

MUCKHART COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Muckhart Community Council, held via MS Teams, on Wednesday 27th January 2021, at 7:30pm

Present:	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)	
	Matthew Pease (MP)	
	Patrick Thompson (PT)	
	Marlene White (MW)	
	Val White (VW)	
	Peter Wyatt (PW)	

Councillor Denis Coyne; Greig Mackay (GM), Bus Users Director for Scotland ¹

Status: **Approved**

1. Apologies for Absence

JA welcomed members, Cllr Denis Coyne, Greig Mackay, Bus Users Director for Scotland and residents to the meeting which was being held via MS Teams due to the current Coronavirus situation.

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Kathleen Martin and Graham Lindsay and PCs Barry Ritchie and Barry Reiter.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Meeting on 2nd December 2020

The Minutes of the meeting of 2nd December 2020 were approved, proposed by PW, seconded by JB.

4. Matters Arising

- JA reported that the EDF Burnfoot Hill Community Fund would be holding an on-line introductory meeting, at 2:00pm on Monday 1st February. Several members indicated their interest in attending. JA will report back at the next meeting.

ACTION: JA

- Re Item 4 Matters Arising, 2nd December 2020, first bullet (Dog noise): JA reported

¹ Web site: <https://bususers.org/>

that he understood that the owners of The Granary have now been served with a Noise Abatement Order, following noise monitoring at a neighbouring property on behalf of Clackmannanshire Council's Planning Department and Environmental Services. PT confirmed that action was being taken and welcomed this, though he was not convinced that the order would prove effective.

- Re Item 8, 2nd December 2020 (Scheme of Establishment Consultation): MRW confirmed that MCC's response to the Scheme of Establishment consultation had been submitted on 3rd December. Further to Lesley Baillie's (LB) response, on 29th December, MRW forwarded all of the comments received re Muckhart to members for any feedback. On 22nd January, LB forwarded all comments received, from all Community Councils, which MRW had forwarded to members. LB also stated that MCC's proposal to change the boundary with Dollar CC was likely to be agreed, noting that there would be no impact on the electorate. LB also stated that the second stage of the consultation is unlikely to take place until after Easter.
- Re Item 4 Matters Arising, 2nd December, third bullet (Muckhart Primary School: Update): MRW confirmed that John Allan, Head of IT at the Council, has confirmed that an improved broadband service is likely to be finalised, in the next three to four weeks, in time for the school's reopening, following the current closure due to the Covid lockdown. Also, further to the last meeting, MRW has uploaded a post onto the website regarding letters issued by internet service supplier Briskona, to over thirty properties, across the Muckhart area. These properties, located close to the school, along Golf Course Road, at Blairhill and at Moss Park, are entitled to Scottish and UK government vouchers covering the cost of supplying a new, wireless, superfast broadband service. Briskona have since issued a further letter to promote their service.
- Re Item 11, 2nd December (Planning Sub-Group): SD reported that the Council has approved the revised planning application for Rossardan, to which MCC had objected. The Council has responded to all of the points raised by MCC.

5. Police Report

According to the Police Report issued, there was nothing to report since the last meeting. The Report was accepted by all and JA thanked the officers for their input.

6. X53 Bus Service

JA introduced Greig Mackay (GM), Bus Users Director for Scotland, who then spoke about funding opportunities for bus networks and the work of Bus User Groups. GM is also Chair of the Forth Valley Bus Alliance Board.

GM talked about the opportunity to submit bids for funding, on a partnership basis, from a £500 million government fund to improve the bus infrastructure, for towns, cities and rural areas in Scotland. The Scottish government is keen to have passenger input included within these bids, to ensure benefits for the end user. GM is also keen to ensure that dialogue takes place on the priority measures for the bids currently being prepared. Time-scales are tight with the deadline for the first tranche of submissions being 18th April (the second tranche is due in October). GM is keen to ensure that funds are spread across Scotland and would welcome ideas to incorporate into bids.

The Forth Valley Bus Alliance Board includes Clackmannanshire, Stirling and Falkirk Councils, SEStran, Tactran, First Scotland East, Stagecoach East Scotland and independent bus operators and funding has been secured for a consultant to prepare their submission. The Board is in discussion with the Traffic Commissioner regarding rates, bus routes and issues for bus companies and their operating costs.

