

NEWTONHILL, MUCHALLS and CAMMACHMORE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The 341st meeting of Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore Community Council was held via email (due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19) during March 2021.

1 – MINUTE OF MEETING 340 (February 2021)

Accepted

2 – MATTERS ARISING

None

3 – POLICE REPORT for February has been received and forwarded to Community Councillors. Also published online. There has been a decrease in antisocial calls, increase in assaults, 2 thefts, one drink driving, 2 dangerous driving and three careless driving.

4 – AGM 2021

The next Annual General Meeting is scheduled to take place during June 2021. COVID-19 restrictions may cause the AGM to be postponed, as happened in 2020. Elections for membership of the Community Council should be completed before the AGM.

Aberdeenshire Council would normally announce a call for nominations sometime in April or May.

5 – SCOTTISH WATER

Scottish Water has repaired the leak in Stranathro Terrace, Muchalls.

A post on facebook asked if the Newtonhill sewerage pumping station had the capacity to cope with the development of 121 houses on the moor. MR MORGAN has asked Scottish Water to confirm that their systems have capacity for the potential increased population of Newtonhill.

6 – PLANNING

- (1) 2021/0126 | Erection of Double Garage | Nether Mains of Muchalls, Newtonhill. Approved by Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Department

7 – HOUSES ON THE MOOR

The finishing touches are being made to the first of the houses at the Park Place entrance to the development ahead of the first occupancy by the end of April. Landscaping around this area will begin shortly as the weather improves. This landscaping will take in the initial section of the core path at the end of Park Place which borders the new houses and will include Barratt resurfacing this length of the core path. The other road entrance to the development at Cairnhill Way is expected to be completed in mid-April, at which time the footpath from the farm access road will be re-opened. The first of the affordable houses are due to be handed over to Grampian Housing Association on 29th April following the initial length of the road being completed. It is expected that the security fencing will be reconfigured in late April to allow the public access to these houses and the Barratt show house.

The new pipeline from the western side of the development south to the Pheppie Burn is scheduled to be completed by the end of March. While most of the rock removal has now been completed on the site it is possible that further work will be necessary on house foundations behind the earth bund close to the core path on the north side of the site. If required, this work may start as early as the 30th March.

As the weather improves and the soil dries out, there have been complaints about dust arising from the farm track and operations involving removing topsoil for the gardens for those houses nearing completion. Barratt are aware of the problem and are taking additional measures including regular sweeping of the site roads to try to reduce this problem.

There has been speculation recently that the area of moor within the Barratt owned land but out with the security fencing to the south of the development which was badly damaged by fire a year ago will

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be “landscaped” by Barratt. We have been advised by Barratt that no work will take place in this area and hopefully, with time, the gorse will recover.

8 – ROCKS AT VILLAGE ENTRANCES

A meeting was held with Barratt’s site agent and a representative from Robertson’s Granite to assess the quality of stone for engraving purposes. No decision was made as it was felt the opinion of the person carrying out the engraving should be sought. This should be sometime in early April after which a price for engraving will be provided. Several questions have been raised: is engraving the best option? Would metal signage such as is on the sign for Chapelton be better? Who will pay the costs of engraving? Where could funds be accessed? Could possibly apply to the National Lottery. Unfortunately, no funding applications can be made until quotes are received. Can the Community Council provide Barratts with a letter of comfort/indemnity in the unlikely event the stone is toppled? Would Aberdeenshire check the stones for safety and provide insurance?

9 – PHOENIX PROJECT (Isabella Initiative)

A Zoom meeting took place on Monday 8th March 2021. The model was to be unveiled on the day of the Skateraw Fair but unfortunately this has been cancelled. It would be preferable to have the businesses in and around the village open in order to maximise the event as the objective is to regenerate local businesses. As yet no decision can be made on a date. Competitions are being developed for the opening day – perhaps photography or something arty, etc. Promotion and advertising are moving ahead. Preparation of the site and materials will be purchased in April 2021.

10 – COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

Presentation by Landscape Services. MR MORGAN has written to Landscape Services about the bushes and the broken tree in St. Michael’s Road.

MR FLOCKHART enquired about improved lighting and a real-time bus arrival display at the Park & Choose. The response from Aberdeenshire Council was:

We are still working on this, there are 2 elements:

- 1. Lighting at the bus shelter – this just now needs to get signed off by the Lighting team, and*
- 2. Lighting in the car park area – we have requested details on an alternative product to use here and await the details.*

The Service will continue to push for the bus stop issue to be resolved over the coming weeks and will keep chasing for the car park lighting solution.

11 – ROADS

Roads Service has confirmed that they intend to carry out repairs to the worst of the potholes in Newtonhill in the week beginning 15 March. This was later amended to say that contractors are being called in to tackle major potholes in the Newtonhill and Portlethen area on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council’s Roads Service.

