

KEMNAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 31 March 2011 AT 7.30 PM
IN KEMNAY VILLAGE HALL

Present: Bill Blackwood (Acting Chairman), Margaret Christie, David Evans, Annie Ferries, John Hern, Janet Newberry, Eric Pashley, Jim Piggins, Mavis Wainman.

Attending: Angus Elder, Alex Fowlie, Jon Hardey, Philip Hopley, PC Martin Robertson, PC Barry Wallace.

1. Welcome:

The Acting Chairman welcomed those present.

2. Apologies:

Chris Hunneyball, Bob Ingram, Ian Murray, Cllr Hazel Al-Kowarri, Cllr Allison Grant.

3. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 25 March 2010:

The adoption of the minutes was proposed by Janet Newberry, seconded by John Hern and unanimously approved.

4. Chairman's Report:

The attached report was tabled by the Acting Chairman, who thanked the Chairman for his continued work.

5. Financial Statement:

Janet Newberry, treasurer, presented the accounts. The adoption of the financial statement was proposed by Jim Piggins seconded by Mavis Wainman and unanimously approved.

6. Date of Next Annual General Meeting:

Next year's meeting would be held on Thursday 29 March 2012.

Chairman's Report

I am pleased to be able to say that Kemnay Community Council has continued to be well supported, with Community Councillors playing a full role both in discussion, and by volunteering to accept various responsibilities. Although there have been no major new issues, our debate continues to be lively and some long standing matters have continued to rumble on.

The most obvious changes to our village have been largely thanks to Aggregate Industries. During the course of the year they have done extensive work at Mill Farm, where they have turned a rather unpleasant hole in the ground into what will be an attractive and wildlife friendly recreation area. They were also responsible for organising a clear up of inappropriate brushwood, mainly broom, which was detracting from the appearance of the Place of Origin. More immediately obvious, they have provided a most handsome piece of granite placed at the entry to Kemnay, welcoming people to our village. The lettering was done by Fyfe Glenrock, and our very sincere thanks go to both companies for their very real support of our

community. We must not, however, forget the considerable involvement of Aberdeenshire Council in the planning stages, and in the preparation and landscaping of the site. Our thanks go to Jim Stevenson and his team for their work.

We have welcomed a police presence at many of our meetings, and the new policy, with a report being submitted prior to meetings, has proved to be a success. There have been some changes in our Community Beat Officers, but PC Sandra Duncan has always proved to be a helpful and courteous point of contact. It is good to see that crime levels in general have been dropping, although minor irritants, like grossly inconsiderate parking, and flagrant abuse of the parking restrictions, have, at times, aroused our ire.

When the Draft Local Plan was published we were disappointed to note that no particular emphasis had been put on the submissions by Community Councils, even though they are statutory consultees. Kemnay Community Council representatives had a meeting with the Team Leader, Piers Blaxter, and made this point in particular, and we believe that our message was accepted.

The Plan went before the Garioch Area Committee, and we were a little disappointed with the decisions they took. We had acknowledged that Kemnay had to have its share of new housing, and the majority of the proposals in the draft plan were accepted as drafted. However, the plan for the Fetternear estate included 69 houses of a type that may have allowed the development of significant new village facilities, final approval being, inter alia, conditional on these facilities proving to be feasible. The Area Committee, however, approved up to 77 houses, but only allowed for associated development to be connected with the stabilisation and restoration of the Bishop's Palace. This decision will give the village the disadvantages of a significant development without any commensurate improvement of facilities.

David Fyffe gave us a presentation on the outcome of the Fetternear consultation, run by the estate, which in general showed support for the proposals, although the degree of interest shown in the presentations had been a little disappointing. The Community Council was also invited to become involved in the creation of a Swimming Pool Trust which would take control of a new pool. This, however, was felt to be a long term commitment that could not reasonably be accepted.

The access to the path skirting Beechhill Croft, which was mentioned in my last report, was finally resolved, although not entirely to our satisfaction. However, a possible alternative to the blocked route did seem to be a feasible option.