GM stressed how important it is that people should be encouraged to use the new X53 bus service, as much as possible, to help ensure the service's longer-term viability.

Replying to a question from JA about bus priority measures, GM mentioned measures to address pinch points, illegal parking, improved bus lanes and traffic light sequences. PWL noted his opinion that the frequency of the X53 is too low (though much improved from the 23 bus frequency) – for example, a trip to Dollar is likely to entail a long wait for a return bus to Muckhart and highlighted that this is a chronic problem for bus services in rural areas. GM commented that there are other ways of providing rural transport, such as DRT (Demand Responsive Transport), which are more adaptive.

JJ asked if the £500 million fund is looking at sustainable buses, for example, whether electric and hydrogen powered buses are covered. GM answered that, if a bid is successful, there is a requirement in that regard and also flagged the SULEBS funding (Scottish Ultra Low-Emission Bus Scheme).

Marion Robertson (MR - resident) referred to the forthcoming scheme for free bus travel for young people, under the age of 19, and asked GM how best to contact First Bus about this change and bus travel issues relating to Dollar Academy. GM agreed to pass on MR's details to the First Bus Director. GM also confirmed that the CPT (Confederation of Passenger Transport UK - which represents the UK bus industry) has already agreed its reimbursement with the Scottish government.

Alison Macdonald (AM - resident) commented that reliable and accessible timetables are key to encouraging bus use and, with more people likely to take "staycations" this year, good bus information will be important for tourism. AM noted that it was good that the X53 timetables are posted at bus stops and that there was a wide advertising campaign about the new service. However, more widely, timetables on the Internet have been unclear (for instance, whether they are up to date or even providing conflicting times). AM also bemoaned the complete absence of information about other bus services, for example, at major bus stops. With the selection of the Forth Valley site for the regional hospital, came a requirement and promise that there would always be a bus service to the hospital. Also, bus travellers can often find themselves waiting for a delayed bus, with no information about when, or indeed whether, the bus might come. A digital information screen at places like the Kinross Park & Ride, similar, for example, to that provided in Edinburgh, would be very helpful.

GM replied that there is work on improving timetable information on the internet, and their compliance team has been working on a database. It is the responsibility of local authorities to post timetable information in the bus stops. There are timetable and bus information initiatives, to improve efficiency and information, for example, with small screens at bus

stops, similar to iPads. He noted that vandalism in bus stops is an issue which they are seeking to address and local authorities are increasingly willing to help.

AM further noted that not only is there no bus service from Muckhart to the hospital, there is also no information about bus connections to the hospital. GM suggested looking at booklets produced by Scottish Borders Council.

JJ added that there is a need to re-think the use of private cars, for instance, looking at car pooling and Car Clubs (such as those in Aberdeen), and in integrating bus services with these, in addition to changing attitudes to the purchase of private cars.

GM commented that there is a need for park and ride connectivity, a shift in model, and we need bold approaches on emissions.

MW expressed a concern about the bus service and local tourism and asked if the Stirling to St. Andrews service – linking two major tourist cities - would be reinstated. GM replied that multi-operator tickets would be of benefit, generally, however, the First Bus Group Eastern area did not extend as far as St. Andrews.

JA confirmed that MCC will seek to encourage bus use. MRW noted, and GM agreed, that this needs to happen across Clackmannanshire and that all Community Councils should be promoting the X53 service. GM agreed, and will speak to David Philips, Operating Director at First Buses. MRW also suggested that this be raised at the next JCCF meeting.

JA thanked GM for attending and for providing so much information. PL agreed to lead a sub-group to discuss initiatives to encourage bus use, including preparing a post for the web and MCC's Facebook page. JA agreed with JJ's comment that the group will be a Sustainable Transport group.

ACTION: PL (re Sub-Group) / DC (re JCCF)

7. Kirkhill Flooding

JA reported positive progress on the work re flooding. On 9th January 2021, JA met with JB, Stuart Cullen, Clackmannanshire Council, and Richard Johnson (RJ), NMB Consultants. They are looking at two strategic options to mitigate the risk of flooding. One relates to the west drain and the other is to divert the water flow to the east of the village, however, the latter would be expensive. The Council has commissioned RJ to undertake a study and he will report on the options, in a few weeks' time.

