

## 2021 NEFAC 182

### THE FIFE COUNCIL - NORTH EAST FIFE AREA COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

9 June 2021

9.30 a.m. – 2.20 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Donald Lothian (Convener), Tim Brett, Bill Connor, John Docherty, Andy Heer, Linda Holt, Margaret Kennedy, Jane Ann Liston, David MacDiarmid, Karen Marjoram, Tony Miklinski, Dominic Nolan, Bill Porteous, Jonny Tepp and Brian Thomson.

**ATTENDING:** Derek Crowe, Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation Services), Lesley Craig, Lead Consultant and Allan Maclean, Lead Consultant Sustainable Traffic and Travel, Assets, Transportation & Environment; Bill Lindsay, Service Manager, Planning – Policy & Place and Richard Simmons, Lead Officer Transportation Development Management (North Fife), Economy, Planning & Employability Services; Gordon Binnie, Housing Manager – Area Housing Management, Donna Christie, Lead Officer - Estate Management, Paul Coleman, Lead Officer (Safer Communities), Kirstie Freeman, Safer Communities Area Co-ordinator and Sara Gray, Lead Officer (Safer Communities), Housing Services; Chris Smith, Station Commander for North East Fife Area, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service; Chief Inspector Brian Poole, Local Area Commander, North East Fife and Murray Gibson, Community Police Inspector, Cupar/St Andrews, Police Scotland; Donald Grant, Community Manager (North East Fife), Communities & Neighbourhoods; and Diane Barnett, Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services.

**APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE:** Councillor Ann Verner.

### URGENT BUSINESS BEING BROUGHT BY THE CONVENER

The Convener advised of an additional item which they had agreed to take as urgent business which was relevant and competent due to the imminent closure of Post Office counters in Spar convenience stores and moved its consideration, in terms of the relevant Standing Order, to allow the Committee to express its view. This was unanimously agreed and a Motion was considered at Para. 346 below.

#### 344. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Nolan declared a non-financial interest in Para. 347 - 'Appointment to Partner Organisation - St Andrews Pilgrim Foundation' - as he was the outgoing Council appointee.

#### 345. MINUTE

The Committee considered the minute of meeting of North East Fife Area Committee of 21 April 2021.

#### Decision/

**Decision**

The Committee agreed to approve the minute.

**346. URGENT ITEM - POST OFFICE CLOSURES**

Councillor Heer, seconded by Councillor Brett moved that:

'The Committee deplors the decision by Spar to close its Post Office counters in Fife and urges Spar management to reconsider the decision'.

**Decision**

The Committee:-

- (1) agreed unanimously with the Motion deploring the closure decision and to make the Committee's opinion known to Spar management;
- (2) acknowledged that the proposed closures affected 6 post office counters across Fife, 4 of which were in North East Fife; and
- (3) noted the impact on customers who would have to travel further to access postal services and to also access facilities for cash transactions arising from the lack of alternative banking facilities due to the previous bank closures.

*Prior to consideration of the following item, Councillor Nolan, having declared a non-financial interest, left the meeting for the item.*

**347. APPOINTMENT TO PARTNER ORGANISATION - ST ANDREWS PILGRIM FOUNDATION**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services seeking a nomination from the North East Fife Area Committee following the resignation of Councillor Nolan from the St Andrews Pilgrim Foundation.

**Decision**

On a motion by Councillor Brett, seconded by Councillor Miklinski, the Committee agreed unanimously that Councillor Liston be appointed to the St Andrews Pilgrim Foundation.

*Councillor Nolan re-joined the meeting following consideration of the above item.*

**348. NON-SETTLEMENT TRUST - GRAVES DRESSINGS: CRAIL CEMETERY - LUMSDEN MONUMENT**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods seeking approval of a grant award of £8,336 from the Graves Dressing fund to Crail Preservation Trust as a further contribution to the Lumsden Monument Conservation project.

**Decision/**

**Decision**

The Committee approved an award of £8,336 from the Graves Dressing fund to Craig Preservation Trust as a further contribution to the Lumsden Monument Conservation project.

**349. OBJECTIONS TO ROADS CONSTRUCTION CONSENT FOR BALGOVE PARK, BALGOVE ROAD, GAULDRY - 20/03102/RCC**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Planning relating to objections to a Roads Construction Consent application for a proposed development at Balgove Park, Balgove Road, Gauldry.

**Decision**

The Committee agreed to set aside the objections and allow the Roads Construction Consent to be granted subject to the standard conditions.

**350. OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR STRATHKINNES CROSSROADS**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment providing the results of an appraisal of options for potential improvements to Strathkinness Crossroads (B939 & C4).

