



Kirriemuir Community Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of 27 July 2022 Held in Kirrie Connections Meeting Centre

Present: Heather Kelly (Chair), Jeanette Reioch (Secretary), Irena Krasinska Lobban (Treasurer), Roy Christie, Graham Galloway, Frances Havenga, Ian Lynn, Jim Stewart

In attendance: Jean Henderson (Minute Secretary), Cllr Julie Bell, Cllr George Meechan, Cllr Ronnie Proctor, Gordon Grewar (Angus Council) part time, Kirsty Hunter (Angus Alive) part time, PUBLIC: Audrey Middleton, Cathy Stephenson

Heather welcomed **Kirsty Hunter of Angus Alive**, who had come along to give a resume of Angus Alive's activities.

- Kirsty thanked KCC for the invitation and will address the points raised at the KCC June meeting.
- Angus Alive has been providing Cultural Services for Angus Council for 6.1/2 years and has saved £1.8m, annually, in terms of commissioning culture and leisure. All have been delivered on time and on budget.
- The pandemic was a challenging situation for customers and this was managed very tightly by five independent Board Members and four Angus Council Members.
- Furlough was applied for and received during the pandemic. Angus Alive was able to maintain its financial position without any additional support from the local authority.
- There have been implications on services regarding libraries, etc. A couple of vacancy savings were necessary otherwise we would be in debt. To reduce our costs we have gone through a significant Government operating decision to reduce opening hours.
- During the recovery we were forced by Government to close our facilities. We are taking the opportunity to look at resources and staff available for our services.
- Libraries: We took on board feed back, so that young people after school hours had access and people of working age, also. We have increased the hours as we have gone through the pandemic. We have reviewed what we provide but there is absolutely no doubt it will not go back to pre-pandemic days.
- We have continued to make savings that we are required to make and are very grateful to Angus Council for providing funds to allow us to provide these services.
- As a result, coming out of that period £458,000 we were to make in 2021 was deferred for the year. We have to make savings of £1m in the future.
- We have held our prices for the past 4/5 years. We will have to look at prices and charges for 2023/24. We have reduced membership prices and also for some of our activities, i.e. football pitches. It is important to highlight that a lot of things are going to be different. However, we can utilise technology by providing services in a different way, e.g. via Libby, our new on-line service, which can be accessed on the Libby Membership App. Access on the Angus Council App for fitness members.
- There are significant challenges. I sit on a committee, Challenges Around Energy Costs. Sport Aberdeen is having to close the beach pool because of energy costs.
- Regarding the issues raised by KCC, I have no record of receiving any complaint emails. I have details of how you can make a complaint in the future. We have had to maintain our vacancy saving. We

looked at a number of positions at the Libraries and the service we could offer. We provided a click and collect service during the pandemic. We were allowed to go into the Libraries to collect the books and deliver the orders