In the meantime, JB has established a local Flood Group, which includes five residents. The group has held two meetings, to date, and is looking into historic flood events in Cairns Place, Kirkhill and the wider Muckhart area. The group will produce a Flood Register and, from that, will develop aims and objectives, which will be discussed with MCC, to then develop a Flood Action Plan. The group is looking at what we, as a community, can do to protect and guide against such adverse events.

ACTION: JB

The Council issue flood pods, which are static flood response units containing gel packs, sandbags, etc., and it was suggested that the area behind the Muckhart Inn, on the verge (at Cairns Place), could be a possible location. SD noted that this is currently owned by the

Receiver, following the bankruptcy of Wilson Homes, and that there would probably be no objection to this use.

JA thanked JB for all his work.

8. Muckhart Lend a Hand (MLaH): Update

MRW advised that MLaH was continuing to provide local support for those requiring it. The MLaH Co-ordinator has reported that there has been no massive increase in demand for support and that MLaH continues to help around five to six people, directly. There are no local resource issues and CTSi funding remains sufficient for the support being provided.

MRW flagged relevant recent posts on the Muckhart website, including those relating to the government's FACTS campaign and emails issued re a Covid-19 research panel and a Mobile Test Centre, located in Sauchie.

9. H49 Planning Application

a) Section 75 Update

SD reported that the Section 75 (Sec 75) agreement has been delayed and that the DPEA has granted the Council a further six weeks, from January, to conclude an agreement with Springfield. On several occasions contact had been made with Council to determine how and when MCC might get involved with the Sec 75 agreement. A recent Council email stated that MCC cannot be involved with the Sec 75 negotiations which will involve only the Council and Springfield. Once the Sec 75 has been agreed, further discussions will take place with MCC.

While MCC has no legal right to be involved, the Council has been made aware of the issues raised by MCC, for example, MCC's views on proposed traffic calming measures, etc., together with MCC's and the community's 'red lines', and numerous emails have been exchanged recently between SD and the Council. MCC's points are clear, having been carefully refined over the course of the planning application. VW explained, for example, that due to safety reasons, the school's Parent Council, together with other residents, reject the proposed lighting and tarring of the path to the school.

Cllr Coyne noted these points and the importance of the Council's awareness of MCC priorities for serving Muckhart well. SD referred to MCC's proposals that it wished to see taken up. MRW will forward a copy of the MCC proposals to Cllr Coyne. JA welcomed Cllr Coyne's comments and offered a meeting. **ACTION: MRW**

DC reported that one of the major points, raised at the last JCCF meeting, related to the Sec 75 agreement for a bypass at a new housing development, where it seems the community has been short-changed: the initial contractor went bankrupt and the replacement contractor is implementing only half of what the community believes had been agreed. DC noted that the lesson here is to ensure that any agreement is put into writing.

SD noted that he was not sure what level of detail there would be included in the Sec 75 agreement. Cllr Coyne flagged the importance of good costing of the elements in a Sec 75 agreement and of contingency allowances.

JJ highlighted the importance of our three ward representatives in helping to ensure that Muckhart's interests are met.

SD also informed the meeting that an archaeological investigation was due to take place on site H49, with the digging of trenches, etc., during the weeks of 8th and 15th February.

b) Draft letter of complaint about the DPEA process

PL reported on the draft letter prepared by the working group and circulated to members for comment, explaining the approach taken and the fact that it had been difficult to draft, given the large number of issues. While mindful of the aim to draw a line in the sand, the working group was also very mindful of the importance of laying down markers, for example, with regard to possible future development applications.

PW recommended clear and strong linkage in the letter between dismay expressed at gaps in the text of the Reporter's decision and the quality of the site visit. JJ noted that the letter can be sent to others, such as, the relevant minister and MSPs, in view of the great public interest in this matter, with a clear focus on what is to be achieved, and it can be forwarded also to the local and regional press. SD noted that many of the issues have been raised all over the country, so the question is, how to get changes to the process and the legislation. JJ reminded the meeting that the developer had stated, at the outset, that it would win because of the claim of "economic" use of land in the Local Development Plan.

