

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

14th October, 2020

2.00 p.m. - 3.20 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Linda Erskine (Convener), Alistair Bain, Alex Campbell, Gary Guichan, Rosemary Liewald, Mary Lockhart, Lea Mclelland and Darren Watt.

ATTENDING: Ken Gourlay, Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment; Ross Speirs, Service Manager (Structural Services), Assets, Transportation and Environment, Roads and Transportation Services; Patricia Galfskiy, Policy Officer, Sharon Murphy, Temporary Community Development Team Manager, Sarah Roxburgh, Community Manager (Cowdenbeath Area), Communities and Neighbourhoods; Mark Barrett, Lead Officer Transportation Development Management (South Fife), Economy, Planning and Employability Services; Sarah Else, Education Officer, Education Services; Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer (minute taker) and Diane Barnett, Committee Officer (observer), Legal and Democratic Services.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE: Bailey-Lee Robb, Member of Scottish Youth Parliament.

The Committee congratulated Lorraine Mullen, Community Education Worker for the tremendous amount of work she had undertaken within the area over the last 20 years and extended thanks on behalf of Cowdenbeath Area Committee for her contribution over the years.

Prior to the start of formal business, the Convener intimated the intention to vary the sequence of items from that on the agenda – to consider Public Questions as the first substantive item (Paragraph 190).

188. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Decision

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

189. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE OF 9TH SEPTEMBER, 2020

The Committee considered the minute of the Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 9th September, 2020.

Decision

The Committee agreed to approve the minute.

190./

190. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questions were submitted (in terms of Standing Order No, 6.1 (1)) by Mr Zielinski, Chair of Cardenden Community Flood Resilience Group and Mr Tom Kinnaird, resident of Benarty. A response to the questions would be circulated following the meeting.

Question No. 1 - submitted by Mr Zielinski

How was Fife Council made aware of the potential flood risk to Cardenden village and what was the trigger for commissioning the recent Flood Study, conducted in partnership with Kaya and Stantec?

Response

The publication of the first National Flood Risk Assessment in December 2011 highlighted the risk of flooding within the Cardenden area. Prior to that, there is evidence within the Biennial reports prepared from 1999 up to 2009 of localised flooding due to a gas pipe crossing the Den Burn where water entered a single dwelling in 1995 or 1996. The current Cardenden Flood Study is an action within the first Local Flood Risk Management Plan covering 2016 - 2022 for the Forth Estuary Local Plan District. This Plan describes all actions to be addressed by all actors within the Flooding Community within Scotland. SEPA, Scottish Water, Local Authorities, (Scottish Natural Heritage) SNH and HES (Historic Environment Scotland) as well as groups and individuals.

Question No. 2 - submitted by Mr Tom Kinnaird

With phase one of the new Kingdom Housing Association homes complete at Kirkland Farm, Ballingry, landscaping works on Ballingry Meadow are complete and a new section of cycle path paving has been laid to the estate ownership boundary where it comes to an abrupt and unsightly halt. The south Lochty Burn runs to the south of the new homes and has no barrier fencing or wall to prevent young children from falling in. What action will the committee take to complete the landscaping and join the new paving to the existing paving at Bonnar's garage, and does the committee consider that some form of barrier should be erected at the burn to prevent a young child from falling in and drowning

Response

You cannot legislate for an individual's behaviour. If someone wishes to go somewhere, they will find a way. Fencing of SuDS and watercourses has been discussed at length within the flooding community throughout Scotland.

It is current best practice throughout Scotland not to fence off SuDS pond basins and swales where at all possible but to use defensive planting as landscaping. The reasons for this are:

- Ponds/

- Ponds, Basins and Swales by their nature are in an area under constant vision from properties they are designed to serve therefore in the unlikely event that someone does get into difficulty they will be seen;
- Fencing prevents quick access to Emergency Services in the unlikely event of someone getting into difficulty. By their nature, any breach would be in an area not quickly noticeable and therefore difficult to find in an emergency to allow Emergency access;
- As well as the above reasons, fencing of a watercourse (burn or stream) will hinder the clearing of these watercourses required to ensure they are not blocked by rubbish dumped further upstream, or fallen branches weeds, etc which could cause flooding either adjacent to or upstream of a blockage;
- By their nature watercourses are long and mainly in private ownership. Where would fencing or any barrier actually stop? Also, not all landowners would wish for/permit a fence on their property which would require regular maintenance; and
- Defensive landscaping is lower maintenance, as opposed to a fence line that would require regular inspection and maintenance to repair any breaches.

Decision

The Committee noted the questions submitted by Mr Zielinski and Mr Tom Kinnaird and the respective Service responses.

191. LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING (LCP) BUDGET APPLICATION - BENARTY ASTROS FOOTBALL CLUB

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, providing an overview of the application to fund the provision of a post and rail fence around the pitch which was currently leased from Fife Council by Benarty Astros Football Club at King George V Park in Crosshill.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:-

- (1) a contribution of £8,568 from the Ward 8 local community planning budget to support the provision of a post and rail fence around the pitch, subject to Benarty Astros Football Club fundraising to support the remaining cost of installing the fence; and
- (2) include a condition that Benarty Astros Football Club would provide evidence that all relevant consents were in place following consultation with Fields in Trust that lease conditions were being met before any building works commenced.

192. SCHOOL ATTAINMENT AND ACHIVEMENT REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services), providing a summary report on 2018-2019 School Attainment and Achievement across the secondary and primary schools serving the area. Web address links to Secondary School Standards and Quality reports, cluster primary summaries and information regarding educational attainment in the primary and secondary schools was provided.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) agreed to engage directly with local schools to find out more about School Attainment and Achievement;
- (2) noted the details contained in the report in relation to new ways of analysing and reporting on secondary schools' performance from August 2020; and
- (3) noted the information provided in the primary and secondary schools' reports.

193. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Decision

The Committee noted the content of the forward work programme.