**Decision**

The Committee:-

- (1) noted the contents of the report and considered the results of the appraisal;
- (2) agreed that Transportation officers work with Ward 18 elected members to consider further options, including speed reduction on the approach to the crossroads; and
- (3) agreed to consider a report at a future meeting of this Committee on any proposed options arising from discussion with Ward 18 elected members.

**351. ROAD CONDITION UPDATE - NORTH FIFE**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment providing information on road conditions in North Fife between 1 September 2020 and 12 May 2021.

**Decision**

The Committee noted and commented on the report.

*Councillor Kennedy joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.*

**352./**

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### 352. GREEN ROUTES

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment providing information in relation to the potential for Green Routes in North East Fife.

#### Decision

The Committee noted that the assessment of the appropriateness of Green Routes within Fife would be considered within the review of the Local Transport Strategy for Fife which had recently commenced and was programmed to be completed by Autumn 2022.

*Councillor Tepp joined the meeting during consideration of the above item.*

*The meeting adjourned at 11.25 a.m. and reconvened at 11.40 a.m.*

### 353. NORTH EAST FIFE LOCK UP PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on progress of the programme to improve the lock up service offered to tenants and to modernise the lock up estate in North East Fife.

#### Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) noted the work completed and that proposed for 2021/22 in North East Fife; and
- (2) requested that information on progress was shared at ward meetings, including occupancy levels for each ward and any anecdotal information in relation to the purposes for which occupied lock ups were being used.

### 354. SAFER COMMUNITIES TEAM ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on the operational activity of the Safer Communities Team within the North East Fife Committee area during the 12 month period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

#### Decision

The Committee noted and commented on the activity to date as detailed in the report.

### 355. OPERATIONAL BRIEFING ON POLICING ACTIVITIES WITHIN NORTH EAST FIFE APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021

The Committee considered a report by the Local Area Commander, North East Fife providing information on matters impacting or involving Police Scotland, which had relevance to community safety in the North East Fife area.

#### Decision/

**Decision**

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**356. SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE - LOCAL PLAN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee considered a report by the Station Commander for North East Fife area (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service) providing incident information for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, providing an overview of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) North East Fife Committee area incident activity against its key performance indicators (KPIs).

**Decision**

The Committee noted the progress across a range of KPIs detailed in the report.

*Councillors Kennedy, Marjoram and Thomson left the meeting following consideration of the above item.*

The meeting adjourned at 1.20 p.m.

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The meeting reconvened at 1.50 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Lothian (Convener), Connor, Docherty, Heer, Holt, Liston, MacDiarmid, Miklinksi, Nolan and Porteous.

**357. NOTICE OF MOTION – HOME CARE SERVICE**

In terms of Standing Order No. 8.1 (1), the following Notice of Motion had been submitted:-

**Motion**

Councillor Tepp, seconded by Councillor Liston, moved as follows:-

'The North East Fife Area Committee requests that the Director of Health and Social Care report to the next meeting of this Committee with details on the number of people in North East Fife who are waiting to receive a home care service and how long those people are currently waiting for this service. Committee are aware that there have been long standing problems in providing a home care service in North East Fife compared to other parts of Fife and asks for information on the action the Integration Joint Board are taking to address this issue.'

**Decision**

The Committee agreed unanimously with the terms of the motion as detailed.

**358./**

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### 358. NOTICE OF MOTION – POLLUTION EVENTS, RIVER EDEN/CERES BURN

In terms of Standing Order No. 8.1 (1), the following Notice of Motion had been submitted:-

#### **Motion**

Councillor Brett, seconded by Councillor Liston, moved as follows:-

'The North East Fife Area Committee (NEFAC) expresses concern at the recent pollution events; one in River Eden (2018) and more recently in the Ceres Burn. Committee notes that the Eden event has now been prosecuted whilst the Ceres event is still the subject of a live/current investigation by the Regulator SEPA. NEFAC is very aware of the concerns highlighted by local people and organisations whose activities involve the use of these water courses such as the Eden Angling Association. In addition NEFAC highlights the fact that Fife Council, through its Biodiversity Action Plan, articulates the importance of our water course ecosystem by stating that: it provides us with clean water, helps to moderate floods, store large amounts of carbon, provide water during droughts and maintain river flows. Furthermore, it states the following objective to: "Maintain and where possible improve the health of freshwater and wetland ecosystems." What has occurred within the Cupar Ward over the past few years has reinforced the view that the proactive protection of our water courses should receive a much higher level of attention. NEFAC therefore resolves to seek a report from Fife Council Environmental Services and SEPA, to a future committee on the Eden contamination incident.

