

Feughdee West Community Council Online Meeting

Approved Minutes

25th June 2020

Present: Simon Richards (Chair), Jill Randalls (Secretary), Ross Clephan (Treasurer), Lynsey Craig, Marijke Stallaert, Ian Bertram, Cecilia Rogers, Peter Tyrrell, Katie Rumbles, Iain Adams, Sam Wylde, Alice Lewsley

Banchory and Mid Deeside Councillors: Cllr Ross, Cllr Durno

(No members of public present as online meeting)

1) **Apologies:** Nicola Milne, Cllr Bruce.

2) **Approve minutes of the last meeting:** Proposed by Cecilia Rogers and seconded by Ian Bertram.

3) **Police Report:** The police report of 2nd of June was circulated by the secretary. Main items in the report: less street crime due to lockdown - unfortunately Covid 19 has caused an increase of online crime, in particularly phishing by text and email. Text scams should be reported to 77726 Email scams to phishing.gov.uk

4) **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer had sent out the monthly report by email. Total funds as of 24/06/20 = £2,942.09. Balance of unrestricted funds £1,359.62

5) **Councillor's report :**

- Cllr Bruce had sent her report by email prior to the meeting
- Cllr Ross reported that the 'Spaces for People Agenda', a Scottish government initiative of Sustrans, is being launched today. This will include a 20mph speed limit, car parking being removed and barriers being put in place to widen the existing pavements. Coffee shops will have to apply for a permit for pavement furniture. This initiative has not been well received in Banchory by local businesses and members of the public. At present, car parking in Banchory remains free of charge.
- Aberdeenshire Council will have a £30 million budget deficit due to Covid19. Cllr Ross warned that cuts to services will be inevitable and that there will be a period of austerity ahead for the foreseeable future.
- Cllr Ross reported she had received complaints about the lack of grass cutting. Due to social distancing measures, crews have been redeployed for bin collection, recycling, crematorium duties etc. At present, pathways are being cut in playing fields rather than cutting the whole field. Consequently it may be some time before Strachan play park and football pitch is cut.
- Cllr Ross advised users of the medical surgery to park in front of the practice where staff could clearly see them to invite them inside for their appointment.

6) **Secretary's Report:**

All correspondence received had been forwarded where appropriate.

On 12th of June an extraordinary Zoom meeting was held (minutes for these are available) to decide FWCC's response to the amendments made to the Fetteresso Additional Information application. A

response highlighting various concerns was sent to the Energy Consent Unit. The Secretary noted that submission of comments to ECU was not an easy process.

A letter from FWCC was sent to the Director of Education and to the Learning Estates Dept asking them to consider using Strachan School as an additional educational facility during Covid19 pandemic. No reply received as yet.

7) Junior Councillor Report:

Nothing to report, apart from home schooling challenging for some.

8) Dissolution :

- The secretary received an email from Ruth Semple at Natural Power on the 19th of June, confirming that a draft agreement had gone to their legal team. It will subsequently go back to Fred Olson to receive final approval. JR thought FWCC should have a draft agreement document back by the middle of July.
- The secretary also received confirmation from Marr Area regarding the number of councillors required for each new area. For Feughside the minimum number will be 5 and the maximum 9. For Inchmarlo/Glassel the minimum will be 5 and the maximum 7. Each CC will be allowed 2 junior members, unless otherwise specified in its constitution.
- Torphins CC had indicated during the FWCC dissolution community consultation that they were opposed to any part of FWCC merging with the Torphins area (ie the change of boundaries option). However some Glassel residents had replied to the FWCC consultation perhaps believing themselves to be within the FWCC boundary. Torphins have proposed their own community consultation to assess the desire for residents in Glassel to change CC. Marr Area had also indicated that there would be a light touch review of the Scheme of Establishment and part of that may include tweaks to various CC boundaries.
- The topic of community council elections by postal vote was raised last month. Cllr Bruce has contacted Aberdeenshire's legal department about this. A solution is still being worked out. SR confirmed that this had been discussed during a Zoom meeting with Marr Area.

