

Minutes of Meeting Tuesday 27th October 2015 at 7.30pm in Saline Community Centre

Present: David Chisholm, Marie Crane, John Crane, Irene Wardell, Muriel Phillips, Jim Hensman, Donald Murdoch, Jean Alexander, Janet Murdoch, Jim Currie, Kay Jackson, Marylla Ferguson, Roddy Jones, R McFarlane, Andy Brand (guest) Aileen Baxter (guest), Morag Baxter, Peter Ball, Lanny Ball, Maggie Currie, Ken Wcislo, Donald Watson, Yvonne Watson, Catriona Price, George Duncan, Keith Hayes, Alan Twaddle

Apologies: Martin Cairns, Jason and Aileen Fletcher, David and Maureen Storey, PC Kirsty Orrock, Morag Aitken, Jean Morris, Cllr Bobby Clelland, Cllr Kate Stewart

1. Chair's introductory remarks: DC welcomed those present. He reminded people of the welcome packs for new residents and encouraged everyone to report new arrivals to John Crane or Jim Hensman. He also reminded that any interests in the matters being discussed should be declared.

2. Guest Speaker, Aileen Baxter: Aileen is in post with Fife Council until the end of March 2016. Her role is to help groups to ameliorate the effects of benefit cuts in the West Fife Villages. She described work on a community survey to identify the areas of greatest concern. The biggest issue is transport while many communities identified a wish for a community café and employment is an important concern. Importantly, some people indicated a willingness to help out. Current initiatives being progressed are;

- a) An 8 seater minibus will be available to the West Fife Villages from December. Volunteer drivers are now required
- b) A credit union will be starting on Monday 2nd November, based in High Valleyfield and be run by volunteers as a subsidiary of Credit Union. The credit union will accept savings and will also give loans at interest rates much lower than pay-day lenders and loan sharks. She compared this with interest charges by a certain High Street store
- c) Funding is available under Anti-Poverty measures and details will be circulated via the Community Bulletin and Community Web site

Jim Hensman described his work with the Oasis Group that had provided a valuable service for excluded people. The group had been very successful when based in the Kingsgate but had suffered when forced to move to more remote premises. Consequently, he felt that community facilities needed to have a high profile location

3. Guest Speaker, Andy Brand: Mr Brand represents the applicant for the proposed solar farm at Muirmealing Farm, west of Saline. He described the proposals and the programme for works should planning permission be granted. The works involved erecting around 19,500 panels, associated buildings and security fencing. The farm would generate 5mw of electricity, more than twice the output of the largest commercial wind turbine. The construction period would be around 3 months and involve site access, drainage, installation of the panels, landscaping and fencing. When the facility is operational, there will be a need for ongoing routine maintenance. He referred to the community council's wish to maximise on local employment and was asked to provide information on how local companies could express their interest (this will be discussed in more detail at a later date) Mr Brand also indicated that a contribution could be made to the community council for good works in the area. This would

likely be around £10,000 but could not be confirmed until the levels of Government subsidy had been clarified.

In response to questions from the floor, he advised that the panels were designed to absorb light rather than reflect it and had an anti-glare finish. Timescales are dependent on when planning permission and grid connection are granted. Sheep may be used to graze the grass under the panels. Some present were concerned about the access point, which would require to comply with Fife Council's requirements. Materials and equipment would likely be delivered from the west and details would have to be agreed with Fife Council. Buildings on the site would be relatively small with the largest being the sub station

Action: DM/DC

4. Additional items for the Agenda/Order of items:

Alan Twaddle advised that the Cub Scouts 100th anniversary would be in 2016. He described several fund-raising activities and requested a contribution from the community council. The limited funds available was noted but it was felt that a contribution could be made. The treasurer will investigate and agree a donation in consultation with the chair and secretary

It was suggested that this matter be publicised in the Community Bulletin and Web site

Action: MC/DM

5. Minutes of previous meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a correct record. Proposed by Marie Crane, seconded by Irene Wardell

6. Matters arising from the minutes of previous meeting: Apart from those covered by the agenda.

- a) Vacancy: It was noted that two people had offered to join. Both were suitable but, to ensure that the procedures advised by Fife Council were complied with, it was agreed that the vacancy would be advertised in the Community Bulletin

Action DM/DC

- b) Fife Planning Liaison: DC advised that a small liaison group had been established, which would meet quarterly and that he had agreed to participate. The first meeting will be on 23rd November

Action: DC

7. Reports

a) Secretary: see attached report

Decisions taken were;