The cuts to the Council budget, and the EU working time directive, have resulted in some reductions to the access of facilities. In particular, the lack of an evening janitor in the Academy caused the cancellation of a number of activities, and our expectation of having public access to the fitness suite has now finally been dashed. We have not had our public toilets reopened, but a Comfort Partnership has been agreed with Bennachie Lodge which will give some relief to users of the Pleasure Park.

Thanks to a most generous donation by the Community Association we have bought another eight lamp post Christmas illuminations. Appalling weather prior to Christmas nearly made it impossible to put up the Christmas trees, but our thanks go to those stalwarts who braved the elements to erect and decorate them. In particular they go to Eric Pashley for his organisation, to Gavin Adam for his invaluable skills and contacts, and to Ben Hudson of Treelagic for donating the trees.

The Association of Scottish Community Councils has continued to cause us concern. It is the body that purports to represent us, yet its workings are so opaque that we have no idea what the Executive members are doing, how they are spending their budget, nor what their programme is. They do not publish accounts, do not publish minutes of meetings, and do not hold themselves to account at an Annual General Meeting. A proposal that we submitted for the annual ballot was rejected as being "erroneous", but despite persistent requests we have not been told why it should have been so deemed. Unfortunately their deficiencies do not seem to be widely appreciated, but this is probably due to the fact that many Community Councils are not even aware of the ASCC's existence.

Consultations have included the Open Space Strategy, and one dealing with the issues surrounding travellers' camp sites. This was initiated by Aberdeenshire Council, but we have since had a second one produced by Grampian Police. We also commented on car parking charges, and individuals were invited to respond to a Health and Well-being survey

This year, for the first time, we laid a wreath on the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday on behalf of the people of Kemnay.

At our final meeting Scottish and Southern Energy gave us an interesting presentation on the intended upgrading of the Leylodge electricity sub station. This is necessary to allow for the transmission of more power generated from natural resources in the north of the country, but the actual proposals will have little or no impact on Kemnay.

I have not mentioned a number of other interventions that we have made on behalf of residents, ranging from litter problems to recreational facilities. I would like to emphasise that the Community Council exists for the benefit of everyone in our area, and it welcomes involvement and suggestions from anyone who can see that something needs to be done, or could be done to improve our village.

Cllr Al-Kowarri has been a regular attendee at our meetings, and I thank her for her support and her work in keeping us informed about the work of Aberdeenshire Council. She has also been most helpful in ensuring that our requests and problems are forwarded to the appropriate person in the Council.

Finally I would like to give thanks, in particular, to Margaret Christie and to David Evans. Without their assistance my job as Chairman would be made vastly more difficult, and I cannot overemphasise how supportive and helpful they have been in their roles as Secretary and Planning Specialist. To single them out does not mean that I am unaware of how much other people also do, Bill Blackwood, our Vice Chairman, Janet Newberry, our Treasurer, Jim Piggins keeping watch on Community Learning, and Bob Ingram doing the same on the Safety group are examples, but everyone has been most supportive and pulled their weight. I thank you all.

KEMNAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 31 MARCH 2011

Present: Bill Blackwood (Acting Chairman), Margaret Christie, David Evans, Annie Ferries, John Hern, Janet Newberry, Eric Pashley, Jim Piggins, Mavis Wainman.

Attending: Angus Elder, Alex Fowlie, Jon Hardey and Philip Hopley, PC Martin Robertson, PC Barry Wallace.

Apologies: Chris Hunneyball, Bob Ingram, Ian Murray, Cllr Hazel Al-Kowarri, Cllr Allison Grant.

1. Welcome: The Chairman welcomed those present and particularly those from the group promoting wind turbines at Greenmoss Farm.

2. Police matters: There were four reports of vandalism in March: three broken windows, and damage to a notice board and a car. Investigations are on-going into a suggested attempted break-in at a business premises. Individuals have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for possession of drugs and shoplifting, and investigations are continuing into an alleged juvenile assault and into bullying of teenagers on Social Networking sites. The Police have been carrying out speed checks within the village. Twenty motorists have been reported for Road Traffic offences and three others were educated. There will be increased police patrols in the area during the Easter holidays. PCs Currie and Gibbon recently took part in the Momentum Project, educating local youths on various aspects of driving. The Institute of Advanced Motorists is to start a Better Driving Course on 19 April. Anyone interested can phone 01651 873477 or email gordonam.info@btinternet.com.

