

# MUCKHART COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Muckhart Community Council, held via MS Teams, on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020, at 7:30pm

<b>Present:</b>	John Anderson (JA)	Chair
	Mike Wilson (MRW)	Secretary
	Danny Conroy (DC)	Treasurer
	Philip Lord (PL)	Minute Secretary
	Jonathan Bacon (JB)	
	Stuart Dean (SD)	
	Jon Jordan (JJ)	
	Marlene White (MW)	
	Val Whyte (VW)	
	Peter Wyatt (PW)	

Councillor Graham Lindsay

**Status:**        **Approved**

### 1. Apologies for Absence

JA welcomed members and Councillor Graham Lindsay to the meeting, which was being held via MS Teams due to the current Coronavirus lockdown.

Apologies for absence had been received from PCs Barry Ritchie and Barry Reiter and Councillor Kathleen Martin

### 2. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

### 3. Minutes of Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020

The Minutes of the meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020, issued to members by email on 8<sup>th</sup> June, were accepted without amendment, proposed by PW, seconded by MW.

### 4. Matters Arising

- Re Item 4 (Matters Arising: National Planning Framework 4): MRW noted that, due to the current Covid-19 situation, the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) draft is now likely to be put before parliament in autumn 2021 and finalised in the spring/summer of 2022
- Re item 8 (Muckhart Community Plan: Updates, Transport Services): PL reported that he had been in touch with Stagecoach about re-establishment of the number 23 bus service through Muckhart. They had replied that though services were being re-established, the number 23 service was not yet included because their "lesser resources were better placed elsewhere". They were unable to give a date for the service's reinstatement.

PL will try to get a date for re-instatement from Stagecoach.

**ACTION: PL**

## **5. Police Report**

JA noted that a written Police Report had been received and had been distributed prior to the meeting. Since the last meeting, one crime had been reported in Muckhart, whereby a male was charged with threatening or abusive behaviour within the confines of a single family home. A number of complaints were also received, in the middle of June, of persons camping at the lower end of the Castlehill Reservoir.

JB drew attention to these complaints and noted that substantial amounts of litter were being left behind and that this was a continuing problem. A discussion followed regarding possible remedies to the situation, including the use of CCTV, recording and reporting car number plates and a request for the further involvement of the Police. SD noted that this has been a recurring issue, over a long period of time, and in the past there had been cross-area meetings involving Tayside Police (before the establishment of Police Scotland), PKC, the Fire Service, landowners and community groups, such as Community Councils. JB agreed to email our Police contacts to ask if any measures could be put in place and if further Police involvement could be considered.

**ACTION: JB**

The Report was accepted by all and JA thanked the Officers for their input.

## **6. Muckhart Lend a Hand**

JA noted the continued magnificent effort being made by Muckhart Lend a Hand (MLAH).

MRW reported on the Council proposal, made in mid-June, to send a flyer out to all members of the community who were currently shielding. The content of the MLAH flyer was agreed and copies were mailed out, week commencing 29<sup>th</sup> June, to around 20 people in the Muckhart area. It was agreed to display a copy on the local notice board, the MCC web-site and on Facebook.

**ACTION: MRW**

MW noted that, in her experience as an MLAH volunteer, some individuals felt uncomfortable asking for help, for example, with collecting and dropping-off prescriptions. It was suggested that individuals would feel better if this service was offered, directly, by the pharmacy in Dollar. MW agreed to raise this idea with Fran McNicol, the co-ordinator of MLAH.

**ACTION: MW**

## **7. H49 Planning Application Appeal**

SD reported that we are now at the point where little more can be done to assist the Appeal process. He noted that the Appeal was now out of hold and there had been a few recent entries added to the DPEA web-site requesting further information, none of which were directed to MCC, which would conclude on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. It was still not clear what, if any, decision has been made by the Reporter regarding a site visit.

MRW reported that, on 11<sup>th</sup> June, MCC had sent an email to Colin Bell (CB), at the DPEA, requesting an update on plans for a site visit following the issue of Government updates to Planning procedures due to Covid-19. CB had replied to confirm that although the Reporter intended to undertake a site visit he might conduct this by 'virtual means'. MCC, in

response, requested that the Reporter should undertake a site visit in person.