- a) Fife Council Training for Community Councils: Anyone interested to advise DM
- b) Fife Council Planning Event: Anyone interested in attending to advise DM
- c) Fairer Scotland: DC remarked that the report suggested that many concerns raised at this community council were shared by community councils throughout Scotland. The report will be posted on the Community Web Site.

b) Treasurer

MC advised that the balance remains at £454.40

- c) **Police:** PC Orrock had submitted an apology and had provided a report to DC. Speed checks were continuing and parking attendants had been present around the school. Police are now patrolling on bicycles. There has been no significant crime and the only incident of note was cows on the road at Upper Steelend. It was assumed that the recent traffic offence would be reported to the next meeting. Some present were concerned about Police "blue light" training through Saline and Steelend. While the need for this was accepted, some of the times seemed inappropriate.

8. Main discussion items

a) The Glebe Planning Application:

Jim Currie advised of a planning application in principle for the erection of 9 houses at The Glebe. Permission in principle for an access road and four houses had been granted in 2014 and residents had been informed that these would be bungalows. Works have now started on site to form the access road and 50 lorry loads of topsoil had been removed from the site, all without planning permission. Residents were now seeking the community council's support by objecting to the application.

It was noted that the applicant had described the plot as a gap site, which those present considered to be a back-land development contrary to Fife Council policies. The applicant's opinion of the form of local development was also disputed with the view was that the predominant form was large plots. Access was also a major concern not only from The Glebe but at the junction with North Road. There was also concerns of groundwater and problems of inadequate foul drainage. It was therefore agreed that these concerns should be reflected in the community council's response.

Action: DC

b) Muirmealing Solar Farm

It was noted that all in the community council area had received a copy of the September Community Bulletin that advised of the application and its reference number. No objections had been submitted and it was felt inappropriate for the community council to object. However, it was agreed to continue to liaise with Mr Brand to explore opportunities for local businesses to bid for work.

Action DM

9. AOCB

- a) DC advised that work had started on SSCDT's study of Saline Glen. Following a meeting with the consultant, it had been agreed that the timescale be slightly extended and that a report should be available for discussion by Christmas

10. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 24th November 2015

SALINE AND STEELEND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Secretary's Report October 2015

Actions taken/Updates following September Meeting

1. Kingdom Housing Association: contacted re opportunities for local unemployed to participate. KHA provided details of their local training schemes that locals would be eligible for. It is suggested that chair and secretary be authorised to set up meeting with KHA to discuss further.

Alan Henderson also provided advice on lettings procedures that were publicised in the Community Bulletin and web site

2. Fife Voluntary Action: services publicised in Community Bulletin and web site

3. Wind turbines: no feedback received yet

4. SESplan: agreed comments submitted

5. Fife Council "Your Place/Your Say" survey: comments submitted

6. Leader: publicised in Community Bulletin and Web Site

7. Solar Farm: Application publicised in Community Bulletin and Web Site. No objections posted on Fife Direct so there appears to be no reason for community council to object. However, applicant's agent has been contacted and asked to confirm employment opportunities and community fund. This will be provided in time to be discussed at October meeting. Agent may also attend meeting in person.

8. Coal Gasification: "Hands Off Our Forth" event publicised in Community Bulletin and Web Site.

Correspondence

1. Invite from Scottish Trust to attend their annual conference on 24th November at a reduced rate of £40. The topics are relevant to Saline and Steelend, and it is suggested that a place be booked

2. Fife Council Training for Community Councils: This is a survey for community councils to define priorities for training. A copy is attached and members are asked to feed back their views, which would be collated and passed to Fife Council

3. Fife Council Planning event: This is a follow-up to the meeting attended by the chair.

Drop-in events will be held in Glenrothes between 2 and 5pm on November 5th and 12th. Anyone wishing to attend should advise me after the meeting, indicating which event they would attend

4. Bus Timetable Changes: Fife Council has advised that Stagecoach and Bay Travel will be changing timetables in November. In advance of timetables being available to the public, the council has provided details. There are no changes to services through Saline although the area could benefit from a new luxury express service to Perth from Dunfermline. Anyone wishing a copy can advise me at the meeting

5. Fairer Scotland Event: The report of this (attached) is interesting and seems to reflect views expressed at many community council meetings. While it highlights complaints of local authority attitudes, the Scottish Government does not escape criticism. In fairness to Fife Council, efforts are now being made and it is suggested that the criticisms and concerns be noted but that we concentrate on the positive suggestions for future action

