

Keith Community Council

Minutes of Meeting On Tuesday 6 February 2007



1. Present

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|-------------------------------------|----|
| Stewart Cree (Vice Chair/Secretary) | SC |
| Irene Boyd | IB |
| Ian Cattanach | IC |
| Gary Coull | GC |
| Marguerite Cruickshank | MC |
| Charles Lawson | CL |
| Adeline Reid | AR |
| Cllr Percy Watt (Ex Officio) | PW |

In Attendance

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Sergeant Bill Neil | (For Item 4 only) |
| Lorna Campbell | The Banffshire Herald |
| Ester Green | The Northern Scot |

2. Apologies

Peter Matheson

The Vice-Chairman advised members that the Chairman, Colvin Cowie, was currently attending hospital in Glasgow for a routine check-up and that, in his absence, he would take the Chair.

Item

Action

3. Minutes of The Meeting of 3 October 2006.

These were adopted as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed **GC** Seconded **CL**

4. Police Matters

Sergeant Neil offered his apology for the recent absence of a Police representative at Community Council meetings and stated his intention that, operational duties permitting, he would ensure that such representation was afforded at future meetings.

Sergeant Neil advised members that Constable Ian Ralston had been appointed as the new Community Beat Officer for the Keith area and that he hoped to introduce Constable Ralston at a forthcoming Council meeting. He also intended to introduce Diane Jamieson who had recently been appointed as Community Warden for Keith working three days per week.

Members welcomed these appointments.

Sergeant Neil then updated members on the progress of the CCTV system that is soon to be introduced to Keith. He advised that listed building status applied to two of the proposed camera sites and that obtaining the necessary permissions would result in a delay of 3-4 months. It was, nevertheless, hoped that the system would be operational before the summer months when the problems of disturbance tended to be at their greatest.

Sergeant Neil responded to a notified question regarding a Police operation designed to impact on irresponsible young drivers 'cruising' in Huntly. The success of this operation, which had resulted in 14 drivers being prosecuted, had encouraged him to seek authority for a similar operation in Keith. The tactical details of this initiative would remain confidential but he hoped to report back to the Council on this matter at a later date.

There was general recognition by members that the problem of young motorists had receded in recent months either as a result of Police activity or the inclement weather and dark evenings.

CL raised the issue of vandalism to newly planted trees in Regent Square and agreed with Sgt Neil that CCTV would act as a significant deterrent to such behaviour in the future.

AR referred to a group of children, the eldest of whom appeared to be no more than 12 years old, who were recently seen harassing an elderly pedestrian on Mid Street. The same group of children are believed to be responsible for acts of vandalism and annoyance elsewhere in the town. Sgt Neil noted these concerns and undertook to make enquiry.

PW urged all those who witnessed such incidents to report them to the Police without delay.

Sergeant Neil referred to item 4.6 on the Agenda (travellers at Cottage Woods) and advised that he maintained a close liaison with the travellers and the Moray Council on this matter. There had been no new incidents in this area since the last meeting. PW confirmed that he had received no further complaints.

5. **Matters Arising**

1. **Right Of Way - Isla Road to Corsairtly**

SC reminded members that the Moray Access Forum were pursuing this issue but required first-hand evidence of usage of this route during the past 20 years.

As members' portfolios had now been introduced this matter was passed to CL to progress

CL

2. **Trees Overhanging Union Street.**

This matter is being addressed by LG and will be held over until the next meeting to allow her to update members personally.

LG

3. **Obstruction Caused By Tree On Banff Road**

As item 4 above.

LG

4. **Westerton Court Sign**

SC sought confirmation that this sign was still defaced by paint. On

receiving this he suggested the matter be deferred to allow LG to address the matter and report back.

LG

5. **Trees Overhanging A96 – Regent Street**

PW confirmed that maintenance of these trees was the responsibility of Bear (Scotland) to whom he had referred the matter.

PW

6. **Extended Closure Of Leisure Centre Over Festive Period**

SC advised that, following the publicity arising from discussion of this matter at the last meeting, a response had been given in local newspapers by Ken Brown, Sports Facilities Manager. This response cited, amongst other things, the poor history of usage of the Centre over the festive period. This was noted but not accepted in relation to the fitness suite, which had only come into operation in July 2006.

SC had also discussed the issue at a meeting of the Joint Community Councils of Moray whose Chairman had, as a result, written to the Chief Executive of the Moray Council seek an assurance that every effort would be made to minimise such closures in future.

SC also advised that the Chairman had written to the Sports Facilities Manager to express his disappointment that no representative from the Community Council had been invited to the recent opening of the new facilities at the Leisure Centre. An acknowledgement had been received and a fuller reply is awaited.

6. **Financial Report**

The Secretary advised that the Bank balance on the Community Council account was £621.46 with £27.21 being held as petty cash.

It was agreed that, subject to his approval, the Council would appoint Mr Neil Lewarne of the Royal Bank of Scotland to audit the accounts at the end of the financial year. AR agreed to approach Mr Lewarne to confirm his availability. *(Secretary's note – AR confirms Mr Lewarne has agreed to undertake this function)*

7. **Christmas Lights Sub-Committee**

GC updated members on the Christmas lights switch-on which took place on 7 December 2006. Some discussion took place regarding adverse publicity that had arisen following this event but it was generally agreed that this was misplaced and that, in view of the short timescale within which the Council had arranged the event, an enjoyable evening had ensued. AR offered the thanks of all members for the work undertaken by GC in this regard.

