

Auchtertool Community Council Meeting

7.30pm, 14 November 2023

Attendees

Tom Lochhead (Chair)

Andrea Cail (Treasurer)

Gill Cura (Secretary)

Debbie Scollay

Ross Mitchell

Kev Carter

Iain Martin

Pat Garragher (Chair, Auchtertool Community Trust)

Cllr Lesley Backhouse

Apologies

Cllr Kathleen Leslie

Cllr Julie MacDougall

Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Pat Garragher, new Chair of Auchtertool Community Trust, thanking him for his attendance which supports the hope to have more integration between all local committees and Trusts.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held in October were reviewed and approved with no amendments required.

Proposed: Tom Lochhead (Chair)

Seconded: Andrea Cail (Treasurer)

Treasurers Report

The Treasurer confirmed that there was nothing new to report and that the finance report per last minutes stand.

The Treasurer also confirmed that they were still waiting for detail of gardener's invoices and were trying to ascertain how many visits were made.

£2,154 remaining after gardener paid; £893 remaining from ACT landscaping grant – some of which was proposed could be applied to the village Christmas Tree and lights. The Council members agreed the proposal and the approach to contact the Chair/Treasurer of ACT to notify them of the intention and ask for permission for the same.

Treasurer suggested an agenda point for the next meeting – discussion regarding applying for a grant from the Four Winds Trust and apply it to a more significant project and apply

The Treasurer confirmed that the previous year's accounts still required to be audited; and this year's accounts and finalised and audited.

Police Report

Cllr Backhouse confirmed the Community policing team as follows:

- PC Stuart Horne – Burntisland, Kinghorn & Auchtertool.
- Sgt Judson-Howie, Community Sergeant.
- Nicola Black Community Inspector retiring next week. Replacement TBC

Email stuart.horne@policescotland.co.uk (not to be shared broadly with community, for ACC use)

www.fife.gov.uk/communitysafety to report dog fouling, fly tipping etc. Can be share on website with community

Battery storage (AOB) Light Pollution – worth reviewing planning conditions (TL to visit contractor to discuss issue with this and parking on road)

Planning Applications

Glenniston Solar Farm Project

Glenniston planning application is sitting with Fife Council and it is still being decided if it is required to go to committee review. DS has reviewed other areas and battery storage appears to be overtaking solar. Many are small but one at the back of Ballingry (Westfield) is 200MW (5 times the size of Glenniston). Provides enough power to 60k homes. The Council members discussed why there appears to be a need to use up vast amounts of land for solar panels if battery storage can give a similar output/result. It was agreed that it would be good to have a view from Fife Council on the applications as a whole – what will be allowed up to what point in time.

Cllr Backhouse shared that the Fife Plan is currently being updated and will include local plans right down to village level; however, the Chair argued that the Fife Plan doesn't say how much Fife Council are prepared to take on board.

Cllr Backhouse stated that Energy is not totally devolved to Scottish Government; many of the projects are private companies buying up land or making deals with land owners. Non-agricultural land being targeted and that many housing developments have been challenged as they are proposed on prime agricultural land.

Cllr Backhouse agreed to try to find any documentation which specifically outlines Fife Council's target energy generation

Glenniston Solar Farm Planning Application - Signatures

47 pre-typed letters provided to the Council by Locogen in support of planning proposals. 2 women purporting to be from the Community Council targeted homes in the village and local area.

An official complaint has been made to the council about the source of some of the signatures gathered in support (and objecting against the Glenniston Solar Farm planning application. The Chair asked CLB to find out how long Fife Council has to respond as they have had no acknowledgement of complaint. CLB will follow-up with Diarmuid Cotter – Head of Complaints and Pam Ewing, Head of Planning

The Treasurer confirmed she had reviewed complaints procedure online and it states an acknowledgement should be received within 5 days of receipt unless extraordinary circumstances.

RM stated that in every case of planning fraud the Council has referred the matter to the Police. If this does not happen ACC will report to the Police directly.

Other Planning Matters

The Chair shared that Harmony Energy are the battery storage company that are looking to engage with the community early next year on a forthcoming proposal and that they have invited applications for £5k/year to local community benefit

Community Benefit/Grants – Planning projects

Fife Rural Development Fund Community grants of up to £25k – apply by 20 November to be spent by February 2024. Given the very short notice deadlines, the CC members agreed it was too tight to pull the application together as required.

The Chair suggested that ACC should have some discussion with ACT regarding one organisation/trust to be applicant for all the funding on offer.

4 Winds Trust – Agreed that we will invite Stuart Duffy, Secretary of the Four Winds Trust to next meeting to provide an overview of 4WT. Application for grant of up to £3k possible – next review date Feb 2024

A.O.B

2 missing bins replaced with wind-proof/seagull proof bins. CLB shared that Fife Council's Head of Street Cleansing very proactive at replacing bins.

Core Path – RM working with Greener Kirkcaldy and Sus-Trans to support with the maintenance of the path. More likely to get funding for a tarmac path/cycle path. More details to follow at a later date

Village Noticeboard – no change, carry to next meeting

Village Social Media – converted from a Facebook Page to a Group – Auchtertool Billboard – to allow the community to post directly/interact more easily. Over 110 joined so far.

Christmas Boxes – proposal to provide Christmas boxes/hampers to local elderly residents. After much discussion this initiative was tabled until next year as we are short on time.

Christmas Tree enquiry submitted – awaiting prices. RM to speak to Tom Mitchell at Clentrie Farm. Lights already sourced - £100.

5/6 Dec for Lights-switch-on – KC to notify parent council and share details within the community.

Cllr Backhouse shared details regarding GetHelp@fife.gov – KC to add to Auchtertool Billboard; this resource has helpline to do Benefit Checker.