



## **Minutes of Bridge of Allan Community Council AGM**

**Held at 7pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022**

**Virtual Meeting held online via Zoom**

**Present:**– Mike Watson (MW) CHAIR; Janie Meikle Bland (JMB) VICE CHAIR; Leslie Harkness (LH) SECRETARY; Alasdair Taylor (AT); TREASURER; Anna Doeser (AD) COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER; Sandra Davidson(SD); Bill Fortune(BF); Emma Fradgley (EF)

**Apologies:** Andrew Drummond Baxter (ADB); Siobhan Hencher (SH); Alastair Heron (AH) PLANNING OFFICER; Moira Randall (Associate Member) (MR); Alyn Smith MP; Councillor Ewan Dillon; Councillor Douglas Dodds; Councillor Graham Houston; Douglas Nielson ( Vice Chair, Friends of Bridge of Allan ); PC Paul Gilliland; PC Ross Barclay)

**In attendance:** Crawford Bell (CB) Community Development Manager, Stirling Council; Councillor Douglas Councillor Alasdair Tollemache; Alexander Stewart MSP; Graham Rusell ( Chair of Friends of Bridge of Allan); Gavin Drummond

Abbreviations – Community Council (CC), Common Good Fund (CGF), Stirling Council (SC), Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

MW opened the meeting at 7.00 pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The apologies were noted as indicated above.

### **2. Approval of Minutes of Previous AGM**

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021 were approved. (Proposed: BT; Seconder: AD)

### **3. Matters Arising (MW)**

LH confirmed that there had, in fact, been no imminent need for succession planning during the previous session and that Neil Harman had reluctantly had to resign from the CC for personal reasons. CC members expressed their satisfaction that MW has decided to stand once again for the post of Chair

### **4. Annual Report from the Chair (MW)**

Good evening, it's good to be back in harness and in a position to present the annual report covering the past year.

A year in which we have been busier than ever addressing an ever growing number of local issues some of which I will allude to later.

The increasing workload has without doubt impacted on Team members and regrettably we have lost two valued members in Iain McCusker and very recently Duncan Mc Dougal.

As lead on Planning Iain did an outstanding job fronting our valued response to a number of key planning issues (including the controversial CO-OP site location and the Henderson Street Care Home development proposal as well as the day to day oversight of the everchanging local planning landscape.

Duncan has been a priceless asset fronting our significant objection input to the Airthrey Kerse planning applications and the formal appeals process at both local and Scottish Government level over the past decade on behalf of ourselves and Causewayhead C.C.

We are however fortunate to have recruited two new members in Alastair Herron who has adopted the Planning portfolio and is already addressing a number of challenges including the upcoming Local Development Plan. We are also pleased to welcome the addition of Emma Fradgley who will amongst other things be assisting Alasdair with the Xmas lights plan.

Regrettably we are also about to lose Janie who is standing down has done an outstanding job over the recent past often encouraging us to think out of the box and has led on a number of important developments in tandem with key partners including the Accessibility and Inclusivity access work with Caryl Fraser of Stirling Council and also the Discover Bridge of Allan initiative.

Planning has been a major issue throughout the year and despite what could be measured as successful interventions on number applications. The Park of Keir outcome following the Ministerial intervention was undoubtable a low point and has left a bad taste.

For the many years work by RAGE, Dunblane Community Council , ourselves and our elected members to be dismissed in such controversial circumstances was a significant blow and threat to the upholding of future Greenbelt expectations and an undermining of the Local Community Planning process. In the same context the future shape and development of the Village will be included in the soon to be created Local Development Plan by Stirling Council and we plan to bear influence wherever possible through the consultative process.

As ever the constant issue of traffic management, speeding and parking have been a constant feature of our agenda working through our elected members. And highlighting specific issues including the those relating to the access and egress to the new Crossing Gates and speed restriction within the Village.

I am happy record that following years on our agenda and the input from Bill the on-going saga of the Tennis Courts now appears to be closer to a resolution with potential access to major funding being made available to Stirling Council through a new Lawn Tennis Association stream of funding. The outcome should be clearer following a meeting with Land Services officials later this week.

Village Christmas lights provision proved to be potential problem with issues over maintenance costs and a significant shortfall in available funding. We were fortunate to have the drive and imagination of Anna who's Crowdfunding initiative saved the day and certainly created a welcome and much appreciated festive feel in the Village at an important time in terms of Covid Recovery.

Work on the future of the lights in terms of storage, funding and maintenance is now a priority for a small working group. Now further complicated by the future closure of U.G. site with whom we were in consultation over potential storage and minor maintenance cost saving options

Despite the considerable work done to create a clear administrative system for access by the community to the Common Good Fund applications and uptake over the year has been disappointing in part due to misunderstandings with Stirling Council officials. A matter to which we will be giving full attention with Stirling Council who appear to be on a different page in respect of their understanding of the administration management of our Fund.

