

# Froghall, Powis and Sunnybank Community Council

Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 7pm

## Online (Zoom)

### Minutes

**In attendance:** Community Councillor Stephen Clarke, Community Councillor Geoff Goolnik, Community Councillor Alex Mess, Community Councillor Linda Presslie, Community Councillor John Singer, Rachel Smith (subsequently Community Councillor), Daniel Warren (subsequently Community Councillor).  
Sergeant (A9019) Michael Stobie (Police Scotland)  
City Councillor Michael Hutchison (George Street & Harbour),  
City Councillor Sandra Macdonald (George Street & Harbour).

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair (Geoff) opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

Apologies had been received from Community Councillor Ann Pirie (Treasurer) and City Councillor Dell Henrickson.

#### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising from October.

##### # Corrections:

No mention of the dangerous holes on Erskine Street.

##### # Matters arising:

These have been filled in and area resurfaced. Cllr. Michael Hutchison was thanked.

The adoption of the minutes was proposed by Alex and seconded by Stephen.

##### # Co-options:

Daniel Warren and Rachel Smith both introduced themselves and a vote was taken as to their co-option onto the Community Council. It was proposed by Alex and seconded by Stephen and passed unanimously with the numbers quorate.

#### 3. Police Report & City Wardens.

# Sergeant (Sgt) Stobie reported that High-profile patrols had been undertaken around the retail park and the Powis area, in response to bike thefts at St. Machar Academy and Aberdeen University. There was also a concern with bike safety as well. The police were shortly going to run bike safety initiative with the University, St. Machar Academy and NE Scotland College (Gallowgate) to address both of these issues.

# Rachel confirmed cases of incidents of slashed bike thefts (and of slashed tyres) in the Powis area. Sgt Stobie to investigate

:# Daniel felt that car handling habits were noticeably bad in Powis with cars getting too close to cyclists. Sgt. Stobie to investigate

# Also on bikes, Linda proposed we might want to investigate the "Spaces for People" initiative to maybe source some static bike sheds to which bicycles could be secured more easily. Cllr. Sandra Macdonald to investigate possibilities.

# Linda drew attention to three large paving slabs turned over and broken up around Froghall Community Centre. The stones were heavy so children could not have been involved. Sgt Stobie to follow up

# Linda reported on a seat for use by pensioners outside Calsayseat Medical Centre being vandalised. John also mentioned a nearby tree had also been recently attacked. Alex and John both pointed out that there were CCTV cameras on the exterior walls of the Centre so maybe these had captured these acts. Sgt Stobie to immediately follow up and investigate.

# Sgt. Stobie asked if those present were aware of any mental health support services in local area, such as a Men's Shed. Rachel said that they had been trying to get a Men's Shed founded at Powis Community Centre. Linda said Froghall Centre were also looking into the matter, and that they had had a bicycle club operating before the shut-down. Sgt. Stobie grateful for this information.

# Geoff mentioned that he had heard from Cllr. Dell Henrickson that Aberdeen University were concerned about anti-social behaviour of some students and its effect on the nearby community. They were apparently interested in talking with the Community Council and willing to work with local police to try and curb it.

# John mentioned his experience when trying to phoning 101, He was concerned about illegal and dangerous parking on double yellow lines on the Spital near to the junction with Sunnybank Road. Further, John mentioned issues of fly tipping outside his flat on Bedford Avenue and the spread of graffiti at the top of Bedford Avenue and on the electricity sub-station on Bedford Road. Sgt. Stobie to investigate further and liaise with City Wardens and/or Council officers as appropriate on these matters.

No City wardens were present.

#### 4. Councillors' Reports

##### Cllr. Sandra Macdonald:

# Alex asked about Flu Immunization this year. In reply, she stated that, clinics would be apparently set up in several locations throughout the city, in sports centres, secondary schools, churches and community centres. The following groups would be offered the vaccination: Children aged 2–5 years, school children in P1–P7, pregnant women, health care workers, social care workers who provided direct care, unpaid carers, 55–64 years (from December 2020 onwards), the over 65s, those with underlying medical issues e.g. asthma, COPD or diabetes, anyone who lived with someone who was shielding. Clinics will start with the over 65s, then the at-risk adults, then at-risk children, followed by children aged 2–5 years. Those in a care homes or housebound will be able to get the jab by the end of September. It was going to be challenge for the NHS locally as over 100,000 people in Aberdeen needed to be immunised in Aberdeen City alone. There is also available (*a new improved*) **local helpline 0345 337 9899** {at local call rates} if more information was needed.

# Alex was though sceptical of what was being offered. There was a danger of it becoming a shambles and he wondered why had taken so long to get this so-called “plan” in place. Vaccination will never be completed for all these people before Xmas - when it was most needed. Linda agreed.

# Salt bags were available from ACC for communities from 1<sup>st</sup>. November if they wished to apply for them. More information on ACC’s website.

# Geoff welcomed the announced introduction of hydrogen buses next month on the No. 19 route that passes through our area. Cllr. Macdonald felt such advances was vitally important for Aberdeen and the North-East.

# Daniel reported that getting through to Aberdeen City Council was becoming more difficult. The 0300 phone number was going dead at times, while the website was not operating well at all. Cllr. Macdonald agreed that there was a problem.

# Linked to this issue, Linda asked about the actual staffing of the City Council’s call centre which was difficult to reach even when it was functioning. She felt that the pandemic was being used as an excuse for not operating efficiently.

##### Councillor Michael Hutchison:

# Linda raised the question of street lights. Problems can be dealt with through the ACC website or by approaching City Councillors.

