

Draft Minute of Biggar Community Council Zoom Meeting on 16th November 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).

6 members of the public also attended.

1. **Welcome.**

2. **Apologies** – Al Stewart, Associate Member, Cllr Eric Holford, Aileen Campbell MSP, Claudia Beamish MSP.

3. **Declaration of AOCB.** None.

4. **Minutes of last meeting** on 19 October 2020 – 17. Bollard in Gas Works Road - amended to say “HES did consult one resident of Gas Works Road, but failed to consult other residents and businesses.”

Approved: Peter Rae proposed and Janet Moxley seconded.

5. **Matters arising.**

- **Bonfire Committee membership** – it was agreed that Peter and Thelma would be the BCC representatives on the Biggar Bonfire Committee, to replace two of the previous three representatives.
- **Scheme for Establishment for Community Councils update** – NI summarised the position concerning the proposed amendments to the SLC Scheme for Community Councils. In response to a query from BCC about public attendance at remote meetings, SLC lawyers have confirmed that the amendments do mean that members of the public should be given access to all meetings of the Community Council except where the Chairperson decides otherwise, but they are not clear on how members of the public should be allowed to participate in remote and mixed meetings (meetings at which some participants take part remotely).
- He also explained how the procedure for handling consultation on the proposed amendments would work. All comments are to be with SLC by 1 December. Thereafter if there is general support for the amendments they will be adopted at the next full Council meeting. If SLC judge that there is not sufficient support, further proposals will be brought forward and a further consultation period of 8 weeks will ensue. In any event SLC have committed to carrying out a wide-ranging review of the Scheme in 2021.
- There was general discussion of the proposed amendments, and a majority felt that there was too little certainty about public involvement and the role of the new post of Deputy Chairperson, not previously defined in the Scheme. The amendments are not in Plain English, and are open to misinterpretation. They do not do what SLC claimed they would, and possibly introduce an additional official post of Depute Chairperson with decision making powers. They also invest too much power in the Chairperson and reduce the influence of other members. It was therefore decided

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that BCC would not support the proposed amendments, and **NI agreed to draft a response to this effect**. The response will also include suggestions for further changes to the Scheme to be incorporated in the promised future revisions.

- Cllr McAllan said that SLC are keen to engage with and empower CCs and it would be helpful to have comments now on other aspects of the Scheme. Cllr Allison confirmed that there is likely to be a detailed consultation on the Scheme next year.
- **Use of emails** – the circulated proposals for using emails were broadly welcomed with a few changes proposed. A revised version will be circulated to members. PR proposed that If an email is urgent the heading should state so - this was agreed. TI asked that she should be phoned about any urgent business.
- **Draft resilience Plan/Winter Resilience** – NI spoke about further communication with SLC – he had circulated a letter from Ken Wratten giving several useful contacts. He was waiting for further information from SLC Roads about detailed issues on Winter Clearing, including treatment of North Back Road. This is a major pedestrian route to the High Street but as most of its length have no pavements it should not be treated or cleared by volunteers.
- The recent letter also clarifies the insurance position in relation to gritting and snow clearance. BCC members have public liability and personal injury cover for activities including snow clearing / gritting pavements and paths as well as transporting vulnerable people to an emergency centre and caring for them once there. People who volunteer for BCC only have public liability cover for these activities, and they have to act under the direction of a CC member. BCAG are still discussing personal injury cover for volunteers with their insurers.
- Grit in street bins is only provided for use on roads, pavements and footpaths. JR offered to get extra supplies from the SLC depot at Carnwath. JM will put the map of grit bin locations on the BCC website.
- **CCTV** – Bob Brownlie explained that following receipt of a letter from SLC Property Services he had spoken to Stephen Bell. Stephen had pointed out that CCTV will not stop crime and is an expensive option. The letter states that any installation has to be necessary and proportionate. The operators would have to consider privacy issues, including carrying out a Privacy Impact Assessment, appoint a Data Controller and set up a robust procedure for strict controls of any access to and potential release of information or images. Bob had also obtained another quote for a CCTV system in the High Street. It is broadly similar to the first quote, at about £36,000 capital cost and annual running costs of about £2,500. As already agreed the CC will canvass public opinion on the possible implementation of CCTV in Biggar High Street, including local businesses.

Action – Lesley to draw up a questionnaire for circulation.

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- **Actions Log** – Park Road signage - on going.

Lights at step at Campsie - no money available from SLC, Jimmy is speaking to BEAR.

Food Co-ops to be deferred till lower tier.

Resurfacing A702 in Biggar High St is being addressed.

Biggar Mill Road, Station Rd potholes are on a list but reassessed every year. So resurfacing delayed. Agreed Janet to contact Gordon Mackay.

6. **Police Report – none.**

7. **Matters raised by the public**

Two members of the Public brought up their concerns about delays in gaining access to social care assessments, in one case for self-directed support and in the other for advice on access modifications. Both people had experienced delays, unreturned phone calls and poor communications from the South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership. The Chairperson pointed out that in the case of self-directed care the SLC process involves a social worker- this is not the practise in some other councils.

It was also brought out that South Lanarkshire Social Care are not getting involved as they should in the Health and Social Care Area Forum for Clydesdale. It was commented that this adversely affects the current moves to integrate Health and Social Care to enable keeping people in their homes and improving care in the community.

Cllr McAllan said that there were communication problems about these issues even before Covid. He and Cllr Allison are willing to take them up.

Action. Cllrs McAllan and Allison will take up these problems with SLC both the individual cases and to find out what is happening about assessments at the moment.

Remembrance Stones – Alan Michie, British Legion had written for our support for a site to be found for the poppy stones the community had laid at the War Memorial for Remembrance Day. It was suggested the garden space at the corner of Station Road and Coulter Rd might be suitable.

