

# Airth Parish Community Council

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Minutes of Meeting held in Airth Primary School on Wednesday 18th April 2018

**Members Present :**                    **Jon Anslow (Convenor)**  
   **Aileen Amos (Secretary / Treasurer)**  
   **Robert Smith (Assistant Secretary)**  
   **James Toal (Vice Convenor)**  
   **Stephen Sloper (Community Councillor)**  
   **Murat Dilek (Community Councillor)**

**Also Present :**                         **Jacqueline Hogg, Co-opted Member(Airth Parish Church)**  
   **Cllr. Laura Murtagh; Cllr. Jim Flynn;**  
   **George Russell; Robert Brannigan; Tom Sloper; (local residents);**  
   **Jane Rae (Minute Taker)**

**1. Apologies :        Councillor Joan Coombes and Rev Jim Todd.**

**2. Police Report**

NO UPDATED POLICE REPORT

**3. Previous Minutes :**

The previous minute of 21/3/18 was accepted as correct and approved by Aileen Amos, seconded by Murat Dilek.

**4. Matters Arising**

- **Main Road between Airth & Dunmore :** The state of disrepair on this road has been worsened by the recent heavy snowfall but Cllr Murtagh assured those present that the repair is included in the planned programme and will be dealt with in due course.
- **Parking at the former Pine 'n' Oak :** Still being misused by heavy lorries. The kerb has been ruined by the lorries driving over it - this was supposed to be only used by cars.

## 5. Correspondence :

- email from Adam Warner - Scottish Water Newsletter highlighting consultation on their plans for next 25 years.
- email alerting of new website for Airth Parish Church.
- email invite to Aileen from Ineos regarding next Community Liaison Group meeting taking place on Monday 14th May.
- email trail of correspondence regarding Robert's plea to Angus MacDonald, MSP, for help to identify and pursue funding for the CC.
- email between Aileen and Brian Pirie (FC) requesting a grant form to claim for new laptop.
- email from Brian Pirie to all established community councils inviting the Convenors to meet up on Wednesday 25th April. In effect, an attempt to re-establish what was previously the Association of Community Councils. Jon to attend?
- email of thanks from Waste Services on the success of recent litter pick.
- outline of Key Messages from Community Resilience Networking Event held on 21/3/18.
- copy of Robert's letter to Falkirk Herald regarding success of litter pick. Also included is letter of thanks from Cllr Joan Coombes and notice of her surgeries being held in Airth Community Centre, starting on 17th April at 11am.
- email from Robert Smith to local councillors outlining various issues requiring to be addressed within the area.
- email from Robert to community councillors regarding a flood prevention consultation which is to be held within the Bowhouse Centre, Grangemouth, on Thursday 19th April from 11am until 7.30pm.
- Community Safety Team report for 1 - 31/3/18. Currently conducting proactive patrols in the Airth & Letham areas for fly tipping. Cllr Murtagh confirmed that there seemed to be an increase in patrols. Robert said that recent fly tipping contained some identifying evidence.
- email from Brian Pirie enclosing a notice from Milesmark & Baldrige CC (Dunfermline) who have produced a simple to use Wildlife info leaflet and poster which aims to encourage local people to help wildlife. Robert has posted on board.
- notice of site open day at Higginsneuk being held on Saturday 5th May.
- letter from Scottish Government Community Empowerment Team acknowledging Robert's request for help with funding for CC. Not very helpful, referred back to FC.

- copy of letter sent by Angus MacDonald (MSP) to Director of Corporate & Housing Services, Falkirk Council, requesting on behalf of Airth Parish Community Council that further consideration be giving to funding for the Council.
- email from Steven Sloper to CC re drainage ditch which has been dug along the side of the access road to the Pineapple, highlighting the need for edge protection to stop anyone ending up in the ditch. George Russell advised that the ditch was dug as the other pipe from their land became blocked. The road to the Pineapple is included in the Core Path Plan. George Russell agreed that he would be willing to erect posts, perhaps signs, if this was necessary, to prevent any accidents.