- We opened for a shorter period of time, 73 hours per week. 31 October 2021 we increased to 131.1/2 hours. In Kirriemuir that was increased to 18 hours per week. This went through Angus Council. The Library 18 hours a week is until 31 March 2023. We are in discussion with Council Officers of what will happen post 1 April 2023 and will be bringing proposals back to Angus Council.
- “Radio frequency” has been implemented – check in and check out books in a booth which frees up a staff member.
- Heather stated that the Library opening hours do not co-incide with the Glens bus arrivals into the town, resulting in the Glens community unable to access the Library services or ACCESS Office services. Kirsty responded that there is a Mobile Library which serves the Glens. Heather pointed out that the Library, in the town, is also the ACCESS Office - the Mobile Library does not provide an ACCESS Office service. **Kirsty will investigate.**
- Kirsty confirmed there is a requirement of a minimum of two people staffing the Library. A new Library Team Leader is starting on Monday, 1 August, and Library staffing numbers will be reviewed. All Libraries have panic buttons.
- Regarding the suggestion of recruiting volunteers, Kirsty reported that Angus Alive do have a voluntary strategy, usually work experience young people. Discussion ensued at length regarding volunteers. Volunteers should not be taking paid jobs as this could create many problems, including a Union problem.
- Angus Alive is currently reviewing a lot of data in connection with the Library service, e.g. age profile of users, time line – when people are accessing the service. People must use the service in order to keep it - “use it or lose it.”
- **Graham** suggested a need to increase publicity of the services offered by the Library, e.g. he was unaware that you can use computers for free in the Library. **Heather** asked for this publicity to be in poster form, not just on-line. Kirsty said print media is expensive. **Irena** pointed out that the Library has an A4 printer and publicity posters could be printed in the Library itself for “pennies” - not an expensive exercise which would reach the “non-online” community with services information. **Kirsty will investigate these suggestions.**
- Regarding the swimming pool and football pitches. Swimming pool current price is £5 plus a membership option, £3 for concession, “average” £4.60/£2.60. Adult membership is £30/month for everything. Off peak £24/month, with a discount for a “second person.” Angus Alive is working with Angus Council to provide free swimming over the school holidays. The cost of entry and the “right equipment” is also under discussion with Angus Council.
- Pool opening times: between 9 am – 9 pm. The pool does not open until 4 pm during school term time. Saturday opening 9 am – 2.30 pm. Closed on Sunday. Angus Alive accommodate the Swimming Club.
- Football Pitches: Angus Alive is exploring how they can reduce prices. Angus Alive is linking in with Kirrie Thistle FC who are about to bring in a full time member of staff. Angus Alive is providing training and support for other clubs.
- Kirsty does not have a lot of background of the payment for the facility. There was a joint funding and the prices are the same for all of the pitches in Angus. Kirsty is not aware of any complaints about access to pitches. **Audrey Middleton (member of the Public)** stated that the Kirriemuir community paid for the Kirrie pitch and are now being asked to pay to use it! Kirsty responded that a decision was taken in 2017, across Angus, for a set price for everything, which includes sports pitches, fitness centres, etc. **Audrey** said no one was aware of this decision in Kirriemuir and the community is very upset about the current situation. **Kirsty will investigate and report back.**
- **Audrey** pointed out that the swimming pool was not open during the summer holidays and Kirriemuir children had to travel to the Forfar pool. Kirsty reported that she was unaware the pool had not opened. During the Easter Holidays the pool had to be closed for a time after a member of staff broke a glass around the pool area. **Kirsty is confident the pool is currently open but will investigate further.**

- **Graham** referred to the £1m of cuts to services in the future. Graham said it was important that the community is involved in any discussions regarding specific facilities in Kirriemuir facing possible closure. Graham highlighted to Kirsty the excellent history of Kirriemuir's "community spirit" e.g. DD8, Kirriemuir Regeneration Group, the KHT Police Museum, etc. Kirriemuir does not want to lose anything, so can we be involved in these discussions? Kirsty responded, "definitely, we are going to look at the future together." Kirsty reported that in 2015 Angus Alive made savings without making cuts to services.
- **Graham** highlighted the recent visit of KCC's Community Trust Steering Group to Huntly Community Trust. Huntly Community Trust is based in their Library and has a community book shop, etc. Moray Community Trust, also.

Heather thanked Kirsty for coming along to the meeting and looked forward to hearing the outcome of the questions posed by Kirriemuir Community Council.

	ACTION
<p>1. Apologies: None</p> <p>2. Approval of 29 June 2022 Minutes: Agreed as a true and correct record. Proposed by Graham and seconded by Roy.</p> <p>3. Police Report: No report received this month.</p> <p>4. Scottish Fire & Rescue Services Report: July 2022 Community Safety: 8 x Home Fire Safety visits 3 x Operational Intelligence Visits</p> <p>Incidents: 8 x AFA (Automated Fire Alarm) 7 x Smoke Detector Operating 2 x Dwelling (fire) 2 x Special Service Calls 1 x RTC 4 x Fire in open – small 1 x Fire in open – large</p> <p>5. Treasurer's Report: As at July 2022: FPP fund £200, KCC fund £670.46, Defib fund £595.50, Grant £627.04, VAA fund £10,300.00 Total: £12,393.00</p> <p>6. Matters Arising: B25 Development Trust:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heather, Graham and Jim visited Huntly on 13 July. Heather reported an extremely interesting and helpful visit and highlighted Huntly's windmill which generates a huge income for the town. • Huntly has plans for a number of vacant buildings. £4.3m will be spent on a vacant Department Store building and there are people actually queueing up to make use the 	

