Auchtermuchty & Strathmiglo Community Council

Minutes of the 14th Meeting of the Community Council held at 7.30 pm on the 24th February 2025 via Zoom conferencing facility.

PRESENT: Maaike COOK [Strathmiglo], Mark GIBSON [Auchtermuchty], Andy HEER [Auchtermuchty], Susan JACK [Gateside], Andrew MACNAUGHTON [Gateside], Alan MUIRHEAD [Auchtermuchty], Gordon SIMPSON [Dunshalt], Bill TORRANCE [Strathmiglo]

ATTENDING: Cllr. Donald LOTHIAN.

1.0 **Welcome and Apologies**: The Chair welcomed all those attending.

Apologies: Ian MACAULAY [Dunshalt], PC's HADDOW and LOWE.

Before the meeting began the Chair brought the attention of members to the sad passing of Robert Allison, a Strathmiglo resident and stalwart of the community. He had been involved over many, many years with a wide variety of community groups most prominantly as Chair of the Strathmiglo Community Association. When based in his newsagents in Strathmiglo High Street, he was the hub of community activity and, though retired from the Chair's position, he was still an active participant in the village's affairs and events. He will be missed by all who knew him.

2.0 **Declarations of interest:** these will be made when appropriate.

3.0 **Police**: it was noted that the latest police report had been circulated.

3.1 Speedwatch, Public liability insurance; a number of emails have been circulated concerning this matter, of most note was that Fife Council's current insurance vendor is to be changed in March of this year. It was felt sensible to hold off from any decision until the new vendor was in place and the arrangements made clear.

4.0 **Minutes of Meeting:** the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 27th January 2025 were accepted as correct.

5.0 **Matters Arising:** not included in the Agenda

5.1 BWTF micro-grants; following consultation with the 'Muchty Lights' group by the Chair and Secretary it was agreed to approve their grant application.

Discussion took place regarding the process of application/decision making. It was felt that the process had to be proportionate to the size of the grants and the present system of the sub-committee acting as a filter supplying recommendations to the full CC for approval would work for the time being.

6.0 **Other Business:**

6.1 Binn Wind Turbine Community Fund; aka Our Community Energy Co. [OCE]. S. Jack provided an update on the situation, it was hoped that this would occur every 3 or 6 months. The OCE directors [3 from Greencat, 3 from Community] look to ensure that the company is run correctly and provide the communities with relevant information e.g. predicted monies available, electricity generation, operational problems etc. Noting that the bank loan to cover the costs of the turbines will run until 2038, that 75% of monies goes to Abernethy, Glenfarg and ourselves, that Foundation Scotland take 12% as a fee and that it may take time for the funds to reach OCE's bank account – it is predicted that £50,000 will be available in May 2025, with £25,000 annually til 2028. Figures are uncertain beyond that date. Accounts of OCE can be accessed through Company House. S. Jack will pass on documents available to the Secretary for distribution. Local Community Associations are to be asked for feedback on their contact with Foundation Scotland and the grant application process.

It was noted that A. MacNaughton will replace S. Jack on the Binn Funding panel as a Community

Council representative.

6.2 Resilience Group [RG]; a number of topics have been discussed. Water monitoring methods and locations, broken drain by Fire Station in Auchtermuchty – it is reported that some work has been undertaken, 'Leaky Barriers' in an effort to slow water flow possible sites are being looked for upstream from Auchtermuchty – though looking for 'expert' input for advise. It is noted that it is planned to include the Flood Resilience leaflet to the Strathmiglo Newsletter meaning that it will be delivered to every house in Strathmiglo. The meeting was informed of work in the field between Friar's Mill footpath and the Glentarkie road from the A91. This has involved clearing and straightening the Barroway Burn allowing water, from the catchment area above, to enter the water course heading towards Dunshalt more quickly which is contrary to the advise of advisory bodies. It was thought that this and works undertaken around Myres Castle, described to the meeting by M. Gibson, should be brought to the attention of the River Eden Sustainability Partnership.

7.0 **Fife Council:**

7.1 **Auchtermuchty**

7.1.1 Old Distillery; given the state that the disused building is in, and the barriers now blocking the pavement, it was thought that urgent action needs to be taken before the situation becomes even more dangerous to both foot and vehicle traffic along Distillery Road. Fife Council have looked into the case but have yet to make any decisions. The meeting felt that progress had been extremely slow, if not non-existent, given the number of years local residents have been looking for a solution. As ownership of the building has not been determined despite numerous attempts it was thought that Fife Council should take possession and undertake what works [including demolition] were required with the owner if found to pay costs. This however is unlikely in the short term. Cllr. Lothian will seek an update on Fife Council's position.

7.1.2 Anti-social behaviour; communications have been on-going with the Safer Communities Team, it appears that social housing – where some concern was raised – have their own team. It was noted that youth disorder is now becoming common in Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo with the recommendation that all incidents are reported to the police.

It was at this point in the meeting that the lack of attendance by police officers was commented on. Cllr. Lothian Lothian pointed out that it is very rare these days for officers to attend CC meetings. Communication between the officers and the CC is very important and if the CC have suggestions of how it might be improved we should submit them to the Inspector for consideration.

7.2 **Dunshalt**

7.2.1 Speeding; a meeting is to be held in the village on 6th March at 7pm to provide local residents and relevant bodies to come together to discuss possible solutions for this ongoing problem.

7.3 **Gateside**

7.3.1 Community Association awareness event; a 'Blether and Bacon' open morning is to be held to raise the profile, and hopefully recruit new members, of the Association.

7.3.2 Village Hall flooding; a local landowner has stepped forward, at their own cost, to help alleviate the water logging problem around the hall. This has been much appreciated by the Association and hall users.

7.4 **Strathmiglo**

7.4.1 AGM of Community Association; this was recently held and the Association progresses.

7.4.2 A912 drain; the gulley at the entrance to the western community woodland still fails to clear water during heavy rain. No action appears to have been taken by Fife Council despite the issue being raised on a number of occasions over a substantial period of time. Cllr. Lothian had observed heavily muddied water coming from a nearby field which may have contributed to the problem. Testing using

a long stick showed that the road drain was clear so it is thought that any problem was in the pipe work below – if there is any, it was suggested that this drain may feed into a soakaway which is no longer working. M. Gibson will pass on a contact name and address within Fife Council who he has had successful dealing with.

8.0 **OSP:** the Secretary forwards all relevant information that he receives.

8.1 Fibre Optic cables; B. Torrance questioned why, when requesting a fibre connection from his provider, he cannot be connected to fibre optic cable for his broadband service when the necessary cables are evident [and confirmed by an Openreach engineer] to be on the telegraph poles directly opposite his house. Unfortunately he has had no satisfactory answer.

9.0 **Planning**

9.1 Latest lists; the Secretary has circulated a list of the latest applications in the CC's area.

10.0 **Correspondence:** the secretary has forwarded on to members all relevant correspondence received.

11.0 **AOCB;**

11.1 Future CC meetings; In person meetings will resume in March and take place in turn between Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo until September when a Scottish Country Dance group restart in Strathmiglo. At this point it was agreed that meetings then would be held in Auchtermuchty Community Centre. [It was advised that the unsafe distillery building opposite to the Community Centre should be taken into consideration when parking]

12.0 **Date and venue of next meeting:**

Monday 31st March 2025, in Auchtermuchty Community Centre, at 7.30 pm.