**BANFF & MACDUFF COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Wednesday 31 January 2024 – 7pm**

**Deveron Community and Sports Centre.**

Present:

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| Mary Arnold | Chair |
| Kevin Ritchie | Vice Chair |
| Hazel Daniel | Secretary |
| Louise McCafferty | Treasurer |
| Reg Connon | Community Councillor |
| David Duguid | Community Councillor |
| Colin Robson | Community Councillor |
| John Will | Community Councillor |
| Dougie Thomson | Community Councillor |
| Paul Gleisner | Community Councillor |
| John Main | Community Councillor |
| Shona Watson | Community Councillor |
| Councillor Stuart Adams | Ward 2 Elected Member |
| PC Zubaj | Police Scotland |
| Jan Emery | Aberdeenshire Council |

Apologies:

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| Councillor Mark Findlater | Ward 2 Elected Member |
| Councillor Ross Cassie | Ward 1 Elected Member |
| Councillor John Cox | Ward 1 Elected Member |
| Councillor Glen Reynolds | Ward 1 Elected Member |
| Councillor Richard Menard | Ward 2 Elected Member |

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| **1** | **Present and Apologies** |
|  | Mary Arnold, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted. |

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| **2** | **Declaration of Interests** |
|  | No declarations noted. |

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| **3** | **Approval of Minute of Meeting of Wednesday 29 November 2023.**  **Matters Arising from last minute** |
|  | Hazel advised that she had contacted Council regarding the trees on the Howe and has been advised that currently there are none which are considered a risk to the public and therefore no action is required.  John Will advised that he has contacted the Council regarding the flooding at the car park in Myrus Circle and is waiting for a response.  The minutes were approved.  Proposed by Dougie Thomson and seconded by Colin Robson. |

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| **4** | **Police Report** |
|  | The Police report had been provided to CC members prior to the meeting.  PC Zubaj summarised the report and included the ongoing vandalism that continues to be relevant in Low Street and St Mary’s Car park. He advised that the young people are travelling between Portsoy and Macduff and this can also be problematic. |

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| **5** | **Treasurer Report** |
|  | Louise advised that the current bank balance is £3925.64  This includes £2,400 from the Towns and Villages Amenities Fund.  The CC has to now obtain insurance itself. Louise advised that she has a quote for £97.20, which was agreed.  Louise advised that she has an appointment with an Accountant to sign off the CC accounts. There is likely to be a charge. Due to the very limited amount of transactions, it is not thought that this will be costly. A sum of £50 was agreed and if more is required Louise will contact Hazel.  Louise has begun the process of having a Reserve Plan and this should be ready for the next Meeting.  Louise had sought costs for Google Meet (£95.88) and Zoom (£129) with a view to allowing access to others who would wish to take part. However, the equipment needed is not available in Macduff and therefore would only be able to be used in Banff, which the CC members decided was not economically viable. |

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| **6** | **Jan Emery, Area Project Officer** |
|  | Jan updated the CC regarding the Coastal Path from Whitehills to Banff and from the Macduff end of the bridge to Tarlair.  Whitehills to Banff has been surveyed and there is to be a stakeholder meeting on the 13th Feb 2024. Included in those discussions will be the reinstallation of the path from Deveronside up to the Memorial. There may be a possibility to connect the blue plaques on the paths as well. There will be a full public consultation in relation to this.  Banff Bridge to Tarlair. The survey has started and there is an area which needs a lot of consideration, as the harbour is a working harbour. There are already notices to advise of the care needed in this area. There is consideration being given to including walks to the Anchor and the Memorial Tower in Macduff.  Jan advised that she has been able to gain access to a Trust which was set up 80 years ago by a resident of Macduff. This is to be used to purchase benches along this part of the route.  The CC were advised that all information boards should be of the same style in order to have consistency for people. |

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| **7** | **Councillors’ Report** |
|  | Cllr Adams advised that Budget discussions are ongoing. Council Tax is to be frozen for the next year.  Banff Bridge requires £3million pounds of repairs and this is high priority. Questions were asked about the public consultation regarding a replacement bridge. SUSTRANS are providing the finance and the CC were in agreement that the public consultation was weak and did not provide all of the relevant information in order for people to make a considered opinion as to the preferred option. Cllr Adams advised that the majority of people chose the option for the bridge to be close to the current one.  The majority of the work for the bridge will be from underneath. There were questions regarding the potential for upheaval to traffic and the recognition that it is an integral part of the highway system and there would be huge implications for both communities should the bridge be inaccessible. Given the CC’s concerns for both towns, it was agreed to contact Alistair Miller and Douglas Farquhar regarding the potential impact for everyone.  There was also a brief discussion regarding the potential route which would be required should the bridge have to close.  Bins. There was a discussion around the confusion that some people have with when the bins are being emptied and that bins are blowing over in the wind and their contents being blown around the streets. Cllr Adams advised that straps for the bins can be picked up from the recycling centre. However currently there are none in stock.  The Council App provides information regarding when bins should be emptied. There are also colour coded calendars which can be used. These are currently on order and they will be available for pick up from the Libraries and the Town House.  There was a brief discussion around Aldi. The last possible date for any objections is the 17th February. |

