

**Royal Burgh of Falkland & Newton of Falkland Community Council**

**Minute of Meeting 8 September 2020**

**held at 7pm via conference call due to lockdown Covid-19**

**(Public invited to attend)**

**Welcome from Chair**

**Present:** Peter Burman (Minutes), Rod Crawford (Chair), Gordon Honeyman, Stuart Knowles, Gavin Lawson, Kenny Lumsden, John Smith, Douglas Young

**Councillors*:*** Cllr A Heer, Cllr D Lothian, Cllr D MacDiarmid **Police***:* nil **Residents*:*** 3

**2** **Apologies for online absence:** Jim Brown

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| **Agenda Item** | **Discussion** | **Action** |
| 3  Declarations of new Interest | None | None |
| 4  Minute of Previous Meeting | August minute, taken by Doug Young, approved. | Noted |
| 5  Police Issues | PC Dawn Doherty had sent her apologies to the Chair. Agreed to urge that the previous written reports were better than no information at all. | Agreed |
| 6  Community Council Issues | The big issues had all been raised at a meeting of the revived Stakeholders’ Group, which had been held on 2 September. Minutes would be circulated to all members but, meanwhile, Stuart Knowles gave a comprehensive report on the following matters.   1. Nine-Acre Site – Springfield Properties appear to have walked away from their offer of £1.6m. The meeting had discussed whether the Community should register an interest in the purchasing of the site, which is still on the market with Galbraith. A Community Interest/Development Company would need to be set up with about 20 members under Right to Buy legislation. Stuart Haszeldine, Jim Brown and Gordon Honeyman were delegated to look into possible use of right to buy legislation to bring this Brownfield site into Community Ownership, and to register an interest with the Land Commission. 2. Sustrans PfE Revisit Stage 2 Concept Design – the Stakeholder Group had urged that a low-key review should be made of the options before going for a new Concept Design. A great deal of work had been done and yet there was no tangible physical development on the ground. There had been a suggestion that improvements to the roundabout junction by the primary school could be made if the owner of Pleasance House were willing to sell some land. JB is to approach him. JB is also to circulate a paper on the potential revised interventions. 3. Edge of Village Car Park – a meeting is to be held with John Murray and Ann Camus of Fife Council to discuss application for planning permission and application for grant-aid funding. NTS is unable to contribute before, at most optimistic, March 2022. But no application for Government funding can be made until match funding can be confirmed. There is a strong feeling that ‘Falkland wants this scheme to go ahead’. 4. Estate Car Parking issues – the new Pillars Junction car park is now open and almost complete. But there are now two gates on the private Estate road which prevent large vehicles of all kinds (Biomass, waste bins, &c) from entering the Estate at Pillars, which the community had hoped would greatly reduce the number of vehicles from entering the Estate through the West Port. Ninian Stuart had agreed to look into these issues as a matter of urgency. 5. Chair felt that it was confusing knowing which Estate entity to refer to. PB (he and JS are trustees of the Falkland Stewardship Trust) said that the Stewardship Trust’s responsibilities relate only to the House of Falkland (includes the Biomass plant), Stables, East Lodge and the designed landscape between the Lodge and the House. All other matters are the responsibility of the Estate Trust (FET) or the Rural Enterprises (FREL) Company, and NS is chair of both. Chair of FST is Joe Fitzpatrick, with which the CC has a continuing and positive dialogue. 6. Falkland Bike Park – this facility for downhill biking events appeared to be at a well-advanced stage of development but without consulting the Falkland community. This is a new and major worry because it would bring countless new vehicle movements through the village and hundreds of cyclists. NS to be asked for further information urgently. 7. Another new phenomenon is *NeighbourFood Falkland* – an enterprise for collecting produce (some of which is not local at all) from the Stables on Thursday afternoons. Project of Centre for Stewardship/FET? Again, extra traffic is being generated. NS to be asked for further information urgently. 8. NTS – Wendy Purvis had reported the severe consequences to NTS of Covid-19, including the halving of their annual income. Major restructuring and many redundancies seemed inevitable. Local and national support is being sought. CC willing to give further thought as to how we might help locally. Palace gardens are open to the public but Palace closed until Easter. | Noted |