JJ flagged the importance of better quality homes being built, in view of the 2050 net-zero target.

JA asked MCC members to email their comments to PL, to finalise the letter.

ACTION: All / PL

10. Muckhart Community Plan: Updates

JA suggested that, following the significant work on flooding, this should be incorporated into the Muckhart Community Plan. This was agreed.

a. Infrastructure Working Group (IWG)

MRW reported that he had been in contact with Suzy Hynds, from the Council, on roads issues. It was confirmed that contractors have a large backlog of work, given the current Covid situation, and the improvement works will be completed as soon as possible. JJ asked about work on the electric charging point. MRW will follow up.

ACTION: MRW

11. Planning Sub-Group

a. Planning Applications

SD noted that there had been four planning applications since the last meeting. Two were for tree works and two for extensions and appropriate declarations of interest had been declared. The Sub-Group supported three applications and was neutral on the fourth.

b. National Planning Framework (NPF4)

MRW reported on two consultations that were underway. The first being a request for feedback on the government's Position Statement, following the Call for Ideas, in relation to

NPF4, the second seeking comments on the use of mediation in the Scottish planning system, also as part of NPF4. He asked whether MCC would consider submitting a response.

SD noted that, while the work is time-consuming, these are matters of community interest.

JJ noted that political lobbying starts after the consultation documents; the big developers will have big teams available to prepare sophisticated responses, whereas Community Councils are disadvantaged due to their small size.

It was agreed that the Planning Sub-Group will look at the consultations and prepare an MCC response.

ACTION: SD

12. Muckhart Primary School: Update

VW, reporting on behalf of the Parent Council, passed on their thanks to MRW for pushing forward on an improved broadband service for the school, confirmed that all the teachers are fit and well and that the school has been working as a hub for key worker children with normal timetables operating. The remaining pupils are being provided with home learning via the internet. In the afternoons, the children have outside activities, set by teachers. VW will provide further feedback, following the next Parent Council meeting, in five days time.

13. Treasurer's Report

DC reported that the hall hire has now been refunded and the annual grant has been received. The balance of the account stands at £1,934.11. The report was accepted by members.

14. JCCF: Update

DC and MRW attended the JCCF meeting, on 3rd December 2020, and DC reported briefly on the items discussed, including the issue regarding Section 75 agreements, highlighted earlier in item 9. Due to connection issues, Clackmannanshire's Local Area Police Commander, Chief Inspector Audrey Marsh, was unable to join the meeting. Her presentation will take place at a future meeting.

MRW asked about insurance cover for the defibrillator, located at the Coronation Hall, as the unit in Tillicoultry is covered under the Community Council's policy. JA said that the Church had donated the defibrillator and will ask whether it has insurance cover. Answering a question from MRW about the possibility of it being insured through the Hall, VW confirmed that the defibrillator is not included in the Hall's cover.

ACTION: JA

15. Correspondence

MRW referred to the post uploaded onto the website further to contact by a resident regarding telephone scams and a solution to this problem provided by trueCall which is also recommended to members by Neighbourhood Watch Scotland.

MRW also discussed an email, received from the Council, regarding accessibility guidelines for public sector websites. Based on the information contained in this email, MCC's website may need to be reviewed to determine whether it meets the guidelines and noted that this might also apply to MCC's Facebook page. If the website does not meet the guidelines, it

was possible that it might have to be closed down until a new design or site has been developed. MRW is in contact with Lesley Baillie to see if, for example, the Council can provide a template covering all of the Community Council's in Clackmannanshire.

ACTION: MRW

MRW thanked Cllr Coyne for forwarding various papers and links, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau document and the avian flu information, which were useful for the community. These have been uploaded onto the website to inform residents.

16. AOCB

There were no matters arising.

17. Date of Next Meeting

JA thanked all for their attendance.

The next MCC Meeting will be held on Wednesday 24th March 2021, at 7:30pm, via MS Teams.

The meeting closed at 9:30 pm.