

KEMNAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2011

Present: Chris Hunneyball (Chairman), Margaret Christie, David Evans, Annie Ferries, John Hern, Bob Ingram, Ian Murray, Janet Newberry, Eric Pashley, Jim Piggins, Mavis Wainman.

Attending: Cllr Hazel Al-Kowarri, PC David Calvert.

1. Welcome: The Chairman welcomed those present.

2. Apologies for absence: Bill Blackwood.

3. Police matters: The Kintore and Cottown areas had been targeted during the snowy period by opportunist thieves searching for insecure vehicles. Several cars had been stolen and later recovered, while other vehicles had had items stolen from them. Three persons had later been caught and reported for a number of these crimes. Kemnay residents were advised not to leave cars unlocked with the ignition keys in the car, or to leave premises unsecured. Operation Westray (using a combination of the local Pro-Active Unit, Roads Policing Department and the Local Policing Team both in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire) had led to all the stolen vehicles and most of the stolen property being recovered. The Local Policing Team had apprehended three offenders in the act. Two assaults had been reported in licensed premises, and two young people (attempting to buy alcohol and, having been refused because they were under-age, causing trouble in a shop) had been reported for Breach of the Peace. Two motorists had been reported for road traffic offences following patrols by marked and unmarked police cars. Operation Whalsey had been conducted over the festive season: Police had patrolled Inverurie and outlying villages between 8pm and 4am during weekends and bank holidays to deter anti-social behaviour. The restructuring of Grampian Police had not caused loss of Community Focused Officers in the Garioch.

4. Opportunity for members of the public to speak: There were no members of the public present.

5. The Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 25 November 2010, were proposed by Ian Murray, seconded by Eric Pashley and unanimously approved.

6. Matters Arising from Minutes:

a) After-hours opening of schools: Two part-time caretakers had been appointed for Kemnay Academy to cover three evenings per week.

b) Lamp-post at the Glebe: This was still bent. Cllr Al-Kowarri was to make enquiries.

7. Planning matters and applications:

a) New Applications: The only controversial application was that of Stewart Milne Homes who wished to change the layout at one part of the Bogbeth Road estate to accommodate eleven 2-bedroom houses and two 3-bedroom houses instead of ten 3-bedroom houses. It was decided to object to the increase in the number of houses, given the infrastructure problems.

b) Halliday Fraser Munro Application: This was a notification of a forthcoming consultation. It was decided to wait for further information before commenting. It was, however, pointed out that the current thinking was that there should be no further housing development in Kemnay until at least 2016.

8. Reports

a) Christmas Lights Sub Committee: Ben Hudson, who had provided the Christmas Trees, was thanked as were Jim Piggins, David Evans and Chris Hunneyball who had participated in their erection. The Chairman thanked Eric Pashley and Gavin Adam who had masterminded the operation. Cllr Al-Kowarri commented that she had been asked by several people to thank the Sub Committee for providing the Christmas Trees and lights despite the dreadful weather conditions.

b) Safety Group:

i) Report: There was no report.

ii) Community Safety Award Nominations: There were no Community Safety Award Nominations offered by Community Councillors, although the contribution of Costcutter's staff to safer pavements during the snow was noted. It was agreed to place this item on the agenda for February's meeting, in order for members to consider the matter.

c) Community Learning and Development: The post of supervisor of the Fitness Suite had been frozen. Aberdeenshire Council had been consulted on the proposal that volunteers be used to staff the facility. The Health Fair was attended by 60 people. The Library was not replacing staff and was cutting down on administration. Adult learning was booming, with upholstery and badminton classes restarting and a waiting list for stained glass.

d) GACCF: Eight people had expressed an interest in a group to be involved in the marketing of Community Councils.

e) Community Planning: Due to financial constraints, the police had done no recruiting for a year and were actively seeking voluntary redundancies. It was hoped that front-line services would not be affected. The NHS was currently not cutting back. The February meeting about Community take-over of assets (see item 14a below) was oversubscribed – another would be arranged. Westhill now had a Council Service Point. Applications could be made for funds from the Police Community Initiative Fund which is created from the sale of lost property; members agreed that they should establish a contacts list of organisations in the village which might profit from such funding.

9. Car Parks Consultation (Consultation Document previously circulated): It was agreed to suggest that prices be held for existing paying car-parks but that the time allowed for each price band be shortened.

10. Housing Strategy: It had been established that Planning Gain had been used to provide low-cost rental accommodation, not temporary housing as had appeared to be the case.

11. Budget Briefing: The current revenue budget is £550m and the capital budget £67m. This is expected to decline and not reach present levels again for 10 years; this is against a background of rising demand and a growing and ageing population. The Scottish Government Grant to Aberdeenshire is 12.6% lower than the Scottish average; 80% of funding is Governmental, and, the Council Tax being frozen, the Council has no way of increasing its income. The Council had anticipated a £12m cut in finance, but the current reality is a cut of about £24m. Between them, Education Learning & Leisure and Social Work account for almost two thirds of the budget. The result is a potential funding gap of £54m over two years. Savings of £51m had already been identified, to be made by imposing a two-year pay freeze for all staff and increased charges for services; more money would be generated from quarries, harbours etc, increased rents, efficiencies (eg sharing premises), staff reductions, and reductions across all services.

12. Kemnay Primary School “Cartie Rally”: This was to take place on 8 May 2011. An information leaflet and entry form were available. Entries were invited from P1-3, P4-7, S1-6 and adults.

13. Aberdeenshire news: The unveiling of the Granite “Kemnay” sign was imminent. There was to be a consultation shortly on the future of Kemnay Academy. The steps to the War Memorial had been replaced.

14. Correspondence:

a) The Transfer of Public Assets into Community Ownership Seminar: This was to be held in Maud on Saturday 5 February 2011.

b) Aberdeenshire Sports Council – Awards Evening: The Awards Evening was to be on Friday 11 March 2011 at The Venue, Garioch Sports Trust, Inverurie.

c) ASCC Bulletin (previously circulated): This mentioned a “Common Ground” meeting, the purpose of which appeared unclear to members.

d) Community Planning Bulletin (previously circulated): This reviewed Community Planning activities in 2010 and offered information about current activities.

e) Garioch Police Bulletin (previously circulated): As this had been circulated electronically, and was rather large, it was forwarded only to members who requested it.

f) Health and Wellbeing Questionnaire (previously circulated): Members were invited to reply individually.

g) Fire & Rescue Service Operating Structure (previously circulated): Members were assured that the new structure would not increase response times.

h) SEPA View: This was passed on to Bob Ingram.

i) Carbon Capture and Storage Demonstration Consultation: This was passed on to Jim Piggins.

j) Aberdeenshire Sports Council Newsletter: This had been received.

15. AOCB: The Bus Forum would be held on Monday 3 March. John Hern had been asked to bring to the attention of the Community Council the fact that those clearing the car park at the back of St Anne’s Church had dumped the snow in the Church garden, damaging a young tree. This had happened during the snowy period at the beginning of 2010 and also during the recent snowfall. It was agreed to write to Aberdeenshire Council asking them or their agents to desist from the practice.

16. Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting would be held on Thursday 24 February 2011.