Following a further Government update, in an email from CB, dated 25<sup>th</sup> June, MCC was advised that the Reporter intended to undertake a site visit by 'virtual means' based on video imagery gathered on a tour of the site to be undertaken by Springfield (which it subsequently offered to provide). MCC was asked if it would consent to this. Following a Planning Sub-Group meeting, on 26<sup>th</sup> June, we issued a further email confirming that, due to the unique circumstances relating to site H49, our preference remained that the Reporter should undertake a physical site visit and that, consequently, we did not consent to a virtual site visit. SD noted the Council had responded to the same email, also requesting that it would prefer that a physical site visit take place.

JJ pointed out that Springfield was, presumably, now out of furlough and, perhaps, we could get that confirmed. He also questioned the wisdom and ethics of relying on a video "site visit" provided by the appellant, Springfield, as it would be open to bias. While there was general agreement with this view, the consensus was that there was little more we could do at this point. However, if Springfield were to provide a video of the site, MRW stated that MCC would be allowed to view and comment upon it.

As things stand, presently, the DPEA web-site indicates that a site visit will take place but does not indicate if that is in person or by video. MRW will continue to monitor the web-site for any further announcements.

**ACTION: MRW**

## **8. Muckhart Community Plan: Updates**

The following updates were noted:

### ***Infrastructure***

MRW reported that he had issued an email thanking the Council for the improvements made to path from the west of the village, along the A91, to Upper Hillfoots and Golf Course Road. These improvements had been undertaken due to a Government grant made available to improve walking and cycling, under the current COVID-19 measures, and which the Council was able to access. He noted that MCC had since received several positive comments from residents, welcoming the new pathway, together with a suggestion that the kerbs at each end of the path be lowered, to improve access by cyclists and those walking with buggies, wheelchairs or scooters. This request has since been forwarded to the Council.

MRW also noted that the improvements to the path along Drumburn Road, down to MGC, had also been completed and that on behalf of the Working Group, MCC and all of our community, he had uploaded a post onto the web-site thanking Tim and Kim Allan for all of their support.

It was agreed that a formal note of thanks be sent for making these improvements possible.

**ACTION: JA**

### ***Promoting the MCC Web-site***

JB noted that although he had still not been able to get a counter added to the web-site to measure the number of visits, the indications are that there has been more activity both on it and on our Facebook page.

### ***Community Plan Annual Review***

JA reminded the group that a Plan review was due and that we will need progress reports on the various elements of the Plan for the forthcoming AGM. He will be in touch with the various Action Plan leaders, over the next few weeks, about these and to get their input and ideas for the next years' plans.

**ACTION: JA**

### **9. Planning Sub-Group**

#### ***9a: Main Issues Report / Draft LDP: Update***

SD noted that Graham Finlay (GF), the Council's Principal Planner, has indicated that he was still going through responses to the MIR and will get back to those who commented but will probably not do so until Council Officers have agreed responses to all points raised. Such responses will also be run past Cllr Balsillie, the Council's Planning Convenor, prior to contacting those who had submitted comments. It was likely to be late autumn before GF would be able to contact MCC regarding its responses to the MIR and that the new draft LDP would not be available for consultation until early 2021.

Cllr Lindsay confirmed he had no further information to that reported.

#### ***9b: Woodlands: Arndean Path***

SD reported that the Arndean estate had no plans to put in an engineered path to the viewing point in the new plantation, though a non-engineered, strimmed path was a possibility. If MCC felt the community would prefer an engineered path, this would require funding to be raised. SD proposed that a meeting be organised on-site to discuss possibilities with Johnny Stewart and this was agreed.

**ACTION: SD**

#### ***9c: Planning Applications***

None since the last meeting.

### **10. Muckhart Primary School: Update**

VW reported that the arrangements for learning during the lockdown had worked extremely well and information for parents about the re-opening of the school in August would be sent out 10 - 14 days in advance. She noted that the parents had purchased a very large marquee to be used for outdoors learning once the school reopens. Further good news was reported, namely, that the school would return with three teachers and thus three teaching groups next year. Thanks were expressed to all those who made these developments possible.

