



Coupar Angus, Ardler and Bendochy Community Council

Minutes of meeting on Monday 12 February 2007, 7 pm, Coupar Angus Town Hall

Members present: Ian Clark, Ann Campbell, Michael Gallagher, Ron Leslie

Visitors: Hamish Shepherd (Strathmore Bowling Club), Mary Gress (Gala Committee), Mark Tulley (Coupar Angus Recreational Association), Gwenda Minto, Jo Kettles, Cllr Alan Grant, Bill Paterson (Scone District Community Council), Helen Pithie (Guild), Sheila Lamond (Guild).

Apologies: Caroline Young (Treasurer), Chairwoman Christine Itani

Minutes – Proposed by M. Gallagher, Seconded by Ron Leslie

Matters arising from previous minutes

- Community notice board – Ian has written to three companies asking for a bus shelter with notice boards built in, subsidised by advertising.
- Community Council elections – Posters are out in Coupar Angus and Ardler. Nomination forms are available from the Tavern in Ardler and C&W West. Further nomination forms have been distributed around Bendochy.
- Ian will write a letter to Carol Duncan, manager of Lloyds TSB, to thank her for allowing completed nomination forms to be handed in at her bank.
- AGM – to be advertised by 15 February. Michael to email poster to Ian for printing.
- Mausoleum in Kirk graveyard – the Clerk of Works is on long-term sick leave, but his manager will contact Michael soon.
- Lighting at skate park – now set to switch off at 10pm.

Police report – no member of the police present

Price of Place – Ron – they are buying plants and deciding where to put them.

Planning – Ian – there are plans for a development at End of Loch Cottage

Treasurer's report – Caroline is chasing up money for CAN advertising. Six companies still to pay. **ACTION** - Ian will chase them. Caroline needs this money by the end of the month in order to have the books ready for the accountant.

Correspondence – Jo Kettles forwarded a letter from Shaw & Sons Ltd offering official forms, records and registers for Community Councils. These include things like special receipts and payment books, and notices for advertising meetings.

Any other competent business

- A member of the community expressed concern that the police were not taking her complaints seriously about vandalism. **ACTION** – Michael will write to Inspector Buckley Jones.
- People have been parking on double yellow lines and near bus bays. **ACTION** – The Community Council requests that Cllr Grant ask for traffic wardens.
- **Next meeting – AGM – Monday 12 March 2007**

Overleaf - Discussion with local groups of the Social, Economic and Environmental future of Coupar Angus

1. SOCIAL IMPROVEMENTS

Lack of sheltered housing and care homes in Coupar Angus

Comments:

- It is financially impossible to have sheltered housing or care homes in every town.
- There are a lot of non-Coupar folk in the Servite housing at Apedale Way. A lot of local people who own their own homes didn't know that they could apply for a Servite house. N.B. 'Sheltered housing' refers to housing for the over-60s with a warden and possibly a communal area and organised activities. Apedale Way is only classed as 'Amenity Housing' – for the over-50s. There is no warden or communal area.
- Community Alarm systems should be better advertised. At the sheltered complex at Invergowrie people log in by standing on a pad. The system is inexpensive and brings peace of mind.
- Some sheltered housing, such as Ashgrove Court in Blairgowrie, has catering facilities. Others, such as Clunie Court does not.
- The warden who monitors the system should live locally
- We should aim at what is achievable – sheltered housing, not a care home

Conclusions

Although we shouldn't discount the possibility of a care home, in the short term it would be best to concentrate our efforts on getting sheltered housing.

What is the Community Council doing?

The Community Council has opened negotiations with Perth & Kinross Council and Servite Housing. Over the next month a representative of Perth & Kinross Council will contact the various departments within the Council that could help us get some sort of sheltered housing with either a part time warden, or a 'floating' warden – someone who would keep an eye on people in their own homes as well as residents of sheltered housing. Unfortunately, because the Council is on a fixed budget, this could be a long, drawn-out process that could take months or even years. However we will keep up the pressure.

In the meantime it would help us greatly if you could let us know about local people who have had to leave Coupar Angus because of the lack of sheltered housing or care homes. This information will strengthen our case.

Lack of Leisure Activities

Comments:

- The requirement for CRO (Criminal Records Office) Disclosures can make it difficult to attract volunteers. For example parents are not even allowed on the school bus.
- Scone District Community Council has started a Community Association to provide activities at the local Glebe School. They have found that by providing activities for both adults and children, more adults now want to become volunteers. With regard to Disclosure, they have found that they can meet the requirements as long as there is one adult 'in charge' who has had a Disclosure check.