9) Transport roads and infrastructure:

Cllr Durno reported that only emergency work is being undertaken on the roads at present, but urged the continued reporting of pot holes.

10) Planning:

June planning applications:

Ref. No: APP/2020/1033 Erection of Agricultural Building, Affrusk Banchory, AB31 6LD

Ref. No: APP/2020/1037 Erection of Dwellinghouse and Garage, Land At Affrusk, Banchory.

The majority view was that a traditional steading was being demolished to make way for a new build executive type house, which is not in keeping with the local area. There have been a number of large executive type houses permitted recently, which are architecturally unsympathetic to the local building style and are eroding the character of the area. The profile of the new build does not appear to follow that of the steading it is to replace and it will be in a prominent position. It was also noted

that it appears that the roof of the existing steading is already being dismantled. It was thought that it was a pity that a traditional building was being demolished and replaced by a new build executive type house. A steading further along the same road had been sympathetically restored two years ago, using the original footprint, original stone and larch cladding.

IA concluded by saying that in 2016 planning for a house on this site had been approved. He agreed to revisit the original application and share with FWCC members.

Action - IA

Ref. No: APP/2020/1094 Certificate of lawfulness - Addition and permanent residential occupation of 45 static caravans and permanent occupation of existing 25 static Castlewood Caravan Strachan Banchory Aberdeenshire AB31 6NQ

Considerable discussion was had over this planning application. The main points were:

- There was some confusion amongst members as to how many caravans/lodges there will be on this site in total if the current 'application' is approved. It was unclear as to whether the 45 caravans mentioned in the application title referred to the existing lodges or the addition of 45 more static caravans as well as the 25 caravans already approved in 2017. It was felt there was a lack of clarity as to whether any application to change of use from holiday to residential had ever been submitted/approved.
(Email from SR after the meeting concluded that there will be in excess of one hundred residential/holiday homes on site if the application for the CofL successful).
- Serious reservations were made as to the suitability of this location is for such a large residential development.
- Concerns were raised regarding:
 - ✓ transport issues - no access to bus routes, unacceptable increase in traffic on a minor single track road.
 - ✓ increase in waste management and its potential impact on the River Feugh.
 - ✓ the quality of the units being used for permanent housing and suitability for the Scottish winter.
 - ✓ pressure on already stretched resources like local schools and medical provisions.
 - ✓ developer contributions if a planning application was successfully circumvented
 - ✓ foundation preparation for the new units may already have started prior to consent.
- It was noted that the original lodgings were approved as holiday accommodation and therefore granting a cert of lawfulness would be against the original planning approval and therefore not 'lawful'.
- It was also noted that the accompanying case law was English and Welsh, and no Scottish case law had been cited.
- Cllr Ross and Durno made it clear they could not comment on this application whatsoever as it would be in breach of guidelines but suggested that Neil Mair (Senior Planning Officer), should be approached for guidance on the process.
- It was noted that the Cof L had been applied for on the basis that the addition on 45 extra dwellings and the change from tourist to residential use would not result in a material change of use of the site. It was generally thought that this would be a considerable material change of use.

- FWCC members concluded that this application felt like an attempt to bypass the democratic planning process, was an attempt to avoid local scrutiny, was completely outside of the LDP and that there were significant local concerns which needed to be treated very seriously.
- **Action:** IA will draft a formal consultee response and circulate.

Local development plan

IA reported that Aberdeenshire council have updated their interactive LDP map. He reported that it was very good and zooming into any area in Aberdeenshire is very easy. Deadline for comments has been extended to 31st of July. It was noted that comments can be positive as well as negative.

The Chair asked all FWCC members to make this an action point and for everyone to look at the map and come back with comments (positive and negative) for the next meeting.

Action - All

Incinerator Bottom Ash Processing Facility at Chap Quarry, Drumoak.