3. Opportunity for Members of the public to speak: Philip Hopley of Greenmoss Farm urged the Community Council to support his proposal for two wind turbines. He spoke of them as part of continuing environmentally-friendly developments on the farm. He had attempted to carry out one environmentally-friendly project a year. The wind turbines would supply electricity to the farm and also provide income to continue the programme of environmental improvements. Alex Fowlie of Muirden Energy outlined the technical details of the plan, and Jon Hardey, field ecologist, answered members' concerns about impact on wildlife, particularly geese flying from the Loch of Skene to feeding areas close to the proposed wind turbines.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2011 was proposed by Annie Ferries, seconded by David Evans and unanimously approved.

5. Matters Arising from Minutes: The damaged lamp-post at the Glebe had been replaced and the area under it resurfaced.

6. Planning matters and applications:

a) **New Applications:** There was nothing controversial.

b) **Greenmoss Wind Turbines:** Following the presentations at 3 above, it was agreed to support the erection of the turbines.

7. Reports:

a) **Safety Group:** There was no representative present.

b) **Community Development:** Vera Walker was now Chairperson. The use of volunteers to man the training suite at the Academy had been discussed. Money might be available to train volunteers who would then pass on their knowledge. Volunteers were being trained to teach ICT courses for which the library had a waiting list. The revision of Community Development Groups had been discussed, but no satisfactory outcome had been reached. The Acting Director of Education was no longer prepared to foot the bill for backdated pay for crèche staff; the problem remained unresolved, but Cllr Al-Kowarri had agreed to investigate the matter.

c) **GACCF:** The March meeting had started with presentations on the Garioch Area Licensing Forum and on tackling anti-social behaviour ranging from neighbourhood disputes to vandalism. In the second half of the meeting, there had been a report on the work of Newmachar Community Council. A draft Community Council Leaflet had been discussed. Kenny Thomson was to represent the forum at a summit meeting on Travelling People on 5 June. The Chairman had closed the evening by announcing his resignation because he was leaving the area.

8. Police procedure on traveller camps: There was a feeling of despair that no solutions to the problem appeared to be available. There was deep dissatisfaction with Aberdeenshire Council's policy of non-intervention. Members felt that the laws which apply to the general population should also apply to

travelling people, and that the police should be encouraged to apply the law. Kenny Thomson was to be appraised of the Community Council's views.

9. Fire and Rescue Service consultation: It was felt that centralisation was generally unsatisfactory and might at times prove dangerous. A response detailing the Community Council's concerns was to be made to the consultation.

10. Aberdeenshire transport strategy review: Members had responded to this individually on line.

11. Aberdeenshire news: The resurfacing of Bremner Way from the Kendal Road end to Minto Path had been agreed at the Area Committee Meeting. Next year the remainder of the road would be dealt with. The second phase of the path resurface on Riverside Road was to be carried out. Ian Fowell was retiring at the end of June. Jim Stevenson of Landscape Services had expressed his disappointment that all his department's efforts in relation to the 'Welcome to Kemnay' stone had not been acknowledged. It was agreed to write to thank Mr Stevenson, and to have a short article put in the newsletter.

12. Correspondence: Copies of Viewpoint and The Network had been received. An e-mail had been received from Alison Cumming with information about the Licensing Forum. The information included a poster, an information leaflet, a Powerpoint presentation and an application form. It was agreed to display the poster on the Village Notice Board.

13. AOCB: The matter of the non-appearance of the notice in the Pleasure Park informing the public of the Comfort Partnership with The Bennachie Lodge was raised. Cllr Al-Kowarri was to be asked to intervene. The problem of potholes in Victoria Terrace was discussed and it was agreed to make use of the online reporting facility.

14. Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting would be held on Thursday 28 April, 2011.