**Minutes - Auchtertool Community Council Meeting**

**7.30pm, 18th October 2022**

**Present**:

Tom Lochhead (Chair)

Gillian Cura (Secretary)

Kevin Carter (Member)

Mike Smart (Member)

Debbie Scollay

Andrea Cail

Iain Martin

Cllr Kathleen Leslie (CKL)

Cllr Lesley Backhouse (CLB)

Cllr Julie MacDougall (CJM)

**Apologies**:

Tracy Lambie (Treasurer)

Audrey Duncan (Member)

Ross Mitchell (Member)

Euan Stewart

**Chairperson’s Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Chair shared housekeeping arrangements and welcomed CKL, CLB, CJM (collectively the ‘Cllrs’) back to the meeting for the first time since resuming meeting post COVID-19 pandemic.

**Approval of Previous Meeting’s Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting – 6th September 2022 – were circulated by email and reviewed prior to the meeting; no concerns or objections were raised therefore the minutes were proposed by the Chair and seconded by Mike Smart.

**Treasurer’s Reports**

The Chair confirmed that Tracy Lambie is taking over as Treasurer and provided an update following his visit to the Royal Bank of Scotland branch in St Clair Street, Kirkcaldy. The bank recommended that, with the pending changes to ACC members, this could be the best time to change to an online-only account with a debit card. The Chair advised that he has paperwork ready for completion by authorised signatories. There was agreement in the room that this seemed a sensible approach to ACC’s banking requirements.

The Chair confirmed that the balance on the account is currently just over £700 and advised that ACC was still to be awarded a grant by the end of the year – expected to be just over £400.

**Police Report**

The Police Report was shared with ACC members prior to meeting by email. The Chair confirmed this will be sent out every month.

No reported crimes in the ACC area during the previous month of September 2022.

CLB asked regarding speeding concerns – the Chair confirmed that the Police haven’t been seen doing speed checks for some time however ACC members reported that they don’t believe there is currently an issue

The Chair confirmed that Stuart Kinnes and Trevor Farley are new officers designated to ACC area and it was agreed that we will copy minutes to them by email every month

**Planning Applications**

None submitted

**Projects**

Speed Reductions – Auchtertool village entrances

Regarding the entrance coming into Auchtertool from the Mossmorran Road (past Auchtertool House) - the Cllrs shared their experience in other local CC areas. It was raised that the Kirkcaldy to Kinghorn road is 50mph to 20mph and saw no reason this couldn’t be replicated in the village. Kinghorn also has signage warnings leading up the 20mph limit coming into force.

Martin Kingham and Lesley Craig would be the best contacts within Fife Council, having taken over from Phil Clark

CLB shared that she has copied in Alan McCrae into communication on the matter of pathway out of village up to Auchtertool House to see if anything can be done; citing his work on other cycle paths.

There was a short discussion regarding replicating the same at other end of village extending lead up to Puddledub farm road due to the narrow/missing pavements leading to the core path walk. It was agreed that the village would benefit from something that slows down traffic

CLB and CKL suggested that Alan McCrae come to Auchtertool and do a walk-around. Cllrs took the action to arrange this; and to invite roads dept and other services.

**Village Issues**

Solar Farm Projects

The Chair confirmed to the Fife Cllrs that the main issue in village are the proposed Solar Farms at Balbie and Glenniston and explained that a sub-group has been set up to focus on this with DS leading this.

An email from Martin Mcgroarty, Fife Council Planning Dept, was circulated prior to the meeting and provided an update on planning timescales to observed by the Solar Farm projects.

It was noted that the Balbie project falls out of the scope of ACC however we do have in interest in that project due to the close proximity and the potential impact on the Glenniston project.

CLB & CJ confirmed they are members of the planning committee and can therefore not offer opinion, only guidance with process however CKL is not so can offer an opinion and additional support.

There was much discussion around concerns over contractors’ use of the roads entering the village. DS confirmed that complaints had already bee submitted to Purvis regarding speed lorries are travelling along Auchtertool/Lochgelly road and cited that weight limits were also a potential issue.

CLB suggested some conditions need to be put in place regarding speed or traffic management and confirmed that conditions have been put in place in other local projects (Burntisland as an example)

ACC will write to contractors (Purvis and Colliers) as a first step; ask them to review situation and challenge their drivers regarding speeding.

It was confirmed that there was still no response from Locogen following consultation meeting in village in July.

Kevin Carter asked the Cllrs if there is a general strategy from Fife Council on Solar Farms; they advised that they were not aware of any specific targets and confirmed that Fife Council is not an energy generator so has a broad view about energy efficiency

Concerns were also raised over the use of arable farmland versus scrubland and queries raised regarding Fife Council’s policies around this. After some discussion the Cllrs confirmed that Scottish Government would own the policy and roll-down to council authorities

DS confirmed that David Torrance MSP has not turned up to the last 2 meetings and she trying to reschedule. CLB agreed to contact David Torrance to discuss.

DS shared that Neil Hanvey MSP had advised that there is a Fife Plan which labels all the land green or brown. Cllrs confirmed this is available online.

CJ to get in touch with Alex Rowlie MSP on the matter also.

After further discussion it was agreed that there is not currently a lot going on that we can respond to formally. Locogen had committed to a further session but this has not materialised.

ACC members confirmed to the Cllrs that we are not against solar but there is a clear agreement from local people that arable farm land is more important and should be maintained.

LB asked if community could consider a buyout of arable land as there are grants raised but it is felt that enough funding would not be available with a ballpark figure of £1k/acre rent per year.

Willow Farm project

Willow farm development has completed the first consultation stage with the second consultation expected. DS shared an overview of the project - Planting 40 acres of Willow on a previous landfill site; planning permission shows a concrete base which it was agreed appears suspicious. Burntisland CC have objected; local farmers have also indicated that they not in favour. The environmental consultation team say they have contacted ACC via Facebook in relation to this matter however no messages have been received. The Chair agreed to look into this further

Cardenden CC are happy with the Solar Farm proposal based on the fact that sheep can still graze; however it is understood their view was taken in isolation by their committee and their constituents were not consulted.

**AOB**

Communication

Kevin Carter confirmed that the new village website had been launched and there were now 9 different mediums for communication with villagers. It was agreed this was a great benefit for the village and should help combat some of the previous concerns raised about communication of village matters.

Defibrillator

Alex McDonald from Burntisland CC has previously offered to conduct training and it was agreed that this would be looked into again. It was agreed that there is a need for signage around village to signpost where the defibrilator is located.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Proposed date of next meeting: Tuesday 15th November 2022 at 7.30pm