MR MORGAN has again asked Aberdeenshire Council for an update on plans to fix the road slip on Murray Road.

Road defect reporting- email www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk or phone 0345 608 1205

12 – NOTICEBOARDS

The noticeboard by the Skateraw Store is in the process of being replaced.

The seized locks on the noticeboard at West Cammachmore have been freed but need to be replaced. If the locks prove difficult to replace, then the noticeboard will be replaced.

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13 – SEASONAL GARDEN WASTE RECYCLING

Saturdays from 10th April to 30th October 2021 at the Bettridge Centre car park - 8am to 11.40am

14 – CORRESPONDENCE

- (1) Aberdeenshire Council - Potential to increase biodiversity through changes to existing maintenance systems.
- (2) Request for location of AEDs (automated external defibrillators) in our Area – outside TESCO and the Pharmacy, Newtonhill and outside 16 Ritchie Place and Muchalls Village Hall. ‘What three words’ was also requested. This is an app whereby locations are identified by using three unique words.
- (3) Update of Locality Plan sent to Aberdeenshire Council.
- (4) Newtonhill Station – Station study due in late summer 2021. Several points were raised by Community Councillors – (1) Parking - Would residents walk to the station? Residents of Muchalls, Chapelton, etc would presumably take the car. Where would car park be sited? (2) Would long distance trains stop at Newtonhill? (3) Would people use the train as opposed to Park and Choose where there is a reasonable amount of free parking. Also, many of those using the bus have bus passes and don't pay bus fares, (4) How expensive would a train fare be? (5) A train service might be good for those working in the centre of town but working elsewhere would mean walking, taking bus or taxi to other destinations, (6) If the train station were to open would bus services be reduced? (7) How frequently would local trains run and would they be at suitable times? Community Councillors queried how members of the public feel; is a public survey needed? If so, how will it be carried out? An article in the Newsey, Facebook, emails? We are quite happy to receive feedback in any form from members of the public.
- (5) Report from MR FLOCKHART on Community Development - It was mostly about buildings that local groups were looking to take over and turn in to local centres to promote local businesses.

15 - AOCB

- (1) Future meetings will continue to be in the current email format for the time being.
- (2) Email from Zurich Insurance – Insurance needs renewed by 1st April 2021 - £114.52. Quote has been accepted. This is paid directly by Aberdeenshire Council.
- (3) Meikle Carewe Wind Farm Fund- Skateraw Hall received £2000 towards renovating the hall floor.
- (4) Roddy Macinnes is due to retire from Aberdeenshire Council on 31st March 2021. Emma Storey is now our point of contact at Aberdeenshire Council.
- (5) Review of Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils – MR MORGAN has responded on behalf of the Community Council.
- (6) Damage to cliff path at Muchalls – A request was made to discuss the possibility of repairs being carried out to the cliff path at Muchalls. This path was used by many people until it was washed away during heavy storms some time ago. Much of the damage was caused by water running off the dual carriageway, down Golf Road, under the railway bridge and then down the path. There is also a lot of water that runs off the field beside the bridge and down the same path. This would need to be dealt with to prevent damage to the path being done again. Aberdeen Endowments Trust (the then owners of the path) were approached re repairs. They offered ownership of the path to the Muchalls Village Association (MVA) offering to contribute towards the cost of repairs. The MVA declined the offer due to liability issues. Later, ownership changed hands and the new owner put up closed signs. This was later followed by a closure notice from Aberdeenshire Council. In order to obtain funding for repairs, most funders would require an application to be made by a constituted group with up-to-date accounts and possibly two, if not three, quotes for the cost of repairs. Some grant funders

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require 10% match funding. There was a query as to whether a charity could be set up to deal with cases like this. This would involve taking legal advice re liability and also taking over ownership of areas in question.

- (7) Chapelton Liaison Meeting held on 25th March 2021. MR FLOCKHART attended. It was noted that there was no officer representative from Aberdeenshire Council. Sales and reservations are improving. 44 low-cost homes are on their way, several more building sites are to be released including a small site for self builds. A planning application has been submitted for eight retail container units for small businesses. Several have already been taken up. There will be an Easter egg hunt round Chapelton, the 10k run has been cancelled but the bike ride may go ahead in September. Hopefully, the Farmers' Market will take place on 16th May. Regarding the lighting at Park and Choose, Aberdeenshire Council are still stalling about the quality of the road on the site. MR FLOCKHART has contacted Emma Storey at Aberdeenshire Council and was informed that they Council are looking at the possibility of a solar real-time timetable for the bus shelter. MR FLOCKHART will chase up the Council. Next Liaison meeting is scheduled for November.