<p>building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KCC group was taken to a local farm. There is a pond with wildlife and a number of local walks have been developed, all of which are attracting a lot of visitors to the town. • Glamping, bike trails, etc. etc. are all in the pipeline, as well as E-bike hire schemes. • Huntly has offered to support Kirriemuir's Development Trust. • Graham reported that Huntly has a substantial private investment of £10m. • Heather said the aim would be to incorporate a similar model to Huntly's into Kirriemuir and hoped Angus Council would support the project. Cllr Bell responded that she was confident Angus Council would look on this very favourably. • Gordon Grewar reported that in the past community buildings, space, etc., had “fallen flat.” Following a meeting he had chaired in April of this year, Gordon is of the opinion there is a better appetite for this approach for the future. There was also a very good turn out from the business community at the meeting, which was encouraging. An attendee from Development Trust Association Scotland answered questions. A further Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, 1 August, to set out the constitution - “we need the town behind us.” All welcome to attend this meeting. <i>(Gordon left the meeting)</i> 	
<p>B32 Poor access for wheelchairs update: Cllr Proctor reported that Tayside Contracts is unable to do the work. However, Angus Council has been able to hire people to carry out the work, including an architect, who is currently working on the drawings. It is hoped this will be completed by Winter. The area in question: Croft Terrace to Health Centre. The route along by the burn will be looked at.</p>	
<p>B49 Path running parallel with Slade Gardens: Cllr Proctor reported this is not going to happen. Cllr Proctor will investigate the lack of the sign.</p>	<p>RP</p>
<p>B55 Free period products promotion: Heather has had discussions with DD8 who may take this forward. Circulate leaflets in the town, was suggested, and promote via emails or go out and speak to the community. Heather asked for a volunteer to do this – no response.</p>	<p>HK</p>
<p>B60 Purchase of glass for Northmuir Telephone Box: Heather has the glass. Cllr Meechan and Jim offered to install the glass. <i>Thank you.</i> Ian offered to provide the silicone.</p>	<p>GM/JS</p>
<p>B63 Outdoor Gym: Heather had nothing further to report as it is now in the hands of Legal. Heather expressed concern should there be a lengthy delay by Legal. We are trying to avoid possible price increases which would seriously impact on this project. At the moment there is a very tight margin on the funds. The funds cannot cope with a price increase. Funds for four pieces of equipment are available and four pieces of equipment is what KCC wants. Cllr Proctor offered to investigate.</p>	<p>RP</p>
<p>B64 Use of video to promote the Community Council: Jeanette reported that Ian is looking for someone to do a quick interview outside of the telephone box. Jeanette and Heather agreed to do the interview.</p>	<p>HK/JR</p>
<p>B65 Temporary Barrier at Beechwood Place/Muirhead Place: Cllr Meechan reported he has a meeting scheduled with Andy Barnes, Angus Council, on site on 28 July. Concrete bollards have been suggested and also tattie boxes as alternatives, which Cllr Meechan will discuss at the meeting.</p>	<p>GM</p>
<p>B66 Millennium Globe in Cumberland Close:</p>	

- Cllr Meechan has discussed this with Mark McGee, Angus Council. Mark McGee has informed him that Kirrie Connections was going to take this forward. Graham confirmed it was KDAP, not Kirrie Connections, who were interested in taking over the Globe but they chose not to take it forward.
- The Globe is fed from a well. It is not from the mains. Pump is broken and the repair cost is £2,500. It was reported that Angus Council has no budget to cover the repair and they are exploring other community groups who may be interested in taking it over. A possible partnership.
- Cleaning, insurance, etc. etc. is required.
- Covid delayed investigating the electrical switch which was in Bruce Walker's shop. Cllr Proctor stated that Alison Smith, Economic Development, had reported a hesitancy because it was too costly.
- Cllr Meechan said he understood it attracted a lot of visitors and it is on the Kirrie App for visitors. Cllr Meechan will continue his investigations and keep KCC updated.

GM

7. Councillors' Reports:

Cllr Ronnie Proctor reported:

I am afraid I have had to pull out of various activities due to my current medical situation, which I am pleased to say is improving. I have carried out a fair amount of Ward work online to a variety of constituents with positive feedback. I attended the special Angus Council last Thursday online.

