

1st Draft of Minute of Biggar Community Council Zoom Meeting 19th October 2020

Present:- Lesley Craise (LC) – Chairperson, Thelma Ingram (TI) – Secretary, Janet Moxley (JM) – Treasurer, Jimmy Ritchie (JR), Laura Shirley (LS), Peter Rae (PR), Neil Ingram (NI) - Associate Member.

Ex- officio Members – Cllr Ian McAllan (Cllr IMcA) and Cllr Alex Allison (Cllr AA).

7 members of the public also attended.

1. **Welcome.**
2. **Apologies** – Al Stewart, Associate Member, Cllr Eric Holford.
3. **Declaration of AOCB.**
4. **Minutes of last meeting** on 21st August 2020 – Approved, Jimmy Ritchie proposed and Laura Shirley seconded.
5. **Matters arising.**
 - **A702 surface defects** – TI reported that she has made 5 reports to Bear and Transport Scotland since August 2020, as the defects appeared or worsen. After the latest report I was phoned back on 14 Oct by BEAR and we received this follow up email. The defects on the A702 were repaired this week.

The A702 is inspected twice weekly and BEAR will continue to monitor for any further failures of the road surface.

Transport Scotland is in discussions with Amey on the structural maintenance design and the reason for these failures. Once they are aware of the proposed remedial works to the surfacing, they will be in contact with the Community Council and the community to advise of the programme.

The latest repair was removal of the top surfaces and immediate substructure, reinstatement was finished with hot asphalt. Thelma will continue to monitor this.
 - **Bonfire Update** – The Chairperson read out the following statement from Al Stewart – “The Biggar Cornets Club are sure it will come as no surprise that given the current Government guidelines and the ban on all outdoor events, this year’s Biggar Hogmanay bonfire will unfortunately not take place. The restrictions prevent South Lanarkshire Council from granting a licence, as a mass gathering of several thousand spectators poses insurmountable problems in the continuing efforts to control the COVID pandemic.

This will be a great disappointment for the whole community, for all those Biggaronians who travel home to Biggar for Hogmanay, and all those who visit us to witness this treasured event.

1st Draft of Minute of Biggar Community Council Zoom Meeting 19th October 2020

We hope you will understand the current situation and respect this decision.”

It was noted that with the resignation of Jerry Sumpster the CC has no representatives on the Bonfire Committee, as JR and AI Stewart are both members of the Cornets Club.

- **Scheme of Establishment for CCs update.** At the full council meeting of SLC in September they agreed to consult on two amendments to the Scheme for Establishment of CCs. SLC have informed us that they consider that the current Scheme does not allow online meetings, so they have brought forward two amendments with guidance notes – one to allow CCs to meet without members of the public present, and the other to allow Community Councillors to meet remotely online . THE Chairperson suggested there are three alternatives – to accept the amendments as they are, to reject them or to accept them but say that there needs to be a wholesale review of the Scheme. Responses to be with SLC by 1 December at 4pm.
 - Many members felt that the wording is confusing and hard to follow even with the guidance notes. They was a request for clarification as there is no requirement for the public to have access to online or hybrid (mixed) .Cllr AA said that it is intended that in future there would be a further deep consultation on the Scheme. Several of the Councillors expressed concerns about the amendments as presently drafted. A member of the public commented that many more members of the public attend our online meetings than have at physical BCC meetings. It was confirmed that anyone could offer comments, either through BCC or direct to SLC. Members were asked to submit comments by 29 October for collation. Links will be put on the CC website. Members of the public can also comment to SLC and/or BCC.
6. **Police Report** – none. Cllr IMcA offered to forward contact details for the two new community police officers for Biggar and surrounding area.
7. **Wreath for Remembrance Day** – it was agreed that JR would lay the wreath at a socially distanced ceremony at the War Memorial on 8 November. Biggar Kirk will hold an online service which will be transmitted at 11.00 on the same day – please contact the Minister, Mike Fucella, to be one of the limited number of people who can attend the church service in person, or for the link to the online service.

8. Matters raised by the public

A member of the public again raised concerns about tables and chairs outside cafes obstructing the pavement. This is particularly difficult for those with visual impairments.. **Action.** LC to have a further word with proprietors and suggest pavement markings.

Action log. Another member of the public asked whether the Action Log could be attached to the minutes as used to happen. This will be done as time allows.

9. Treasurer's Report

Banking arrangements – JM reported that due to COVID, Bank of Scotland are still not accepting new application for their Treasurer's account which has dual authorisation online banking.

Business Account Final balance £447.07. £10 expenditure to reimburse Laura Shirley for purchase of laminator pouches.

Clyde Windfarm Account. Final balance £3965.02. Microgrant payment of £500 made to Biggar Community Toilets for upgrades to their door entry system. The decision on this award needs to be ratified at the October BCC meeting.

Incentive Account. Final balance £5632.63. This account has five active budget lines.

1. Glenkerie Windfarm Microgrant Fund. Final balance £493.92. £250 awarded to the Gillespie Centre towards costs of a new coffee machine. The decision on this award needs to be ratified at the October BCC meeting.

2. BCC Incentive Fund. Final balance £758.44. No transactions on this budget since previous report.

3. Clyde Extension COVID fund. Final balance £2630.27. No new transactions on this account since last meeting. The outstanding cheque to the Youth Project has now been cashed.

4. Glenkerie COVID fund. Final balance £1750. £250 awarded to the Gillespie Centre towards costs of a new dishwasher. The decision on this award needs to be ratified at the October BCC meeting.

5. Scottish Government Towns and BIDS Resilience and Recovery Fund. Final Balance £0. This grant was to fund re-opening the Community Toilets. An interim report on this project has been submitted to SG.