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| **7** | Correspondence/Communications |
|  | * Anti-Social behaviour. Hazel advised that she attended a meeting to discuss the anti-social behaviour in Banff and Macduff. It was agreed that Insp Gavin Grant, would collate some statistics and then further discussion could be given. The meeting recognised that CCTV could be an option but that Youth work should also be a consideration. It was suggested that a public discussion should be arranged once the information from the Police has been received. Hazel to contact a Youth worker to discuss further. Some intervention is taking place. Two young people from the Academy were to attend the Community Council tonight along with the Headmaster, Shona to follow up. * War Memorial. One quote has been received and waiting for another. The cost is likely to be around £6000 to repaint all of the names. * Towns and Villages Amenities Fund. Hazel updated everyone regarding the situation of the 4 projects that had been considered as a report has to be completed by the end of February and money spent by the end of March.  1. Skatepark will not be completed until 2025 at least, so not an option. 2. St Mary’s toilets are managed by the Council and other options may be considered, so not an option. 3. Anchor. New fencing is being progressed and CC can provide bushes to enhance the area, however this will not be completed in time. Hazel to ask if money can be ringfenced to be used. 4. Banff and Macduff in Bloom to receive money to support their volunteers in looking after the towns floral displays.   Alternative projects to be given money, Christmas Lights appeal and Homestart. All 4 projects will receive £600, if the money for the Anchor is not able to be ringfenced, the money allocated to them will be distributed between the other 3 projects.   * Greenbanks. Mary is to follow this up regarding the use of the ground. * Allotments. There are plans to expand the allotments. Currently there is no charge in Banff however this is outwith the practice of the rest of Aberdeenshire. Managing this needs to be considered to allow everyone a fair opportunity to apply and be considered rather the current method which appears to be unfit for purpose. * Common Good Fund. There is money allocated to both Banff and Macduff which does not appear to be able to be accessed. The interest per year can be used, but not the actual deposit. Louise is currently waiting for a response from Aberdeenshire’s Legal Team with regards to this. There is £1,339,000.00 for Macduff and £3,629,000 for Banff. A report is awaited regarding the money. * Anchor. A meeting was held at the Anchor regarding the fencing and a plan is being progressed for a permanent fence to be erected. The Community Council were all in agreement. * Heraldic Stones. This is an ongoing situation. * Huntly Remakery. This is information is now on the website and FB page of the CC. Jan Emery advised that there are ongoing discussions regarding this with BEAT and The Men’s Shed. * Film. A Request has been made for a CC member to work with Aberdeenshire Council regarding a filming opportunity in Macduff later in the year. John Main to be the representative. |

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| **8** | Planning Matters |
|  | Roadside Cottage Ladysbridge Inverboyndie Banff AB45 2DS <https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S5CIN2CALR300&activeTab=summary>  **No Issues**  The Ship Inn 7 Deveronside Banff AB45 1HP <https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S5IB0ZCALWO00&activeTab=summary>  There was a discussion regarding the application. Some members were concerned that applicants are only seeking planning permission after the inside has been dismantled and therefore hoping that their application is granted. The CC noted that it was not this applicant who has done this. Some other agencies have expressed concerns. The majority of CC members were in support of the application, however it will remain an open issue until all agencies have the answers they are seeking.  Macduff Marine Aquarium 11 High Shore Macduff AB44 1SL <https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S5NXRHCAM9P00&activeTab=summary>  **In Agreement**  Ground At Macduff Industrial Estate Tarlair Way Macduff AB44 1RU <https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S6SR6UCAFN900&activeTab=summary>  **In Agreement** |

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| **9** | Update from B and M in Bloom |
|  | Volunteers met 2 weeks ago. A plan has been agreed for the piece of land at the bottom of Sandyhill Road.  A sailing boat has been given to B and M in Bloom and this is going to be placed at the entrance to Banff, just above the layby.  More volunteers will be required, in the spring however this is a quiet time of the year. |

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| **10** | **Good News** |
|  | Mary was pleased with the Emergency Home Plan which has been produced and this will be discussed, more fully at the next meeting. |

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| **11** | **AOCB** |
|  | * The Safety Group has been disbanded. There is one ongoing project which will be completed. The Coastguard have had the money transferred to them to distribute. * Shona from the Citizen Advice Bureau advised that there has been a significant increase in people seeking support in regards to Benefits, due to the cost of living. They have increased their opening times from 2 days a week to 4 days a week as result.   There is a pack available to ensure vulnerable people receive support. People can register on a Priority Services Registration Form which is available in the pack. You can also call them on 0800 294 3259 or visit ssen.co.uk/energyadvice and complete the form on-line.  Mary thanked Shona for the work of the CAB and their volunteers.   * All CC members were reminded to complete their profiles for the website. * It was noted that the lights are still on in the M and Co Shop. Estate Agent to be contacted again.   Thank you to all Community Council members and Councillors who attended. |

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| **13** | **Date and time of next meeting:** |
|  | Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 7pm Macduff Community and Sports Centre. |