

Minutes - Auchtertool Community Council Meeting

7.30pm, 6th September 2022

Present:

Tom Lochhead (Chair)	Simon Forrest
Gillian Cura (Secretary)	Debbie Scollay
Kevin Carter (Member)	Andrea Cail
Audrey Duncan (Member)	Iain Martin
Mike Smart (Member)	Euan Stewart
Ross Mitchell (Member)	Apologies

Apologies:

There were no apologies received.

Chairman's Welcome and Opening remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first in person meeting for some time (due to the COVID-19 pandemic and availability of CC members), remarking that it was good to see so many people attend. The Chair then introduced the Council members to those attending the meeting and briefly explained the structure of ACC and the role of the members.

The Chair invited all attendees to be as interactive as possible, explaining that the meetings were typically informal in nature with everyone encouraged to participate.

Appointment of new Community Council Members:

The current structure of ACC was discussed, including the relationship with Fife councillors. The Chair explained that due to work commitments he lives away for large parts of the year, however he is due back in October 2022 for the winter period and can commit to CC activities until April 2023 when he is looking to step down. This ties in well with the next CC elections which had been rescheduled to April 2023.

The Chair further explained that CC numbers are dictated by number of people living in each CC area. ACC is allowed 8 members based on having less than 1,000 population, therefore an option would be to have some additional co-opted members who, rather than having an active role in ACC, could attend meetings and support where required if asked by ACC members.

The Chair did however confirm that a replacement Treasurer was required due to the current Treasurer being unable to continue in role. Tracy Lambie volunteered to take on the role, having experience preparing accounts. Tom Lochhead proposed Tracy Lambie to the Council and Kevin Carter seconded. No objections were raised. The Chair confirmed that he would arrange for Tracy Lambie to have access to ACC's bank account. Kevin Carter proposed that a further signatory on the account be added in the case of physical absence by the Chair, proposing Gillian Cura. This was seconded by the Chair and there were no other objections raised. The Chair also took the action to contact the bank to add Gillian Cura as a signatory to the bank account. (*Action – Tom Lochhead*)

With 7 council members already in place, it was suggested that Debbie Scollay become the eighth member to align with her role as Lead of the Energy and Environment Group. This was proposed by Kevin Carter and seconded by Ross Mitchell. There was unanimous agreement in the room.

The following individuals were proposed (Kevin Carter) and seconded (Gill Cura) as co-opted members: Debbie Scollay; Andrea Cail; Iain Martin; and Euan Stewart.

It was noted that it would be prudent to start canvassing for a replacement Chair for April 2023. This point started a lengthy discussion on whether ACC does enough to publicise meetings and activities. It was agreed by all attendees that there are some general communication issues with common themes being experienced by several groups and committees; the biggest challenge being the geographical spread of the population served by the CC.

Pre-covid, ACC would post notices in the village re meetings; flyers were also put through doors. Need to consider various mediums to ensure biggest reach. In addition to Facebook and website, need to start posting paper notices again, including notices of next meeting Kevin Carter shared that there was already a project underway to rebuild the community website which will help improve communication. A noticeboard near the village green would also be considered.

Treasurer's Report:

The Chair gave an overview due to the current Treasurer no longer fit and able to perform the role. Both the Chair and Kevin Carter have had responsibility for issuing cheques which has been minimum in requirement – (i) Gardening services carried out in the village; and (ii) new benches installed in the village. The Chair confirmed that ACC has around £2,000 in its account which will drop to around £700 when cheques for (i) and (ii) are cashed but the CC can apply to Fife council for other funding which should see the balance increase.

Police Report:

For the benefit of new members and attendees, the Chair explained that he received a monthly police report from Police Scotland. One crime was reported last month but investigations are still ongoing. The Chair invited any members wishing to view the reports to make him aware and he would share the information. The Chair confirmed that local officers are invited to ACC's meetings but struggle to attend due to transport issues. They have advised their intention to return to the village to do speed checks however this has not materialised. Nothing of concern was noted in relation to crime.