JM encouraged community groups to apply for microgrants, either from COVID or standard funds, as appropriate.

Asset register £10 worth of laminator pouches has been added to the asset register. These are consumables, so will be used up in due course.

1st Draft of Minute of Biggar Community Council Zoom Meeting 19th October 2020

10. Secretary's Report. TI reported that BCC are statutory consultees for planning and receive weekly lists from SLC planning, but although we are also statutory consultees for licensing we were not receiving the equivalent licensing list. As result of inquiries SLC have now confirmed the licensing list will be sent to Community Councils in future.

We have complained to West of Scotland Breast Screening and NHS National Services (Screening) regarding the removal of this year's screening to Lanark.

BCC, along with all CCs in Biggar Health Centre area are now getting minutes of the Patient Group, which is very helpful and explains how the centre is adapting to these times. The Patient Group are concerned about the changes to breast screening this year and have made their own representations. Their next meeting is 17th of November. Reminder – BHC are not involved in this year's flu injection programme.

SLC are intending to arrange training for CCs via the OU, we have been asked for topics.

11. Grant applications. The following three grants were approved unanimously by members –

Clyde Windfarm Account. £500 made to Biggar Community Toilets for upgrades to their door entry system.

Glenkerie Windfarm Microgrant Fund. £250 awarded to the Gillespie Centre towards costs of a new coffee machine.

Glenkerie Covid Fund. £250 awarded to the Gillespie Centre towards costs of a new dishwasher.

An award to Biggar Netball Club from Glenkerie Covid Fund for £250 to cover equipment to allow them to restart under Covid constraints was agreed at the meeting.

It was agreed that Neil Ingram would manage the grant application process. Applications will be checked and then sent to members for comment before final decisions are taken. NI would also advise potential applicants about the various funds the CC has to distribute, and the range of larger funds available from windfarms and elsewhere.

12. Use of emails – A list of suggested etiquette points relating to the use of emails will be circulated by the Chairperson.

1st Draft of Minute of Biggar Community Council Zoom Meeting 19th October 2020

13. SLC Cllrs reports

Cllr Alec Allison

- Flooding on High St – reported to BEAR to investigate, no clear contact for this yet since BEAR took over contract.
- SLC are retraining various staff to cover each other's jobs, as there is concern that there could be significant staff shortages, and this will ensure that they have trained staff to cover in emergencies. For instance all HGV drivers are being trained to covering gritting, and as established during lockdown kerbside refuse collections will be a priority..

Cllr Ian McAllan

- Regarding provision of an A702 pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the Wynd/Station Rd, BEAR installed cameras at Park Place from 1 to 10 October to monitor the level of pedestrian use.
- School is looking to put a mural on walls of Clydesdale Close archway. One wall is owned by Hamiltons the Newsagents, Walker Carpets are the other owners.
- Late night shopping – businesses are looking at a way of promoting themselves at the end of November and SLC councillors are to support this.

14. Planning matters - Boghall Rd appeal - Gladman appeal against refusal of planning consent at Boghall Rd is still with the Reporter appointed by Scottish Ministers, no new documents since 8th October, there are now 206. Reference for the appeal is PPA-380-2085.

A response was sent to Scottish Ministers in relation to the recent consultation about changes to the definitions of housing land supply in the preparation of local plans.

No notable new applications in our area.

15. Draft Resilience Plan. Neil reported on the development of a Biggar Risk Register, and explained how it fits within UK and Scottish arrangements. He had circulated a draft version of the Register. The highest risk is the current pandemic, but after that the next highest risk and most frequent one relates to winter weather. SLC and Transport Scotland issue Winter Guidance each year covering how they plan to respond and what communities and individual should do to help each other. This advice will tie in with any plans which are made at a local level.

1st Draft of Minute of Biggar Community Council Zoom Meeting 19th October 2020

Winter readiness. Two representatives of BCAG explained that their volunteers have been asked if they are prepared to undertake gritting and snowclearing during periods of adverse weather. They are distributing a BCAG leaflet in November and it was agreed they would help to distribute the BCC leaflet of advice on preparedness for winter which Bob Brownlie has prepared. The leaflet will be reviewed by BCC before issue and an online version will be prepared as well.

NI mentioned that the NHS will be issuing guidance on avoiding unnecessary accidents in severe weather, and this was supported by a member of the public.

16.CCTV. Bob Brownlie and Peter Rae have investigated the possible cost installing CCTV in Biggar High Street. Likely capital cost is about £36k, including installation, to cover from Park Place to Broughton Road, but without including any of the closes. There might be 11 locations and a control centre. It was agreed to canvass views from the town about the proposal and separately to survey local businesses.

17. AOCB. Breast Cancer Screening – BCC have written to the NHS Breast Screening Service and NHS Lanarkshire to complain about their moving the Screening Centre to Lanark without proper consultation. BCC have also launched an online survey of women in Biggar to see how they have felt about these changes.

Bollard in Gas Works Road Car Park – JM agreed to write a letter to Historic Environment Scotland about the new collapsible bollard they have installed in the car park at the end of Gas Works Road. Although HES did consult one resident of Gas Works Road, they failed to consult other residents and businesses.

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Newsletter – In view of time constraints, members were asked to use email to suggest items for a newsletter to be issued next month.

18. Next meeting Monday 16 Nov at 7pm. New dates for the next year were agreed to be 14 Dec, 18 Jan, 15 Feb, 15 Mar, 19 Apr, 17 May, 21 Jun, 19 Jul (summer holiday?) 16 Aug, 20 Sep, 18 Oct (AGM).

Minute prepared by Thelma Ingram.