Cllr Julie Bell reported:

- I attended the last council meeting before recess on June 30 – councillors were recalled from recess when an additional special council was called on July 21 to revisit the decision about the Caledonian Railway Brechin potential bid for funds from the Levelling Up Fund, which would have placed the council in a difficult financial position had we approved it. However, the Provost deemed there had not been any material change in circumstances and the motion was denied.
- Whilst technically on a break from formal meetings at the council, it's been very busy indeed. However, in amongst the individual caseload issues, I was delighted to be able to welcome the council's Chief Executive to Kirriemuir and Dean for a ward visit. We toured around the ward from the Wee Bear Café at Lintrathen to the Legion Hall in Newtyle which is a resilience centre, to Kirriemuir Food Hub, which allowed me to highlight various developments with council services and funding. It wouldn't have been a trip here without a visit to Bon Scott and to showcase the Signs of Change street art. Margo really enjoyed her trip – thanks to all those who made it possible.
- I have had a meeting with Alison Smith to see if they can do a review of "changing places toilets." There is a Paper going to committee in August which will include a review. Could KCC have a think about where one of these toilets could be sited in the town. Graham reported that Kirrie Connections is in the process of organising an extension. Graham will investigate if one of the toilets could be included in their extension.
- Finally, through Kirriemuir Regeneration Group, we have now submitted a funding application for the installation of accessible play equipment at Kirrie Hill and have everything crossed!

GG

Cllr George Meechan reported:

It has been a quiet month now that most of the training has been completed. I have however undertaken training for a new role on Angus Council Licensing Board as a new member of both the Licensing Board and Civic Licensing. These are quasi legal boards that are non-partisan.

Updates

I met with the local Housing Manager regarding local housing issues raised by constituents. I attended the Angus Council special meeting concerning the Caledonian Railway. I attended the pre agenda meeting of both the Licensing and Civic Licensing Committee. I met with the Head of Community Health and Care Services, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership.

Constituent Issues

Issues from constituents included the following:

- Welfare issues/benefits
- Roads
- Parks/open spaces
- Housing issues

8. Correspondence:

Circulated throughout the month.

9. Planning: Nothing to report.

10. AOCB:

10.1. George highlighted the vast amount of overgrown hedges and plants hanging over the pavements in the town. This is a hazard and in some cases blocking signposts. Suggestion to contact Alan Allardyce, Angus Council. *Jeanette has subsequently emailed Alan Allardyce with photographs of several of the offending areas.*

JR

10.2. George raised again the issue of inappropriate parking in the Square. It is still continuing. It appears the Police are not now authorised to issue a ticket for double yellow parking, however, they can issue a ticket for “obstruction.” Cllr Bell offered to investigate.

JB

10.3. Irena highlighted the bad repair of some of the benches in the Den. The Glens Rotary has kindly volunteered to repair some of the benches. Irena asked for donations of timber, if possible, to help with the repairs.

10.4. Irena reported that the Den toilets have been closed for a few days due to continued graffiti issues. The toilets have subsequently been cleaned by the volunteers and are now open. Kirriemuir Regeneration Group has applied for community run toilets to improve the Den toilets.

10.5. Irena reported a “convoy of motor homes” arriving on the Hill and parking in the car park. One of the occupants of the motor homes approached and “abused” her for closing the Camera Obscura toilets, saying they wanted to use the toilets. Heather said this should not be happening to volunteers. Discussion ensued about security surrounding public toilets. Ian has “blank” CCTV cameras. Cathy (member of the public) reported that Easthaven has similar problems and they have installed an alarm which “bleeps” when anyone is entering the toilet. That is all it does, bleep, but it is proving to be a deterrent.

10.6. Heather raised the Pharmacy reduced opening hours in the town. Everyone agreed this is a major problem and an unacceptable situation and a number of incidents were aired. Cllr Bell offered to investigate.

JB

10.7 Heather reported a caravan is parked in her street with no wheels and jacked up in an area where there is a shortage of parking space. Cllr Bell suggested Heather report this to Susanne Austin, Angus Council.

10.8 Heather reported that Deidre at the Gallery is paying for glass herself for the telephone box which KCC is responsible for. Jeanette reminded the meeting that Deidre had said she would source her own funding. Heather has given Deidre some funding suggestions.