Planning Applications:

None submitted of any concern

Projects:

The Chair confirmed that he was not aware of any ongoing projects now park is finished and signed off and invited attendees to advise if there were any major projects ACC should be considering.

There was discussion regarding the small section of pavement between village exit and Auchtertool House. Previously there was refusal by Fife Council to address this matter, however now there are young children walking from Auchtertool House to school' this will be revisited with Fife Council (*Action – Tom Lochhead to raise with Fife Council*)

Another item of discussion was the goalposts at park, which several attendees remarked were too big for purpose, suggesting smaller goals (fixed) would be more appropriate. (*Action – Tom Lochhead to raise with Fife Council*)

This led to further discussion regarding a gate at entrance to park which had previously been refused for a technical/access reason. (*Action – Tom Lochhead to raise with Fife Council*)

It was noted that new benches had been installed and had received positive feedback.

Core Path: Auctertool to Kirkcaldy – Ross Mitchell highlighted that some areas are starting to become overgrown and difficult to pass and a more permanent solution for maintenance was required. Current cost is £400/500, twice a year, for farmer to cut back. It was agreed that this would be added to the October meeting's agenda for discussion with local councillors. A secondary option would be to buy equipment for the village to save regular expenditure. Already raised at ACT who are open to help with funding if there was a specific project agreed. Agreed to speak to councillors first.

Village Issues:

Solar Farm Project – at a previous meeting it was agreed that a sub-committee should be formed to deal with the matter of the Glenniston solar farm project, following public notices, the CC had received the following notes of interest: Jilly Martin, Pete Mitchell, Tracy Lambie, Ross Mitchell & Debbie Scollay. It was agreed that Debbie Scollay would lead this sub-committee and would set up a Whatsapp Group for any participants. Debbie Scollay confirmed that she had been in touch with David Torrance, MSP who she had arranged to meet on 10th September; and Neil Hanvey MSP was also willing to discuss further.

It was agreed that the sub-committee should poll residents in ACC's area and decide what aims & objectives reflect the feedback received, ensuring a balanced approach.

Simon Forrest suggested that with so many large-scale projects currently impacting the local area, it would be good for sub-committee to consider other energy projects as there could be common elements. After much discussion it was agreed to begin with a remit focussed on the solar farm project to get things up and running and the sub-committee was renamed as the 'Energy and Environment Group' to allow its remit to extend as required.

There was agreement that it made sense to understand the view of villagers on all projects in planning process and not just the solar project – currently 5 going through the process, at various stages

The Chair confirmed that Locogen have not informed ACC which is part of the required consultation process. All attendees agreed that this should be challenged. The Chair confirmed that he has written to the three other CCs affected by Glenniston Solar project and that two have already responded to confirm they too, have not heard from Locogen with Lochgelly Community Council still to respond.

It was agreed that this matter need to be discussed further with Fife Councillors at ACC's next meeting

It was agreed that the initial remit of the Energy and Environment Group is as follows:

- Understand, based on what is currently shared re. Glenniston Solar Farm project, what the views of villagers;
- Increase communications regarding projects in planning process; and
- Make a formal complaint about lack of notice by Locogen.

The Chair advised the sub-committee can send a letter to everyone via Electoral roll (approx. 600 houses) to garner views to later present to Fife Council.

Actions:

- *Tom Lochhead and Debbie Scollay to draft letter to send to all households in ACC area.*
- *Tom Lochhead to email all three local councillors, outlining concerns about Logogen not following due process confirming that ACC feels this project is moving too quickly and we require more consultation on this;*
- *Tom Lochhead to write to three other CC areas to outline what ACC intends to do in relation to the solar project.*
- *Energy and Environment Group meeting to be scheduled, suggested the week before ACC meeting so they can provide an update (Debbie Scollay)*

A.O.C.B:

No further matters raised.

Date of Next Meeting:

The date of the next meeting of Auchtertool Community Council was confirmed as 4th October 2022, at 1930hrs.