VW noted that digital, on-line learning would continue next year, however, technical issues, regarding the provision of an acceptable broadband service, needed to be resolved to make this possible. MRW went on to note that, further to discussions with VW, on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, he had emailed Lorraine Sanda, the Head of Education at the Council, and Cllr Lindsay, as Chair of the Education Committee, regarding this subject and, following a response from Judith Morrison, at Education, he now awaited further contact from IT Services to further discuss this issue. He thanked Cllr Lindsay for his support on this matter.

MRW and VW will continue to liaise on this issue.

VW also noted that after the lockdown the school gardens and grounds needed tidying up in advance of the school re-opening. She suggested that volunteers take tools to the garden in the last week of July to help. It was agreed that the community, as a whole, could be asked to help out with this. More information will be placed on the web-site, the notice board and on Facebook.

**ACTION: VW/MRW**

Lastly, VW thanked Cllr Lindsay for his recent help with the school.

### **11. Treasurer's Report**

DC presented the Treasurer's Report, noting that on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 the balance of the account stood at £1221.51. He noted that the accounts were nearly ready for auditing so as to be ready for the AGM.

The current Treasurer's Report was accepted.

### **12. JCCF: Update**

DC noted that the next JCCF was due to take place the following evening, via MS Teams. The major item for discussion would be whether or not Community Council (CC) elections were going to take place later this year or if they were to be delayed in view of the Coronavirus situation. CC feedback, to date, included issues such as the lack of opportunity to engage with communities, leading to a perceived lack of democracy, were elections to go ahead this year, together with issues around co-opting members to fill gaps in CC numbers. A decision on this has yet to be made by the Council and we await the outcome of the JCCF meeting.

### **13. Correspondence**

MRW noted that most of the items on the circulated list of correspondence had been dealt with under the items above, but took the opportunity to raise the following:

- The Council review of its grass cutting operations for Parks, Gardens and Open Space areas. It proposes to leave some spaces, within these areas, uncut, to encourage the growth of wildflowers and insects to improve biodiversity (also raised by Cllr Lindsay at the last meeting - Item 12). MRW reported that, aside from the village play park, there were no public areas that the Council would normally cut within the Muckhart area. After a brief discussion, members agreed to support the proposal to improve biodiversity, in principle, however, it would request that the play park and all road side verges (in the interest of road safety) would continue to be cut. JJ noted that the football pitch in the play park currently needed cutting
- JA noted residents concerns raised about the ongoing, excessive noise that dogs were making in the Wester Moss area, noting that the dogs sometimes appeared to be in distress. Members agreed that this was both a nuisance and a concern to residents. It was decided to write to the Environmental Health team within the Council to draw their attention to this issue and asking that they investigate
- MRW noted that two Traffic Regulation Orders had been received stating that new experimental speed limits were being introduced across Clackmannanshire: a 20mph limit through all of the villages and towns in the Hillfoots (excluding Muckhart – presumably, because a 20mph pilot had been trialled, unsuccessfully, in the past) and a

**ACTION: JA**

40mph limit on various sections of roads around Cambus, Sauchie, Dollar, Fishcross and Menstrie. MRW will post the details on the web-site **ACTION: MRW**

#### **14. AGM and Community Council Elections**

JA had spoken to Lesley Baillie (LB), at the Council, further to MCC submissions on CC elections. LB had advised that no decision had yet been made as to whether or not CC elections would take place this year and that the Election team would be discussing this and putting forward proposals in the near future. It was noted that from feedback received by the Council, some CCs were concerned about their ability to function, due to their low number of members, while some were suggesting that, due to current rules of governance, they should dissolve and become Development Trusts instead, as these were set-up to do more of what was required within their area. During a long discussion on this issue, JJ expressed the view, which was supported by members, that we need strong CCs throughout all of Clackmannanshire.

#### **15. Community Event for Community Council Elections**

JA noted that given the uncertainty over CC elections taking place this year, it was not yet possible to plan for any community promotional event. SD suggested that we could consider approach newer members of the community and introduce them to MCC and its work. It was agreed that the Officers should meet and discuss the best way forward to address this issue. **ACTION: JA**

#### **16. AOCB**

No other business was raised.

#### **17. Date of Next Meeting**

The next MCC Meeting and AGM will be held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020, at 7:30pm (via MS Teams - TBC).

The meeting closed at 9:15pm