I am aware that during my time away concerns over the quality and delivery of appropriate grass cutting services has been highlighted on a number of occasions. Coupled with these concerns is the issue of litter and appropriate bin provision.

Having not long returned from OZ both issues were in full evidence and unwelcome. I am aware that these are on-going matters and that an acceptable level of service provision is being sought.

Finally, I would wish to highlight our Communications group which has also been hard at work this year making improvements in our digital communication and information to the wider Community on a wide variety of issue which is increasingly accessed appreciated by residents.

In closing I would wish to take the opportunity to thanks my colleagues for their commitment and support in particular Leslie for his invaluable support and mentoring. Also, Janie, Anna and Alastair for support throughout the year and in particular during my OZ sabbatical.

I would also wish to thank our Elected representatives for their whole hearted support which is appreciated and greatly valued as one of our key strengths as a proactive C.C. It would also be remiss not to recognise the support from Stephen Bly and the Community Development team at Stirling Council.

## **5. Presentation and Adoption of Annual Accounts (AT)**

The 2021-2022 accounts are presented to the Community Council for acceptance. These accounts run from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. In June 2022 the accounts were independently checked and verified as accurate by Gavin Drummond. Many thanks again to Gavin for performing this role.

At the start of the period our funds stood at £34,994.70, consisting of a residual from the administration grant of £140.76, a residual in the Christmas Lights fund of £24.00, Playpark funding of £29,896.06, Larder funding of £2156.07, and £2727.81 in our unrestricted funds.

The biggest expenditure in the period was on the playpark project, with £29,896.00 spent to implement the park which is now in place for the community. There was also an additional income for the playpark project of £2000.01 from fundraising for future enhancements.

The second biggest expenditure during the period was on the Christmas Lights. During 2021, it became obvious that the lights had degraded further and were in need of a major overhaul. As this would be expensive, a major fundraising exercise was started in the community, including crowdfunding. This resulted in a fantastic response, with a healthy total of £14,233.49 being raised from businesses and residents to repair the lights. This then allowed the overhaul to be completed, plus electrical services and storage, totalling £12,380.40.

The larder project has continued during the period, with a "Good Food for All" grant from Stirling Council of £4000, fundraising from Stirling & Bridge of Allan Round Table of £300, and a donation from the Co-op of £150. Delivery of the larder project during the period cost £1438.46

As usual, the running costs of the Community Council were funded by an administration grant from Stirling Council, which for this period was £654.66. Our costs during the period were £741.28 however, consisting of

£440 to fund a Minutes Secretary, £72 on Branding and Website costs, and £229.28 on other sundry expenses including an annual Zoom subscription, since most of our meetings during the period have had to continue to be held on Zoom. We entered the period with an administration grant surplus of £140.76, but would still have overspent in the period were it not for our minutes secretary stepping down. Although there is an opportunity now to go back to face-to-face meetings, if we wish to continue with the improved community access which Zoom attendance allows, then further funding support will be required to achieve a satisfactory mixed attendance format for meetings ( in person and on-line ), as this is likely to be more expensive than either method alone.

During the period, there was overall income totalling £21,338.16, and expenditure totalling £44,248.94. At the close of the period our funds total £12,033.92, comprising £54.14 in the administration fund, £1877.09 in the Christmas Lights Fund, £2543.27 in the Playpark fund, £5,167.61 in the Larder fund, and £2,391.81 in our unrestricted fund.

Our Assets remain unchanged from last year. They include a PA system, 18 Christmas Lights and associated infrastructure which is stored at Gordon Electrical in Dunblane and the BT Telephone box on the corner of Inverallan Road and Station Road.

## 6. Election of Office Bearers

Under the procedural guidance of Crawford Bell of SC, the six office bearers were elected as indicated below.

**Chair:** Mike Watson (proposed LH, seconded VM)

**Vice Chair:** Anna Doeser (proposed MW, seconded LH). AD expressed a desire to retain her role as Communications Officer in addition to serving as Vice Chair and this met with full agreement.

**Secretary:** Leslie Harkness (proposed AD, seconded AT )

**Treasurer:** Alasdair Taylor (proposed BF, seconded LH)

**Planning Officer:** Alistair Heron (proposed LH, seconded BF) Alistair not in attendance and needs to accept the position formally

**Communications Officer:** Anna Doeser (proposed BF, seconded Alasdair) - Accepted

Control of the meeting returned to MW as the newly elected Chairperson.

## 7. AOCB

There being no other competent business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 19.25 pm.

## 8. Date of Next AGM

The Chair indicated that the next AGM would take place on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023.