

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

18th August, 2021

2.00 p.m. – 4.45 p.m.

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

ATTENDING: Vicki Connor, Co-ordinator (Programme and Financial Management), Keith Johnston, Technician Engineer - Traffic Management (South Fife), Ian Jones, Lead Consultant, Network Management, Assets Transportation and Environment, Roads and Transportation Services; Gary Daniell, Team Manager (Community Development), Sarah Roxburgh, Community Manager (Cowdenbeath Area), Communities and Neighbourhoods; David Thomson, Customer Experience Lead Officer / SPSO Liaison Officer, Customer and Online Services; Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

ALSO ATTENDING: Tom Ewing, Cowden in the Community, (Central Park Community Trust).

Prior to the commencement of the formal Committee business, Councillor Erskine extended her thanks to Lorraine Mullen and her team for their invaluable work within the Lochgelly area and commended her on receiving a medal from the Lord Lieutenant.

235. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

236. MINUTE OF COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE OF 16TH JUNE, 2021

The Committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 16th June, 2021.

Decision

The Committee agreed to approve the minute.

237. PRESENTATION - THE CENTRAL PARK COMMUNITY TRUST

The Committee considered a presentation by Mr Tom Ewing (Central Park Community Trust) relating to Cowden in the Community.

Decision

The Committee welcomed and noted the presentation and thanked Mr Ewing for his contribution within the local area.

238./

238. PROPOSED ROAD ADOPTIONS - COWDENBEATH

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment seeking approval to promote the adoption of a section of carriageway and some footpaths at Johnston Park, Cowdenbeath.

Decision

The Committee agreed to the promotion of the adoption under Section 1 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

239. AREA ROADS PROGRAMME 2020-21 - FINAL REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment advising members on the delivery of the 2020-21 Area Roads Programme (ARP) for the Cowdenbeath Area.

Decision

The Committee noted and commented on the contents of the report.

240. OBJECTIONS TO SPEED CUSHIONS – B981 CARDENDEN ROAD, CLUNY

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment asking members to consider the objections to the proposed speed cushions on the B981, Cardenden, Cluny.

Decision

The Committee: -

1. refused the recommendation contained in the report, to set aside the objections, allowing officers to proceed with the construction of the proposed traffic calming measures;
2. requested that officers undertake further consultations with ward Councillors and residents to consider other traffic calming options available; and
3. noted that a report detailing further options would to brought back to committee for consideration.

241. COMPLAINTS UPDATE

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Communities which provided members with an overview of complaints received for the year from 1 April, 2020 to 31 March, 2021, for the Cowdenbeath area.

Decision

The Committee noted the service response statistics and improvements made in relation to complaints for the Cowdenbeath area as detailed in the report.

242./

242. CHRISTMAS 2020 AND EASTER 2021 HOLIDAY PROVISION – CAFÉ INC TO GO

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods which provided members with a summary of the Cafe Inc To Go provision during the Christmas Holidays 2020 and the Easter Holidays 2021 for the Cowdenbeath area.

Decision

The Committee noted and commented on the contents of the report.

243. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment advising members of action taken using the list of officer powers in relation to property transactions.

Decision

The Committee noted the content of the report.

244. COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Decision

The Committee noted the draft forward work programme for the Cowdenbeath area Committee.

245. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questions were submitted (in terms of Standing Order No 6.1.) by Mr Tom Kinnaird, resident of Benarty.

Question 1

Following the conclusion of the Glenraig/Lochgelly boundary campaign, and an agreement of where Lochgelly ends and Glenraig begins, I requested that the Glenraig and Lochgelly signposts be relocated to reflect the decision. I was told that this would be done when resources became available. Can we look forward to these signs being moved to their new locations soon?

Response

We note the changes to the Community Council Boundaries between Glenraig and Lochgelly. However, as the settlement boundaries have not changed, we will not be making any changes to the settlement signage.

Question 2./

Question 2

At the inaugural meeting of the Friends of Lochore Meadows (FOLM) back in 2018, the then Cowdenbeath Area Manager Kevin Sayer was asked if the available park funding pot of £750'000 had been allocated to projects in the park, and answered that it had not and that it was available to be spent on whichever projects the new board saw fit and that additional match funding could be sought in order to make the funding go much further. That triggered discussion and it was agreed that public consultations would be required in order to validate suggestions around which projects were favoured by the surrounding local communities.

Only two public consultations were carried out however, the Benarty Matters Facebook Poll, and later, the FOLM carried out a park visitor survey. The results of those are on file for anyone who wishes to see them, but for the sake of brevity, the top 5 suggestions in each were as follows;

Benarty Matters Facebook Poll

1. New inclusive play areas
2. Camping and caravan facilities
3. Fishing piers and a trout hatchery
4. Extend the beach
5. Refurbishment of the Mary Pit Monument

FOLM Visitor Survey

1. Improve the café
2. Improve the playpark
3. Provide more water sports
4. Provide additional toilets outside
5. Bring back fishing, restock and offer child fishing tuition.

These are all good suggestions and as you can see, there are two suggestions in the top 5 of each set of results which are similar, the play area modernisation and the request to restore the trout fishing. Bearing that in mind then, and the fact that the Cowdenbeath Area Committee hold the power of veto over any decisions the FOLM group makes, can the Committee explain why they took the decision not to break up the funding into smaller seeding packets and seek match funding for each project and instead blow the lot in one go by allocating £500'000 to the play park and £250'000 to an external organisation in order to fund an extension to the new Lochore Meadows Golf Clubhouse?

Response

The play experience will incorporate inclusive play equipment to enhance the offer as a destination venue. This will complement the Visitor Centre which already has an extensive café offer and high-quality toilet facilities servicing the customer experience at Lochore Meadows County Park (LMCP). It is noted that LMCP has attracted increased visitor number over the last few years, and this also highlights the importance of having high quality outdoor destination venues.

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The play experience is a key component to this, and the design and development of the facility has to meet this aspiration, incorporating inclusive play equipment for children with specific complex needs. This has to be a priority to ensure the sustainability of the facility and will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of children and contribute to the local economy by attracting a customer base from a wider geographical area.

Developing such a project is complex and will require significant funds to deliver. £500K has been allocated to the project which will hopefully attract external match funding. NHS Fife and Friends of Lochore Meadows (FoLM) will consider funding applications for the project. The final design of the project will be shared for on-site consultation to allow for community and customer feedback on the scheme before finalising with key stakeholders such as FoLM and the NHS.

Smaller projects

To allocate the funding to many small projects will not have the same impact as an investment in a larger project the latter of which will be more high profile. The capital allocation cannot be used for revenue projects such as restocking the loch for trout fishing, providing water sports & tuition programmes. These are development programmes and should be discussed with the respective departments and partners.

Other projects (£250k)

As far as we are aware, there is no specific project allocated to utilise this funding and it will be for the Cowdenbeath Area to decide on how best to use the funding.

Decision

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