Action. Janet to write to SLC.

8. **Treasurer's Report**

Banking arrangements Bank of Scotland are still not accepting new applications for their Treasurer's account which has dual authorisation online banking, however dual signature cheque banking continues to work well.

Business Account Final balance £347.08. £64.99 expenditure on the Get Ready for Winter leaflet, and £35 for Remembrance Day wreath.

Clyde Windfarm Account Final balance £3965.02. No expenditure on this account since last meeting.

Incentive Account. Final balance £5382.63. This account has five live budget

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lines.

1. Glenkerie Windfarm Microgrant Fund. Final balance £493.92. No expenditure from this fund since last meeting.
2. BCC Incentive Fund. Final balance £758.44. No expenditure from this fund since last meeting.
3. Clyde Extension COVID fund. Final balance £2630.27. No expenditure from this fund since last meeting.
4. Glenkerie COVID fund. Final balance £1500. £250 awarded to the Biggar Netball Club
5. Scottish Government Towns and BIDS Resilience and Recovery Fund. Final Balance £0. This grant was to fund re-opening the Community Toilets.

Please encourage community groups to apply for microgrants either from COVID or standard funds as appropriate.

Asset register No change since last meeting.

9. **Secretary's Report.** TI reported that

We have sent the West of Scotland Breast Screening and NHS National Services (Screening) the results of our survey concerning this year's arrangements in Lanark. An earlier reply from NHS National Screening Services has said we and the Patient Group will be consulted before next year's screening is arranged.

Thelma thanked members for their help with secretarial tasks made more difficult by her declining eyesight.

10. **Grant applications.**

One application - To SSE Clyde Extension Covid Fund by Biggar Community Action Group for the provision of Christmas Lunches in the Gillespie Centre for 28 vulnerable elderly residents of Biggar for £330. Lesley Craise abstained as a member of BCAG, the rest of the voting members approved the grant.

Groups and individuals are encouraged to apply to our grant schemes, advice is available on our website and by phone. Neil's number is 01899 229 211.

Action. Janet to write cheque.

11. **SLC Councillors' reports**

Cllr Ian McAllan

- Potential pedestrian crossing Main Street near to Park Pl/Station Rd: Cllr McAllan advised that BEAR conducted a week long pedestrian survey of the crossing point in October. No results have been received as yet.
- The High School is looking to put a mural on walls of Clydesdale Close archway. SLC have responsibility for the surface. Cllr McAllan will continue to attempt to speak to the businesses that own the walls.

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- Complaints received re the positioning of the temporary chevrons on the A702 at Coulter. These were installed by BEAR for BHC girders transportation and a number of residents suggested they were confusing. Bear were contacted and this has been rectified.

Cllr Alex Allison

- High St – TI has identified various blocked drains and these have been reported to BEAR to clear.
- Low Sign on Coulter Rd beyond Causewayend. This has been reported to Transport Scotland. It is a danger in the dark.
- SLC Sale of small parcel of land in Burnbraes Park SLC Executive Committee has agreed that this land can be sold. Cllr Allison has got agreement that if this land is subsequently determined to have been Common Good Land, proceeds of the sale will accrue to the Biggar Common Good Fund.
- NHS Lanarkshire say that despite some problems they are now ahead of schedule with flu vaccinations and they hope to complete the programme by the end of November.

12. **Planning matters** - Boghall Rd appeal – Gladman’s appeal against refusal of planning consent at Boghall Rd is still with the Reporter appointed by Scottish Minister. No new documents since late October, and the Reporter has indicated that he intends to issue his report in the next few weeks. Reference for the appeal is PPA-380-2085.

No notable new applications in our area.

13. **Community Action Plan** – LC reminded the CC that work on this had been held up since Covid lockdown in March. The Plan is becoming essential to enable organisations in Biggar to apply for grant funding for major projects, as it provides sound evidence that the community is likely to support them, and accurately describes our community to funders. As we may lack capacity to carry out this work, we could look to employ a project worker for about 6 months to develop plans and start survey work, much of which will initially be online. This might ideally be someone with local knowledge. Quothquan and Thankerton CC are using windfarm money to employ Community Action Lanarkshire, who are part of the Rural Development Trust, to carry out initial work on the Plan. A sub-committee consisting of Lesley, Janet, Peter and Jimmy was set up to take this forward, including initially by drawing up a person specification. Cllr McAllan suggested talking to Kenny Lean at SLC about possible funding streams. Thelma suggested involving Gregor Leishman from SLC Community Engagement.

14. **Links with other CCs.** Janet suggested that links with adjoining Community Councils should be re-established, particularly in relation to Action Plans and the shared Clyde Extension Windfarm Fund which includes Biggar, Duneaton, Symington and Thankerton and Quothquan.

Action – Janet to arrange meeting.

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15. Footpaths around Biggar – Janet suggested approaching Alan Bannister the SLC Access Officer about 3 local footpaths which have access issues. These are the route to Bizzyberry Hill, the circular footpath round Biggar Common and the access to Boghall Castle.

Action – Janet to write to Access Officer.

16. Speeding in Lindsaylands Road – PR complained about regular speeding beyond the Wynd past the Ambulance Station. Cllr McAllan agreed to take this up with the police.

17. Common Good land – deferred.

18. Drainage problems – complaints about drainage from laybys on the A702 should be passed to Scottish Water, not to SLC. There may also be a problem in Rowhead Terrace with the pumped sewage system from McAlpine Court, which has not yet been adopted by Scottish Water.

19. AOCB. A member of the public expressed appreciation of the recent efforts at Biggar Medical Centre to facilitate the flu vaccination programme.

20. Date of next meeting – 14 December at 7pm.

Minute prepared by Thelma Ingram.