#### **Decision**

The Committee agreed unanimously with the terms of the Motion as detailed.

### 359. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment advising of action taken using the List of Officer Powers in relation to property transactions.

#### **Decision**

The Committee:-

- (1) noted the content of the report; and
- (2) requested a briefing note from Property Services (Estates) providing further information on the acquisition of Burnside Cottage, High Street, Freuchie, including its intended used.

### 360. NORTH EAST FIFE AREA COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Forward Work Programme for the North East Fife Area Committee.

#### **Decision/**

**Decision**

The Committee:-

- (1) noted the current Forward Work Programme which would be updated as appropriate; and
- (2) requested a report to a future meeting of this Committee on –
  - Further Options for Strathkinness Crossroads (para. 350 (3) above refers);
  - Green Routes – Update (para. 352 above refers);
  - Home Care Service, North East Fife (para. 357 above refers) (next meeting); and
  - Eden Contamination Incident (para. 358 above refers).

**361. PUBLIC QUESTION**

A question was submitted (in terms of Standing Order No. 6.1) by Mr Stuart Bridges, resident of East Neuk. In the absence of Mr Bridges, the Convener read out the question and supplementary points were then addressed by the Convener and the Service Manager, Planning - Policy and Place.

**Question**

'As a resident within the East Neuk, I would like to raise a question with the North East Fife Area Committee in relation to the consideration of a new Scottish National Park here in the East Neuk (and Landward). I believe this would be an important recognition for this area; enhance environmental and heritage management and provide positive socio-economic benefit to the various communities within the East Neuk. Can I therefore ask at the upcoming meeting, if the committee can request Fife Council officials to prepare an exploratory report into this proposal?'

**Response**

'Scotland has only one **statutory** landscape designation – National Parks. National Parks are designated **by Scottish Government** following a process set by the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The four purposes of National Parks in Scotland are to:

- conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage,
- promote sustainable use of the natural resources,
- promote understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities, and
- promote sustainable social and economic development of the area's communities

Scottish Park Authorities are required to pursue these aims in a collective and coordinated way and have a wider range of powers to achieve this. If conflict arises between these aims the legislation gives priority to conservation.

National/

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National Parks bring many environmental, social and economic benefits to local residents, to visitors and to Scotland as a whole. They provide a clear focus on a particular place, mechanisms to stimulate and co-ordinate positive conservation management and additional resources to reflect its importance to the nation. They benefit from an agreed plan designed to safeguard the area's special qualities for future generations whilst managing tourism, transport, energy, agriculture, forestry and fishing in integrated and positive ways. National Parks supplement and add value to existing designations rather than duplicate or replace them. The designation is permanent; where other arrangements may come and go, National Parks are rarely abolished.

There are currently two National Parks in Scotland: Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, and the Cairngorms. These areas have their own plans and are managed by appointed National Park authorities.

Scotland is currently looking to designate the UK's first Coastal and Marine National Park, which would provide protection for marine species and habitats. The Scottish Government with Naturescot is considering five possible locations - Argyll Islands and Coast; North Skye Coast and Wester Ross: Solway Firth; Ardnamurchan, Small Isles and South Skye Coast; and North Uist, Sound of Harris, Harris and South Lewis. The Isle of Harris was rejected as national park in 2011. North East Fife was not considered for designation as part of the work on the Coastal and Marine National Park. The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland and the Scottish Campaign for National Parks (SCNP) are actively campaigning for Scottish Government to designate more National Parks. They published 'Unfinished Business – A National Parks Strategy for Scotland' in 2013 – this report suggests an additional seven areas for national park designation. North East Fife is not one of the seven areas being promoted by APRS and SCNP<sup>1</sup>.

Other areas are also being promoted as Scotland's third National Park; for instance the potential for a Galloway National Park was raised and debated in the Scottish Parliament in February of this year.

There are currently landscape, natural and built heritage designations covering many parts of NE Fife. Planning policy through National Planning Framework and Scottish Planning Policy and FIFEplan, the Local Development Plan set out policy frameworks to enhance and protect particularly those designated areas.

<sup>1</sup> No part of Fife was considered and very little of the east coast - most of the areas being looked at are to the west and north.'

### **Decision**

The Committee:-

- (1) acknowledged the Public Question and the Service's response; and
- (2) requested a briefing on the process if the East Neuk (and Landward) was to be designated by the Scottish Government as a National Park - as set by the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 - including any implications for the landscape, natural and built heritage designations currently covering parts of North East Fife.