The Secretary reported that this proposal is for an industrial facility to process the bottom ash residue that will be collected from the new incinerator being built in Torry by Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils, to deal with municipal waste. The IBA would be transported by lorry to the facility at Drumoak, stored on site and processed periodically. It is thought by local community groups, that the IBA may contain significant amounts of toxins such as heavy metals (including tin, lead and zinc) and several persistent organic pollutants including dioxins.

Concerns include quantities of dust, the leaching of toxins into the river Dee (which is a Special Area of Conservation), increased heavy traffic on the South Deeside Rd and the gradual industrialisation of the Dee valley.

There are concerns that a IBA processing plant would likely require an extension of the quarry. Chap Quarry is due to close in 2022 and the land returned to agricultural land.

SW to follow up reports that two of the councils concerned were considering pulling out of Torry Incinerator project because of the expense involved.

SW suggested FWCC should write to our councillors and ask them to consider the financial repercussions in this time of austerity and pull out of the project.

LC noted the Scottish government commitments to zero waste to landfill as a possible reason for this development.

CR added that the environmental impact would be high with the likely pollution noted above.

The chair called a vote to conclude. 10 members objected to this proposal and 1 abstained.

11) Education and Youth:

- MS gave more clarification on FWCC's letter of suggestion to use Strachan school as another teaching campus during Covid19. SW added that by using it for local pupils it would avoid travel and contagion on public transport. However, as the rules on social distancing have been updated again this week by the minister for education, it is uncertain if FWCC's proposal will be considered.

- JR informed FWCC that she has received an email from a local resident requesting that the art work on the school's fence, be removed as it was looking old and sad. Cllr Ross thought that while the school is mothballed nothing is allowed to be removed from the school premises. She advised JR to contact the Estates department.

12) Climate and Environment:

Jeff Rodgers, Deeside Climate Activist, was invited to give further detail on Aberdeen City's Net Zero Initiative to become a zero carbon city. At the last meeting several FWCC members had expressed an interest to hear more about this. J Rodgers gave a detailed analysis of the document Aberdeen City have produced.

JRodgers has produced a detailed 5-page summary, which can be obtained via the secretary.

The title of the document "A climate positive city" gives no real commitment to zero carbon. Rather it is a series of aspirations, full of feel good factor. It relies heavily on blue hydrogen which is just as damaging to the atmosphere due to CO2 release. It is an extremely expensive process to deal with the CO2 emitted via carbon capture and storage. The Vision and Plan part of the document outlines 24 projects aiming to deliver net zero - for example to promote the use of blue hydrogen for the production of electricity and district heating systems in the city, which are not zero carbon solutions.

JRodgers advocated that Aberdeen City should be challenged on this document and demand that instead some real measures are put in place to reduce the city's carbon footprint. He also advised that CC should ask for a response from Aberdeenshire Council regarding the climate crisis.

13) Mid Hill Community Benefit Fund:

PT reported that the next meeting would be in Oct. There was a brief discussion as to the benefit of holding the annual review in July. PT felt that as dissolution was imminent, there was little point. However it was felt that it was important to hold an annual review as several updates and amendments need to be added to the guidelines.

Action: PT to arrange annual review.

14) Communication :

IB reported that the group are intending to have a Zoom meeting in the next couple of weeks.

15) Community Matters:

- The Strachan flower appeal raised a considerable sum of money and all the containers have now been planted. The Chair thanked all the volunteers involved and Ian Brockie for filling all the containers with compost.
- JR had received an email about the legality of bulldozing and tarmacking a farm track near Mill of Cammy. Cllr Ross thought no planning permission was required for private property road tarring, but advised JR to contact Neil Mair at planning to verify.
- JR also received an email about the neglectful state of the church in Strachan which appears to have been abandoned by the developer and is becoming an eye sore. Cllr Durno said that as this is a private property, there is nothing that can be done unless unsafe.

16) AOB nothing raised.

17) Date of next meeting - Thursday 30th of July 2020 – online.

Meeting finished at 21.10hrs