It was generally agreed that such events could only succeed with the full involvement and support of local shopkeepers and businessmen. To this end it was agreed that the Christmas Lights Sub-Committee would meet to discuss arrangements for a joint meeting with all interested parties with a view to producing a programme of events that would attract larger crowds and offer a significant challenge to similar events elsewhere. The next meeting of the Christmas Lights Sub-Committee will take place at the **Community Centre, Circular Meeting Room at 7.30pm on 28 February 2007.**

SC
AR
IC
IB
+ Any other interested Member.

GC also suggested that this matter was one that could be usefully addressed by the Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership and agreed to raise the issue with them at their next meeting (13.2.07)

SC advised that a further successful fund-raising quiz had taken place at the Fife Arms Hotel on 29 December 2006 when the sum of £258 had been realised.

This matter will be retained as a standing item on the Agenda.

8. Planning Issues

SC intimated that no significant planning issues affecting Keith had been notified since the last meeting. He also intimated that, in accordance with the portfolio allocations, GC would now receive all planning application notifications for the Keith Wards and will bring appropriate matters to the attention of members.

SC suggested that the Council note the well-balanced and effective manner in which the recent development of houses and flats on Reidhaven Square/Moss Street had been undertaken. There was considerable support for this view and SC was instructed to make enquiry to determine whether there was any means by which the harmonious and appropriate nature of this development could be officially recognised. SC

9. Correspondence

The Secretary intimated that the following items of correspondence had been received;

1. Aultmore Wind Farm Proposal

SC advised that AMEC Wind Energy, the proposed developers of a wind farm at Aultmore, had written to offer to make a short presentation to the Council outlining their proposals.

SC was asked to write to the company accepting their offer and suggesting that the presentation take place at the start of the next meeting. SC

2. Proposed Traffic Order – Bridge Street

SC advised that notification had been received from The Moray Council of their intention to introduce a Traffic Order that would extend the present 30mph limits on Bridge Street/Edindiach Road to a point beyond the built-up area.

Members noted this proposal and offered no objection or observation. SC

3. Keith Grammar School Quiz Night – 23 February 2006

Members noted an invitation to enter a team for the above event and undertook to take part. SC

Members noted the following correspondence

1. HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy

2. Letter of support for Regent Square traffic calming – Nora Radcliffe MSP

All other correspondence was dealt with under the appropriate minute headings above.

10. **AOCB**

The Chairman invited members to air any general issues or concerns. These Included;

1. CL – Noted that several streetlights on Station Road/Seafield Avenue had been out of order for some time. SC suggested that such issues were best resolved by directly reporting the matter to the lights fault line which PW advised was on **01343 562525** All
2. CL – Advised that the weight restriction signs on the bridge on Newmill Road are badly obscured by dirt etc. PW to pursue PW
3. CL – Reported concerns regarding vehicles causing obstructions by parking on both sides of Newmill Road. Matter to be referred to Police at next meeting. Police
4. CL – Reported that a drainage ditch at the west side of the 'Wee Widdie' was blocked and the water therein was quite deep. A protective grating had been damaged or removed, causing danger to children. PW to pursue. PW
5. CL – Reported accumulation of water on Station Road outside Lynn House as a result of poorly placed drainage. PW
6. IB – Sought information regarding the procedures for having Westerton Road formally adopted by the Moray Council. PW advised that this was essentially a private matter between the present owners of the road and the Moray Council who would have to be satisfied that the road meet recognised standards before they would be prepared to consider adoption.
7. GC – Sought clarification regarding wheelchair access to certain houses on Quarryhill, which had steps up/down from the road level. SC suggested that, if this was a local authority house it may be a matter for the Moray Council, however it was likely that only those houses accommodating disabled persons would qualify for adaptation for wheelchair users.
8. AR – Sought information on the clarity of road signs directing motorists and others to the Town Centre when approaching from the west. Agreed that MC would make some enquiry and report back in due course. MC
9. SC – Advised that he had received a number of written items from the Chairman for consideration.
 1. Adults and children sharing changing facilities at the swimming pool/leisure centre. It was recognised that this is an almost universal practice and that any restrictions on such use would make it very difficult for families to use the facilities. Unless some practical alternative proposal can be made no action to be taken.
 2. The problem of children dropping litter. To be referred to Police representative at next meeting. Police

3. Greater clarity of road markings at Regent Square. Agreed that this was a matter that would be incorporated in the proposals for the Square that were presently being developed.

4. The perennial problem of snow cleared from pavements being re-deposited there by road snowploughs. No suggestions were forthcoming for a realistic solution.

5. Complaint that the Road Sweeping Lorry stops on Seafield Avenue at 8.30am on Sunday mornings with its engine running. It was noted that the Sweeper carries out duties at the recycling point and this might account for it halting in this area. Agreed to await further information from CC.

CC

6. Complaint that the recent roadworks on the A96 within Keith had not been properly notified in the press. Confirmed by all present that such notification had taken place and that sufficient warning signs had been erected at the entrances to the town well in advance of the works commencing.

7. Complaint that, following the installation of new gas mains in Mar Place, the road had been dug up again shortly after completion of the work to allow the installation of new kerbing. Whilst noting the complaint members recognised that, where different contractors were involved it was not always possible to coordinate such activities. Examples of coordination elsewhere in the town indicated that, where possible, this was being done.

8. Observation on the length of time taken to undertake repairs to a water leak on the A96 near Tesco Supermarket. The matter is the responsibility of Scottish Water and Bear (Scotland). It was acknowledged that, had the weather been colder, an ice hazard would have resulted.

12 **Date of Next Meeting**

Owing to the unavailability of the Secretary and other member(s) it was agreed that the next meeting of the Community Council will take place on

Thursday 8 March 2007 at 7.00pm.



J Stewart Cree
Secretary/Treasurer