- A new purpose-built, community-owned facility could act as a social ‘hub’. It could have several halls, and perhaps a café and a cinema.
- If local community groups transferred their activities to a new community centre it could lift a lot of the burden from local groups with regard to the cost of maintaining their own premises.
- There might not be enough room for all the local groups
- A town manager could also help local groups with planning and administration tasks.
- Insurance can be a problem
- Scone District Community Council carried out a survey of all age groups to find out what activities they would like. They now provide activities on one night a week, but plan to increase this to 2 nights. They offer a selection of activities including computing and chess. There is an adult in charge in order to meet child safety regulations.
- In order to set up a community association like Scone, get a committee together, get charitable status, and then get grants from the Gateway centre in Perth.
- The school board of Coupar Angus primary school decides what’s done at the annex.
- A lot of properties are barely used.
- The scout hut is used 3 nights a week
- One solution might be a Development Trust to enable the community to buy land / property that could be used for a community centre.
- Generating an income for running the property can be a problem.
- There would need to be a detailed audit of halls in Coupar Angus, and how much they are used, before any definite plans were made. As always, getting money for things requires proof of ‘need’.

Conclusions

Three ideas came to the fore –

- A Community Association to provide new activities for all age groups
- A town manager to help local groups with planning and administration
- A Development Trust to buy land and property for community purposes, which could include a community centre or sheltered housing. Money is available from the government for this.

Each of these ideas could bring many benefits. Perhaps a case of ‘nothing ventured, nothing gained’?

What is the Community Council doing?

First, we need information. We need to carry out a detailed audit of local halls and how much they are used, and a survey of what leisure activities people would like to do.

Once we have this information we will be in a better position to offer support for new activities, and we will also know whether or not we need a new community centre to accommodate these activities.

2. IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT

Poor Air Quality

What is the Community Council doing?

On Friday 9 February, Ann Campbell, Ron Leslie and Michael Gallagher were shown around Grampian Foods. The chicken factory currently employs 425 people over two shifts. Management has informed us that 184 of them are from Coupar Angus, not including Polish migrant workers. About 12% of the workforce are agency workers.

We were shown around by Alan Borland, an engineer whose job it is to solve the odour problem, and factory manager Chic Knowles.

Alan explained that the factory needs an IPPC (Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control) licence to operate. This is provided by SEPA, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, which has free access to the factory. SEPA will only grant an IPPC licence on condition that the factory emits no foul odours.

The factory currently processes 615,000 birds each week, rising to 715,000 in the near future. This number will rise to a million with the closure of 2 other factories. There are plans to extend the killing and cutting plant on to the ground by the Co-op, and for this to be the only killing and cutting plant in Scotland.

SEPA has ordered Grampian Foods to carry out a series of measures to solve the smell problem. The programme of improvements will cost £118,000. These measures, which must be carried out by 31st March 2007, include:

- Fitting carbon filters to the blood tanks to neutralise the bad smell
- Altering the hose connections at the blood tanks to avoid spillages
- The area where feathers are squeezed dry will be enclosed, and feathers will no longer be stored on site
- The skips where rejected birds are put will be sealed and housed. There will be an extractor fan with carbon filter
- Spillages of waste around the layering area (the area where the birds first arrive) and other outdoor areas – the concrete surface is to be made smoother for ease of cleaning

However, there are other problem areas for which there is no provision under the current order from SEPA. These include vapours from the scald tanks, the killing area, the machine that cleans the crates in which the birds arrive and the primary processing area inside the factory. Here the only air treatment is by natural dissipation through doors and windows. Therefore we all need to be vigilant and report any bad smells after 31st March. A ‘Substantiated Odour Complaint’ (SOC) is where a SEPA agent stands at the boundary and smells a bad smell. Three SOC’s prompt action by SEPA. SEPA has a freephone number – 0800 807060.

Dilapidated buildings in the town centre

The Coupar Angus Regeneration Trust recently got a grant from Townscape Heritage Initiative (Lottery money) of £880,000 towards renovating frontages at the Cross. On the strength of this they will get a further £1.2m from other funding bodies.

The main targets for renovation will be the Royal Hotel, the Cumberland Barracks and Meg's Café. As well as this, any building with a frontage at the Cross can apply for funding, although they will have to put up 80% of the money themselves. The plans can be seen by contacting **CART** (Tel **628569**, Email: **CARtrust@btconnect.com**).

Work on the old Co-op building will begin in 2 months by the Perthshire Housing Association, who will convert it into 11 flats.

The Royal is now owned by Ancaster Properties, but they have not said when they are going to start work. They plan to convert the building into flats.

3. IMPROVING THINGS ECONOMICALLY

Lack of job opportunities

According to last year's community survey, 64% of people think that job opportunities are poor or very poor. The chicken factory says that 184 people from Coupar Angus work there, not including Polish migrants. Is this a case of all our employment eggs in one basket?

As mentioned above, a Development Trust would enable the town to buy land and property for 'community purposes.' This might include job creation (an Innovation Park for example?) or even a nursing home employing local people. Your Community Council will continue to pursue the possibilities presented by Community Buyout. Watch this space!