## **6. Round the Parish :**

South Alloa : Jon still working on provision of notice board. Robert suggested that Jon should speak to Mandy Brown but Jon has already been in touch with Mandy, negotiations ongoing for the best site to be identified.

Letham : Steven Sloper updated meeting on another flooding event at Letham Terrace at beginning of April, again with sandbags piled up at cottage. Cllr Murtagh updated meeting on progress of meetings with Falkirk Council and Scottish Water. A Project Manager has now been appointed and the project is fully funded and committed and the aim is to deliver it within this financial year, i.e. by April 2019. Falkirk Council must identify which parts of the scheme coming under their responsibility can be added to the project. Cllr Murtagh outlined possible areas that could be included by FC and negotiations made with Scottish Water. Jon Anslow asked that we have an overview of progress and suggestions and be kept up-to-date on developments.

Robert Smith expressed worry over the timescale. Cllr Murtagh advised that although the money has been committed to this financial year it may not take until April 2019 to complete. Tom Sloper added that he felt a good effort had been made to get Falkirk Council and Scottish Water to work together on this.

Steven Sloper queried the claim that the dog fouling issue in the Letham area was being "kept on top of". His mother has found used bags on several occasions which had obviously been abandoned by dog walkers.

Airth : Robert suggested that a litter pick could potentially be organised ahead of the Higginsneuk excavation.

Litter and rubbish stored at back of shops (Dower Place / Shore Road) have now been cleared up after shop owners were alerted to situation.

Hare coursing seems to be happening again - Robert has seen vans carrying greyhounds in the area. Also alerted those present to circulate the word that the season for young deers being out and about is on us again.

Robert again mentioned the fly tipping in the area and acknowledged that the Community Safety Team are also keeping a weather eye on the situation.

Discussion on the wrong siting of dog poo caddies in Shore Road, with incidents of dog fouling having been witnessed.

With the lighter nights more young people on the streets and the police and fire services have increased patrols accordingly.

Local resident Robert Brannigan was present at the meeting to ask about progress (or lack of) in clearing the mess within the site next door to him. He is worried that as the growing season has started then the mess will become worse again. Cllr Murtagh will request that the letter to the owner be sent again by Falkirk Council as any promises made by him appear not to have been acted upon thus far.

Dunmore : James Toal reported that there was a strong rumour that Dunmore Park House and grounds have been sold.

He also indicated that flooding occurred on the A876 when it rained. This apparently is AMEY's responsibility. Cllr Murtagh to investigate and deal with.

Robert asked for information on initiative called "Joined Up Dunmore". James advised that this was set up in order that a community feasibility study could be made to explore the potential attractions for visitors to the area. Complicated process but so far the initiative has received a lot of positive feedback from stakeholders, e.g. Landmark Trust, National Trust for Scotland, Angus Duncan (Falkirk Council), etc.

Aileen Amos outlined the apparently dangerous state of the bridge from the other side and was worried that it was in danger of coming down. Previously Falkirk Council had offered to have engineers look at it. The state of it seems to have been worsened by tree roots and it is also used by heavy vehicles, e.g. bin lorries etc. Cllr Murtagh would investigate the possible "worst case scenarios".

## **7. Treasurer's Report :**

Aileen Amos informed the meeting that there is £114.76 in the admin account. £2771.24 is in the Christmas Lights account, and awaiting a further bill.

Some welcome news was received from Brian Pirie of FC that an error in previous funding had come to light, resulting in an amount of £550 being paid into CC's bank account. It was also agreed that Aileen would go ahead and make application for funding for new laptop.

## **8. Planning Issues :**

**(a) Robert's letter detailing the CC's comments and objections in relation to RSPB application** : All present were happy with the content and agreed that it be sent to Development Services at Falkirk Council.

