in view of the current emergency, this item had been cancelled

5. Car parking charge Consultation:

LC advised that, in view of the current emergency, the consultation was being postponed.

6. Minutes of previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st January 2020 were approved

Proposed: EM Seconded: DG

7. Matters Arising:-

2020 AGM: In view of the current emergency MB agreed to contact Liz Cowie at Highland Council (HC) to check on the position regarding the AGM which is due to be held in May but which may not be possible if the present restrictions are still in force;

Trees: it was noted that the affected trees are still in situ and JH will contact John MacLean at HC to enquire about the present position regarding removal;

OSB: LC agreed to contact Liz Henderson at CNPA to try and get the Authority on board with regards to the necessary repairs;

Skating Pond: this continues to be an ongoing project;

Asset Transfer: as far as ICH is concerned, contact would be made with regard to an expression of interest in the site and it was agreed that Karen Derrick should be contacted with a view to lodging an expression of interest in the Burgh Yard;

Toilets: the whole Burnfield project is continuing with the GI principally involved but LC reported that she had been informed by Karen Derrick that she had been told by Liz Cowie that if ‘we’, i.e. Grantown, obtained the Burnfield site than ‘they’, i.e. HC, will close the toilets in the High Street car park. However, checks with HC reveal that they will only close they High Street toilets if they do not remain financially viable, which at present they are;

Parking: BS advised that the Sustrans application had been rejected but that there had been considerable input from various organizations which had been of substantial assistance.

LC agreed to contact CNPA once the current emergency was over in connection with parking in The Square by CNPA staff which was adding to the congestion;

Bus routes: LC reported that she has been in regular contact with Hitrans, HC and Stagecoach on various issues including obtaining real-time displays on the electronic signage, improving the bus stop in The Square, getting a timetable installed in the Craiglynne stop and designating the bus to Inverness as ‘via Carrbridge’ and that from Inverness as ‘ via Carrbridge & Grantown’;

WiFi: JH reported that whilst Openreach had now decided to go a wholly private route without any involvement at all of HC or the Scottish Government the complaint raised by one of the other bidders to the award of the contract to Openreach was continuing and there will be no progress until that has been resolved;

Storage: GI are continuing to explore all possible opportunities;

Town Hall Clock EM confirmed that he had still not been able to effect service of the letter on the owners/occupiers but BS said that he might have a route for doing so;

Grantown in Bloom: JH reported that 9 of the planters have been sponsored and payment has been received for them; 6 large whisky casks & 30 bags of compost have been acquired at a cost of £412.00 (representing a discount of 20%) he confirmed that 2 will be placed outside the Court House, 2 by the Regality Cross and 2 in Dulaig Park as part of the regeneration project there.

It was reported that Truckfest had been officially cancelled but it remained possible that a provisional alternative date of 16 – 17 July has been suggested. It was hoped that Tuckfest will make the donation of £250 as usual but there has been no contact with the Grantown East Highland Games organization. DG confirmed that in any event there are sufficient reserves to cover any loss if the Truckfest donation is not forthcoming.

EM raised the possibility of setting up a 'Just Giving' campaign to raise funds by getting families etc. to sponsor planters and hopefully raise, say, £1000. He also stated that it will be necessary to cope with the Covid-19 situation and that this could be done by, for example placing the plants around the planters and leave it up to the sponsors as to how they should be planted.

JH said that he was meeting with Berryburn to discuss the acquisition of a new bowser and he was in the process of getting quotes and it was looking like approximately £1200 for a hand drawn bowser;

Hedges: LC advised that the Estate is checking the position;

Castle Road East: it was understood that the specialist report on the problems with these properties has been completed and received, a plan for carrying out the works has been proposed and therefore this item is now closed;

Dava Car Park: EM said that he had spoken to CNPA about tidying up around the Park sign and he will contact them again to check the position.

8. Treasurer's Report:

DG reported that with the Discretionary Grant payment, which had been received, the Balance at 17th March 2020 was **£4,734.69**.

He confirmed that if it was necessary to agree any expenditure during the lockdown, he would forward a round robin email to all members for approval.

9. Planning Report:

BS reported that concerns remained with the continuing development at Beachan Court but as the CC comments on the original proposal were simply ignored there seemed little point in taking the matter further.

EM noted that the property recently occupied by Elephants in the Pantry appeared to be being set up as a fast food outlet but no application appears to have been made for change of use and it was believed that this would be necessary – EM agreed to contact HC to clarify this point. EM's information was that it was hoped to open the premises within approximately 6 weeks.

It was further noted that it was understood that the delays in the re-development of Ritchies emanated entirely from the HC Planning Department, EM agreed to make the relevant enquires of HC.

10. GI Report

There was no Report on behalf of the GI

11. Highland Council Update Report:

In the absence of Muriel Cockburn, or any other Ward Member, there was no Update Report from HC.

12. Correspondence:

LC produced the letter received from the Bank of Scotland and strongly proposed that a response should be sent at the very least insisting on repairs being carried out to the ATM as soon as possible, as there had been a suggestion that the bank were not prepared to repair this as the bank is closing, since the present situation is wholly unacceptable. It was also suggested that a copy of the bank's letter and the CC reply be posted on the Facebook page;

13. AOCB:

Bank Premises: BS confirmed that the SLF application was in place with the aim of acquiring the bank premises, or other suitable building, for community use. The Stage 1 application was in place and if successful would enable the necessary investigations and studies to be funded before a Stage 2 application is made;

Insurance: It was noted that the premium for the current year was £86.00 and it was agreed that this should be accepted and paid

Proposed: BS Seconded: EM

DG was accordingly authorised to make payment of the Insurance premium;

Covid-19 Notice: MB agreed to post a Notice on the Community Noticeboard in The Square advising that due to the Coronavirus Outbreak there will be no meetings of the CC open to the public until further notice but that any problems, queries or requests for assistance can be directed to the CC through govcc@gmail.com. The Notice will ask the community to Stay Safe and help their neighbours.

14. Date of the next Meeting:

TBC

The Meeting closed at 21.15

