

Nethy Bridge & Vicinity Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th December 2014

Present: S. McCook (Chairman), D. Carrott (Treasurer), H. Tucker (Secretary), E. Ibbertson, A. Thom, A. Young, D. Black

In Attendance: Cllr B. Lobban, I. Hogarth (NBTA), S. Barber (Stagecoach) and 7 members of the public.

Apologies: S. George

The meeting was preceded by the AGM of The Nethy Bridge Community Development Company. This was quite separate from the Community Council meeting and was in order to obtain the necessary quorum.

Minutes of the last meeting: Proposed by: E. Ibbertson Seconded by: A. Young

Matters Arising: Nothing

Ms S. Barber from Stagecoach: Ms Barber (Director of Operations) had come to the meeting to respond to the concerns expressed, over the use of double-decker buses on the route through Nethy. Concerns were also raised about the standard of driving at times. Ms Barber stated that these buses were taller but actually smaller than most coaches and the same width. They were in fact easier to manoeuvre. She said that the buses would not be used if the roads were not thought to be suitable. The buses have equipment onboard which records driving habits and speed. Any complaints can be investigated. Double-decker buses were necessary on school runs as the Council would not agree to pay for two single-deckers. Mr McCook mentioned that the school role was falling at Grantown Grammar and was the same capacity still required. Ms Barber said that she would check this. She said that about 75% of the buses used on this route had cctv fitted and any complaints of poor driving could be investigated quite easily. She also mentioned that these buses were more user friendly for wheelchairs and pushchairs. She agreed to respond further before the next meeting.

School Wood Development: Planning permission had been refused at the last CNPA meeting on 21st November. The H2 site on Dorback road had been approved, but no knowledge if this would be taken forward by developer. Cllr Lobban stated that the fact that the Reporter had wanted this site removed from the Local Plan had made it difficult for there to be any other decision. Tulloch do have the right of appeal.

Concern was expressed over the section of woodland that had been mentioned would be gifted to the community. Those present thought it a sensible move to consider putting in a notification of intent to purchase the area in question to protect it for the Community.

Members of the Public: None

Treasurer's Report: Balance: £4,304. The calendars would cost £304, with The Nethy contributing 50% of this cost. The committee agreed that if the cost was similar and The Nethy was still involved, that they should be gifted again next Christmas.

Councillor Lobban's Report: The Budget meeting was 18th December. Savings were again needed to be made. Agreement reached that there should be no reduction to the school day at present. This was something that was being looked at nationally. The Council Tax would have to be raised by at least 5% for the council to benefit, as anything lower would be negated by a reduction in the Government subsidy. Austerity had made the council more efficient but more cash would be required in subsequent years.

RSPB: Mr McCook stated that he had met with Jeremy Roberts at Forest Lodge to discuss concerns over the proposed dams in some areas of the reserve. The map that had been available had been very misleading; Mr Roberts said the hatched areas only showed where dams may be constructed, not that the whole area would be dammed. Mr Roberts realised that it would have been preferable, that discussions had taken prior to the submission of the application and had withdrawn the present application for further investigations to be undertaken by a hydrologist.

Mr S. Taylor speaking as a local resident gave some background information as to the benefits of dams. The removal of lodge pole trees and construction of dams in areas at Mondhuie and Garten Wood had been a great success. This allowed the return of rare mosses and insects and in fact helped to stop flooding as it slowed run off. Mr McCook said that this was understood but he would wait to hear back from Mr Roberts. Mr Taylor asked why the CC hadn't requested more information before objecting. Mr McCook stated that there hadn't been time before the 14 day period ran out and it was for the applicant to provide any necessary background information.

Steel's Mill Path: The design of the bridge and path was now available to view. The path would run from the Templeton Bridge to the old dump, with a large bridge crossing the burn and boggy area. The cost would be £66,000. The CC would undertake the planning application as this would be cheaper, hopefully in this financial year and would be valid for 3 years.

Grass Cutting: An application had been submitted to the Community Challenge Fund to undertake the grass cutting in certain areas within the village. Concern had been raised that all of the cutting would have to be done but this was not the case. Areas agreed would be marked on a map, which had as yet not arrived from the council. Suggestion made to cut football and adjacent field and possibly school areas. Should this be successful then consideration would be given to the churchyard as well. Cllr Lobban said that the council were well aware of the problems this year.

Calendars: Mr McCook thanked Eric and everyone that had helped with the distribution of the calendars again this year. He had already received some thanks from recipients.

Police Report: Nothing. Mr McCook had heard from Inspector McLeod that he hoped to be able to reinstate the monthly reports in the future. Comment made as to the amount of speeding through the village. Mr McCook agreed to mention this to the Police again.

NBTA Report: Mr Hogarth stated that accommodation providers would pay their fees to the Community Centre as from April, as NBTA would be part of the Centre's committee.

CNPA Report: Cllr Lobban mentioned that 3 new board members were required.

Planning Applications: None

AOCB: Mr McCook mentioned that he had repaired the village sign on the Tulloch Road. Request to move the litter bin on Balnagowan Brae to the opposite side of road next to new bench. Cllr Lobban will look in to this.

Question asked why the planning application at Balliemore had been withdrawn. Mr McCook said that it had been the applicant's decision to withdraw it.

Cllr Lobban mentioned that the RSPB had received £6,000 from the Area Committee which would enable them to plant 4,000 trees in the Abernethy reserve. The money had come from the Landfill Communities Fund.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 8th January 2015

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.