# John asked about the broken communal entrance door on his block of council flats. Cllr. Hutchison felt that it was an emergency and he would pass it for the attention of his colleague Cllr. Alex McLennan. John also raised again the fly tipping and nearby graffiti. Cllr Hutchison said that he would forward these concerns to Cllr. McLennan as well.

#### 5. Members of the Public

No members of the public were present.

#### 6. Planning Matters

Linda reported that no new applications relating to the community council area had been forwarded.

#### 7. Chair’s Report

##### Boys’ Brigade

Geoff reported that he had spoken with the Rev. Andy Cowie, Captain of the 40<sup>th</sup> brigade company, to seek clarification of the membership of the company and where they come from. He confirmed that the membership totalled 40 – 50 children, 90% of whom were from within our area. Geoff asked for vote as to whether we would send the cheque for £250, the motion was carried unanimously.

##### Proposed Bridges Redecoration Project

Geoff explained to Daniel & Rachel what the project was about: In a nutshell, bright, vibrant murals on these 2 gateways into area depicting rich history & development of the locality.

# Linda reported that written feedback on the proposal was difficult because the Community Centres were closed apart from for food distribution, but in conversation the response to the proposals was very positive.

# Geoff advised that he had made a request via the ACC website for the removal of the present tags and he assumed that this had now been done. It would become a regular request as he saw it.

# He had been in communication with and met Stephen Bly, the official appointed by the City Council's Environmental Services department on a number of occasions. He had been helpful.

# There was a problem with the Canal Road bridge's uprights because of their varying surfaces. It will mean that they would need to be covered with securely fastened hook-over metal sheets to present smooth surfaces on which to paint the murals, but which can be easily removed if Network Rail needs access to the structures underneath. (N.B. Alex voiced at this point a complaint about the carriageway of this bridge which is indeed in a very poor state).

# Stephen Bly mentioned that we might wish to consider the use of the Bedford Road footbridge as a temporary ("pop up") art gallery over the winter months while we awaited a result from our funding application(s).

# In answer to a concern expressed in a previous meeting, Geoff observed that he had discovered that you can now buy a clear anti-graffiti glaze to spread over finished artwork.

# A relatively long-lasting thermo-plastic marking material had been identified as very suitable to introduce graphics into the walkway's surface, while still observing health and safety guidelines. A possible artist had been suggested (by the manufacturer) specifically for this. Alex proposed a possible fun design that would highlight stepping stones over a stream.

# Funding issues were explored:

- Developers' Orders were ruled out as the project did not closely relate to an ongoing development locally.

- Alex had previously wondered if the City Council could compensate us because of the introduction of parking charges some years ago. Cllr. Michael Hutchison thought it most unlikely as parking schemes in general do not generate any spare money.

- Karen Finch, ACC Community Councils' Liaison Officer, had suggested contacting Castlehill & Pittodrie CC but it turned out that their application was being made under the Coastal Communities Fund and because of location we seemingly didn't qualify

- Informal contact with NUART through Stephen Bly. Not sure if we are too far from city centre although precedent had been set with the decoration of the "toaster" in Woodside.

- Working in conjunction with university institutions was raised but that was dependent on a number of factors, such as a willingness to be involved and being able to undertake such an activity at the right time.

- Other funding opportunities were being examined. There was a UK fund specifically for murals, for example. Linda offered to assist in seeking out avenues. Once we had established more detailed figures from contributors then the hunt could begin in earnest

Firhill Well:

# Stephen Blyth had pointed out that the monument was part of the responsibilities of the management committee of Sunnybank Park. Any proposal to move it to a more prominent position (away from its present location where it can be easily vandalised) would therefore be their concern. He wondered if Historic Scotland might be approached to pay for such a move should the management committee think about it and Geoff felt a site on Sunnyside Terrace just beyond the edge of the park but overlooking the top of the historic Firhill Lane (with which it is closely associated) and safely lit at night by street light, might be suitable.

# Linda reported that, following a request from her as a member of the Park's management committee, the monument had however now been cleaned by Aberdeen City Council.

## 8. Secretary's Report

# No new correspondence had been received.

# Geoff had raised concerns about the production of the minutes, stating that they need to be circulated one week before the date of the next meeting. A discussion was had regarding their production over whether anyone else wished to undertake the role of a minutes secretary for which there was a vacancy, or whether the Community Council should consider paying someone outside the Council to undertake this work. Of those that commented, Alex agreed with this latter proposal but said a failed attempt had been made in the past to recruit such a person while Linda was opposed to the idea. In the end, Stephen agreed to remain the minutes secretary until March and the AGM. He said that he would use the Minute for September as a template for going forward with the minutes from now on.

## 9. Pro-tem Treasurer's Report

# In response to the decision to grant £250 to the Boys' Brigade, Alex asked if he could be sent a copy of the original application. Geoff agreed. Alex added that in sending the cheque he would ask for a receipt.

# Alex stated that the Community Council's accounts stood as follows. Two cheques had been issued (178) to TSOHost for £48.47 and (177) to Geoff for £28.78. This left a balance of £1,732.82.

# Daniel asked if we had thought of sending a wreath to the Remembrance Day ceremony in the City. He was aware that some Community Councils, such as Old Aberdeen, do. Alex said that the Boys' Brigade also sent a wreath. Linda though said that it was our policy to join with the local Community Councils' Forum in sending a wreath and it was agreed to continue this practice.

**10. Reports from other Community Councillors**

Linda announced that the Froghall Community Centre's food distribution and soup service has been given permission by ACC to access the building and resume their work.

**11. AOCB**

No AOCB

**12. Date and time of the next meeting**

Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm on Zoom