| 7 (ii)  Cllr D MacDiarmid’s report | Chair and all other CC members expressed appreciation of Cllr MacDiarmid’s heroic work in helping our local communities with their appalling flooding problems. An early warning system had been requested by Fife Council from *River Track.* Cllr MacDiarmid said that flooding had inevitably led to less opportunities for action on other issues, which were coming on more slowly. Checklist in previous Minutes is still helpful as much is ‘work in progress’. Specific mention was made of the following items:   1. Play Park Area needing to be kept trim – Chair is leading on this project. 2. Brunton Green - both the central bench (of three) and the Johnny Cash Memorial Bench (with overhanging branches and hyper-active birdlife) need attention. JS and Bert Dalrymple are prepared to do this, but would need the cost of materials to be funded. This would be a much better option than employing a contractor. 3. Interpretation Panels (one by Fair Earth the other in the car park) urgently need replacement. JS has temporally repaired the one by Fair Earth. There is a long history including replacement panels designed under the Living Lomond’s Landscape Project. There are many aspects to this and a small group is needed to help resolve such matters as: the actual stories told, accurate and without bias; the design of the panel as a whole; good lettering by an accomplished signwriter; &c. Cllr MacD said that money could be available through the Locality Budget. 4. Rewilding – local residents were present who spoke passionately about Victoria Place and Balmblae. Strong complaints were made about the lack of action in keeping those areas tidy, and by the lack of consultation about the proposal for rewilding. CC supports rewilding in appropriate places but rewilding management needs to be an active management and not simply leaving a place to its own devices. Dogs and dog-walkers and out-of-control vegetation represent a real danger to small children. Ticks are an active threat. DY proposed that Visit Falkland, of which he is Chair, should draw up a list distinguishing between areas which are *appropriate* for rewilding (which then still require consultation with local people) and our village amenity areas which need more finessed management and keeping ‘trim’. DY to report back at next meeting. | All Noted |
| 7 (ii) Residents’  Issues | **Proposed temporary use of part of Mill Green by Stag Inn** – Chair reported that a large consultative meeting had been convened by NS on 12 August at which not only the CC and the Estate but residents who had written to the Estate with their concerns had been represented. The discussions had gone very well, in his view, and continuing consultation/monitoring was taking place in small groups. Nevertheless, a local resident spoke up strongly about the problems caused by an influx of parked cars and how difficult it had become for delivery vehicles to access houses in Balmblae. Chair suggested that the problems should be discussed with John Brown who is participating in one of the ongoing groups. JS, also affected, said that there should be a clear notice at the bridge saying ‘Unadopted road beyond. No vehicular access. Residents’ cars only.’ | Noted - ongoing |
| 8  Planning, Listed Building and Conservation Issue | 1. Chair reported that he had received no notice yet of a decision on Kerkyra House. 2. Old Town Hall – GH drew attention to the ‘wholly inappropriate’ advertising for the new delicatessen: a large A-frame sign on a trailer occupying a car parking space opposite and vintage bicycles fixed either side of the entrance to give a ‘retro’ look. These are against both national and Fife Council policy in Conservation Areas. Various valid points were made. Chair favoured a nuanced approach and offered to speak to the Manager of the shop in the first place, and to report back to the next meeting. | Agreed |
| 12  A.O.C.B. | Encouraged by the Chair, PB had circulated a possible revised template for the CC monthly Agenda. The idea was to cut down on excessive ‘reporting’ and to give more attention to ‘matters requiring a decision or resolution of opinion’. Chair proposed that he and PB would see if next month’s Agenda could fit into this suggested template and, if so, we would trial it. In any event it was good committee practice to review from time to time the way we do things and see if they are genuinely fit for purpose. | Agreed |

**Next Meeting: 7pm Tuesday 13 October 2020 - Virtual meeting**