

## **Fintray Community Council**

Virtual Committee Meeting (due to Covid-19 pandemic)

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 7.30pm

Present - Rod MacInnes (Chair) Alison Cumming (Committees Officer), Katherine Gerrard (Secretary), Jeanette Smart, Cllr David Keating, Richard Taylor (Treasurer), Evelyn Morrice, Cllr Martin Ford, Gina Ford, Drew Cullinane, Ian Thomson, Belinda Miller, Laura Simpson (Minutes Secretary), Mel Roberts

Rod welcomed everyone to the meeting, unfortunately the COVID numbers are high so the decision was made to hold this meeting virtually. Alison Cumming, the Committees Officer was welcomed. Drew Cullinane, who is currently a member of the Kintore Community Council and is standing at the local Council Elections next month, attended as an observer.

**Apologies** Cllr Glen Reid, Cllr Dominic Lonchay

**Declaration of interest** - None

**Approval of the Minutes of the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022** - thanks to Katherine for this.

pg 1 – heading should read A947/B977, pg 2 - Treasurer's report should read £70 reimbursed to Community Association and £30 will be paid,

proposed by Ian Thomson and seconded by Gina with above amendments noted

**Matters arising from the Minutes** - Tree Planting Policy - Cllr Ford updated us of a supportive committee to improve tree planting for biodiversity and climate change, officers will bring a further report following the election in May. Reports have been requested on Council Policy on urban trees and tree planting on road verges. He advised the Community Council to keep an eye on this.

Furthermore there will be a meeting regarding Garioch Area Committee budget and there may be proposals regarding tree planting to help recovery from the recent storm damage.

**Storm Meeting** - this was held last month and was split into different elements gathering the views of different communities regarding the response to the storm. Alison Cumming summarised by saying the key issue across the whole area was communication. This made it difficult to respond to the needs of individuals and communities. Following Storm Arwen, the Council and Community Groups did feel better prepared. Discussion needs to be ongoing regarding recompense for places that open and did provide for those affected by the storms. A number of communities are looking into generators and if they can provide facilities for others going forward.

Cllr David Keating added that everyone has a role to play in being resilient, the Council and individuals in communities. He also said we need to be aware of all weather, floods, fires etc, not just wind.

Roddy – Communication is key and the meeting underlined the need for our communities to be more self-reliant. Work will continue on the Community Emergency Plan (Roddy, Evelyn, Ian and Belinda) to ensure it is robust and fit for purpose.

**Rewiring of Village Hall for external generator** – On behalf of the Community Association Ian reported that as part of resilience planning, the community have previously purchased flood sacks. Going forward, it has been suggested that the hall could be used as a place of refuge in the case of extreme weather. Hosies Electrical assessed the Hall's suitability for a generator. Currently it is not wired to allow for this, but a plan has been devised to make this a possibility, providing power to the kitchen, toilets and ante room. The total cost to do the rewiring is circa £1600. Andy Buchan (Hire Tech) has offered to source, store and maintain a generator at his expense solely for emergency use at the hall. The generator would be delivered whenever required. The Hall would then only be responsible for the cost of the power (and this may be able to be reimbursed). If approved, this would be part of the Emergency/Resilience Plan for the whole community not just the village. Ian has asked for funding approval from the CC to go ahead with this.

Roddy believes that there may be funding available to help with this.

Alison Cumming suggested the Area Funding Committee and possibly SSEN would be approachable for grants. Running costs for the generator would have to be considered.

Gina Ford stated that she was in support of this, it would help build community resilience and that it is the way forward.

In response Ian highlighted that our spend as a Community Council is low and believes that this is exactly what the Council money should be used for. It was confirmed that the £1600 includes VAT. The Treasurer agreed that there was more than sufficient funds to cover the stated amount.

Roddy summarised that Ian is seeking approval, in principle, that the CC contribute the £1600 for the rewiring, this would then be brought to the Community Association at their next meeting.

It was unanimously agreed that this would be approved.

**Community Council elections** – Alison advised that there will soon be forms coming out asking people to step forward to be Community Councillors. If there are too many applications there would be a ballot in the Village Hall in May. All current members of the CC are at the end of their term this year. There is a 3-week nomination period from April into May and posters are being prepared as are press releases to raise awareness of this. There will be a coordinated approach across Aberdeenshire. Part of the role of Community Councillors is to raise awareness of this and encourage people to come forward. A minimum of 5, maximum of 10 Community Councillors are required. Ideally there would be 7 or 8 members.

**Local Council elections** - take place next week. There will be Hustings, organised by Kintore Community Council in Kintore on 14th April and this will be advertised on Fintray Fowk. This will be an opportunity to get to know a bit more about the candidates.

**Police Report** - there was nothing to concern us regarding the Police Report, Evelyn queried that there was a report of oil being taken from a tank in the village within this time frame. Roddy will enquire about this. Belinda is aware of the 'scammers' trying to do work on a local driveway and this was not included in the report either. Katherine highlighted that she forwards a trading standard letter every month to all CC members and has advised that people read this to be aware of such things happening.

**Treasurer's Report** - Richard advised the current balance is £3437.03. £35 has been paid to the Information Commissioner's Office for Data Protection.

**Community Association update** - there will be an AGM on 26th April.

Picnic in the park on the afternoon of 4th June - the Jubilee Weekend.

Gardening Club AGM on 4th May

CA have an application to the Garioch Area Fund to have LED lights fitted to help with energy costs and to insulate the whole loft of the hall - this should help reduce running costs.

Infra-Red heating is also being investigated to replace the current electric heating -this would require significant funding and has not been sourced yet.

**Correspondence received since last meeting** – has been forwarded to CC members - Roddy has asked that everyone reads through communication from Murdo Fraser MSP in respect of 'Fly Tipping' and respond by 12th April if they wished to comment.

**Aberdeenshire Councillor's update** - This is Martin's last report as a Councillor after 23 years. He commented on the recent Council Tax rise and the challenge that the Council face with the current process of budget settlement through the Scottish Government which is a frustration to many but probably unlikely to change. Over 5 terms Martin felt he had attempted to serve his communities as best as he could and that, following Gina's recent retirement, he looks forward to more time to follow his own interests.

Cllr Keating echoed Martin's thoughts in respect of the challenges around budget settlement. He advised that data was being collected re the gull problem and gull proof bins were being investigated. He confirmed that the NE Pension Fund had no Russian investments. He advised that an electric charging policy will give up to date advice eg not allowing charging cables to cross pavements etc.

Roddy thanked all for attending and on behalf of all gave a special thanks to Martin and wished him well in his retirement.

**Date of next meeting** - will be our AGM Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.