10.9 Jeanette reported that, sadly, Douglas Hill, Angus Council, has passed away. Jeanette said Douglas Hill had been a great friend and source of help to Kirriemuir Community Council over the years. Jeanette has sent a card of condolence.

10.10 Audrey Middleton (member of the public) as a representative of the Christmas Lights committee, said they are still awaiting an inspection of the lights by Angus Council. Cllr Meechan said he would investigate.

10.11 **Cathy Stephenson** (member of the public) reported on the current bus situation in Angus and in particular Kirriemuir. Below is a transcript of Cathy's detailed report:

-Quote-

Whilst Forfar depot has lot drivers and had some sickness, the major contribuor to ur buses being cancelled is Forfar depot getting four new contract services to operate from 30.5.2022. Buses between Auchterhouse and Dundee, Tealing and Dundee and Carnoustie and Forfar. Without getting driversd these have had to be covered at risk to 20s; 21s and 22s. To accommodate these shifts patterns were changed. Drivers have also been asked to cover more overtime which is a lot to ask when they mayu have already done 4 x 12 hour shifts in the week. Our first notified cancellations were on 4 June. A month later several drivers left the depot to go to another operator.

I don't want this to become a them and us – those rural communities need busd seervices as much as we do and the current situation is noty caused by them – and in fact they are also losing some of their new services each week.

The situation has then significantly deteriorated due to Stagecoach honouring contracts such as The Open and the Commonwealth Games (these will have been awarded some time ago). The Commonwealth Games is nationally tendered and draws vehicles from across the UK. Those vehicles have to be less than 5 years old which included Forfar's fleet. The buses we are currently using are mostly approaching 20 years old with the newest on our services being 7.

These vehicles are suffering more breakdowns and faults. This means in addition to consecutive buses being cancelled due to which shifts are not covered, a breakdown or fault can take another adjoining bus out of seervice as we saw on Monday morning. The older buses often have dodgy ticket machines which do not track on the App Stagecoach keep telling us to use. The faults and ticket machine issues (jamming and not reading some cards) also add to the stress for the drivers wee do hhave, who are already doing tytheir best despite traffic jams, road closures, road worksd, being asked where the last bus is. “they genuinely do not know what has happened to the preceeding bus in most casdes – they have a route crd for their shift and that is it) and why they are not going to Aberdeen.

I have given Angus Council's Transport Team specific examples where I have factual information and made them aware of inidents which I have been told about or seen on Social Media. The Officer agrees that it is not acceptable to have people afraid to go out in case they cannot get back; it is not acceptable to have young people refused travel because of faulty ticket machines and it is not acceptable that people are struggling to get to and from their work.

GM

The Transport Officer will discuss concerns with Stagecoach's MD at their regular meeting, in particular focusing on the fleet issues and the communication. I know there are people talking about the Traffic Commissioner but I think before taking that step we do need to have tried local approaches and document any ignored complaints or inappropriate responses. Anyone who has made a complaint to Stagecoach who has no satisfactory answer then please keep a note for now.

Recruiting new drivers will take time to get them fully trained and on the road. It is not just the training, there are medicals as well before their PSV licence is achieved. Then they need route learning. Because every operator is trying to get more drivers licenced there are some delays in the processes. The Transport Officer also confirmed that there are no operators, locally, with availability to offer help to Stagecoach. My best guess is that we are looking at another 8 to 12 weeks before we can get back to more reliable services, though I am hoping our fleet returns by mid August.

While they fix this, the Tweets are the most efficient way for the business to tell all of their passengers in Fife, Perth & Kinross, Dundee and Angus which services are cancelled. The Transport Officer is going to be suggesting they use a template and clearly mark each Tweet with the area it covers. I am trying to work it so I can grab all the Tweets before work and provide one screenshot of the whole day's arrivals/departures with the cancelled ones marked up. This, however, does not go far enough for some of our community members who may not use Facebook so I am hoping that some business and community organisations may be prepared to print a copy and put it on their window each day. It is still not perfect but it is a step in the right direction.

-Unquote-

Heather thanked Cathy for bringing this important information to the attention of the Community Council and in doing so supporting the Kirriemuir community.

11. Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 31 August, 7 pm at Kirrie Connections Meeting Centre.

Please remember to submit your election forms.

1.8.22