**(b) Site Visit by Planning Committee to land south of 7 Shore Road** : A site visit had been carried out in relation to planning application for 5 flatted dwelling houses at Shore Road. This visit occurred on 3rd April and any decisions made will be made known in a week's time at the meeting of the Planning Committee.

**(c) Application for 5 renovated and 4 new builds at Brackenlees Farm, Bothkennar** : those present discussed the application, with particular reference to access road. SugarRich currently use it but it is a single track road with no passing points. It was felt that the siting of houses might be isolating for children but, on the plus side, Bothkennar School does have the capacity for more pupils and would no doubt welcome this. 9 individual septic tanks are proposed and it was agreed by all present that a better alternative would be 1 biodisc. It was agreed that as the CC had several pertinent concerns Robert would put together a letter outlining these.

**(d) Application for conversion of Elphinstone Inn into 3 flats**: It is proposed there will be a 1x2 bedroomed flat where existing lounge is; 1x2 bedroomed flat on existing outbuilding and 1x1 bedroomed flat where bar is. The outside of the building cannot be altered as it is a Grade 3 listed building. It was felt that 3 flats plus the existing upstairs flat seems ambitious, in particular for access and parking. 4 parking places are proposed. The current tenants of the Inn have the lease until July. It was agreed that Robert Smith would put together a letter outlining the CC's concerns re possible over-development.

**(e) Plan for Houses on the Escarpment, Airth** : After a meeting on 17/4/18 between planners and developers, it appears some progress has been made.

**Equal Right of Appeal inclusion in Planning Bill** : a communication was received from Maria Montinaro asking for the support of Airth CC for a proposal to "collectively ask for a deputation to the next Full Council Meeting in May to request that Falkirk Council support ERA". It was agreed that until more information was obtained we would not vote on it tonight. Aileen Amos agreed to contact Maria to say that with more information consideration would be given.

**11. AOCB** : Cllr Murtagh informed the meeting of Falkirk Council's debrief after recent terrible winter weather. Airth was mentioned several times during the debrief, citing the community spirit shown during the clean up and also praise for the effort made by members of the community and volunteers. The way the community dealt with this extremely difficult situation was recognised as an example of good practice and it was

Cllr Murtagh's opinion that those involved should be proud of themselves. It was agreed that communication in such situations has to be given the highest priority. This was where a Community Resilience Group in the area would be essential but it was recognised that not every community would have one and therefore it was extremely important that the groups who would be directly responsible for communication and co-ordination in all areas be identified. There would be a need to co-ordinate community responses, which would be different in each area - need to reach everyone through use of different means of communication. A Facebook account was suggested for Airth & District Community Resilience Group and Murat Dilek agreed to progress this. There was a need to garner enthusiasm and support for membership of the CRG, which stalled after the initial launch two years ago. Falkirk Council are willing to back a re-launch.

Robert added that prior to the debrief he met with Derek Easton and Fiona McLuckie. Among the issues discussed, the question of how Dunmore could have been accessed in an emergency was raised. Robert suggested that consideration may have been given to access by boat. James Toal asked if a note of discussions, comments and suggestions made during debrief will be available to the public.

Still on the subject of observations in the aftermath of the "Beast from East" Robert suggested that he witnessed mainly empty motorways except for 4-wheel drive vehicles. There didn't seem any point in keeping the motorways clear of snow if most cars couldn't access it.

Robert also suggested that for future use it would be beneficial if a register of local farmers and contractors could be set up. Steven Sloper felt that at the end of the day it was always going to be members of the community doing the clearing and it seemed right that they should have a share of the responsibility.

Robert highlighted information from the Daily Mail who were supporting plastic clean ups by the community. As Robert was thinking that a proposal to clean up the village, where kids could be involved this time too, would be a good next step, it was agreed that he would direct this through the Daily Mail campaign and perhaps gain some publicity for the CC and the village.

**Jon Anslow concluded that there was no further business and therefore closed the meeting.**