

**STONEHAVEN TOWN PARTNERSHIP
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2013 at 7.00pm
AT THE INVERCARRON RESOURCE CENTRE**

	Item	Action
1	<p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</p> <p>Present: Douglas Samways (DS) Michelle Ward (MW) Wynne Edwards (WE) Alan McConachie (AM) Cllr Raymond Christie (RC) Cllr Graeme Clark (GC)</p> <p>Apologies: David Fleming (DF) John Robson (JR) Allan Sutherland (AS)</p> <p>In attendance: Charles H Sands (CS) Alan Newton, Mitch McKay</p>	
2	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (27 August 2013)</p> <p>The Minutes were proposed by WE and seconded by JR at the October meeting.</p>	
3	<p>MATTERS ARISING - PROGRESS ON TOWN HOUSE / CLIFF PATH (Brian Watt, Aberdeenshire Council)</p> <p>Brian Watt advised that work is starting on the Town House. It had been delayed by a last minute asbestos survey. Muirfield Construction – who are carrying on work at the St Leonards – will be moving scaffolding there this week. A compound will be sited at the widest part of High Street. The externals completion date is set for 6 December, and it is thought if necessary they can put extra staff on to make sure the work is done for Hogmanay.</p> <p>The internals are being dealt with by Dave Schumann – conservation architect. Construction of a staircase would take up too much space, so there will be only a ground floor. The stone cisterns can be removed giving reasonable display space on ground floor. The internal work will be done between January and March, and will probably consist of a fireballs and clock tower interpretation.</p> <p>There will be an external sound system. There is a possibility of the clock chiming (10am to 5pm?) but consultation will be needed. They will look at upgrading the webcams. The external costs are lower than expected so more might be available for internals. Brian Watt will give details of the proposed internals to a later meeting.</p> <p>In answer to questions, Mr Watt confirmed that the internal floor space would be about 10x10 ft. Raymond Milne or the Tolbooth group can maybe be involved in the arrangements. The intention is that it is unmanned with CCTV security. A video and fly-through will let people see the construction etc. Listed building consent will be required for internals.</p> <p>The external stonework is being picked and pointed and the stone cleaned. The tower is being stripped out, re-slatted and re-leaded, but there will be no visual difference. A wooden beam is rotten and is being replaced. There is a lead gully but no drainage system, so when the gully is repaired water will hopefully discharge where intended.</p>	

The dummy windows can be discussed when public views and suggestions are being sought.

There will be a ladder, so access for filming the fireballs is possible and it may even be safer than at the moment. There will be no restriction on access for filming this Hogmanay. Any hold up in listed building consent won't be a problem for getting the externals done.

DUNNOTTAR PATH

Two diversions have been agreed with Dunecht Estates. Planning permission (retrospective) has now been applied for, and is expected to be dealt with at the October or November area committee meeting. The specification for surfacing is now done and quotes can be sought as soon as planning is approved. The work will take 10-14 days so the path should be back to its previous glory this year.

A consultant is looking at the path from Stonehaven to St Cyrus in the longer term. The existing path is not suitable for mountain bikes (too close to the edge of the cliff), so it can't really be fully multi-user.

In answer to questions on costs, Mr Watt advised that the consultants are to cost it all, then we can prioritise and look for external funding. It is hoped that SusTrans might fund part of it.

The coastal path North of Cowie has not been touched due to lack of funds. It may not look too bad but there is a 15m fracture that could go anytime. More and more people are using it, and the signs are sometimes being removed. Landscape Services are putting the signs back whenever they can – and are making regular visits. Subject to funding, the work might be carried out next spring. But this depends if the bank is secure above the fracture of the existing path. Coastal Defences would also need to have repaired the breakwater – the Council will need to speak to them to agree the timing of the work.

Brian Watt might come back to the STP at the end of October for views on internals (although there is not a great deal that can really be done.)

In answer to further questions regarding the Town House, Mr Watt confirmed that the original door was being repaired and kept. The barometer is being put back. Floodlighting will be in place and there will be facilities for Christmas lights too.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING:

BERVIE BRAES / VISITORS SURVEY

Mark Kummerer's deadline was a couple of days ago so feedback is being analysed.

The Bervie Braes Road is to be closed from November to April and then the Council will look at various figures before another report sometime a few months after closure. GC has asked when it will come before committee, but there is no date yet.

DS thought we had a good idea of what people will say – in line with expectations – and there are 400+ cars a day using the road.

Although FB was not present, his feedback about road signs was that we want the Dunnottar Castle sign moved to opposite new car park entrance/exit.

HEALTH CHECK

Health Check – DS will meet with Kevin McDermott at 2pm Thursday in Aberdeen.

COURT

WE said he was struggling to find organisations interesting in the Court building (other than for flats). It would be preferable if it were a hotel, or business units. We

	<p>don't know how much influence we could have on the Court Service who would presumably want to sell for as much as they can. We don't know if there is a process for the council to indicate preferred options for planning. The flat developers remain the most likely highest bidders.</p> <p>RC said that a community group was hoping to take over Court in Dornoch. WE thought we were not sure of local funding for an organisation to take it on, and we had no idea of price. WE will continue to feed back any information he has. GC asked if WE had spoken to Robert Armstrong at the Council. WE said he is going to speak to him about this (and other things).</p> <p>OAITS DF had sent letters to members for support for OAITS</p> <p>PFR DF had sent out a collated version of the Pfr document for feedback and was chasing for responses.</p> <p>COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER SUB-GROUP DS, AS, MW, Alan Bisset and David Dobie had collated information from questionnaires. Initial findings suggest the Council policy is flexible enough – and the guidelines pretty helpful – but recommendations for community groups getting involved in asset transfer are needed. This will have to be looked at again before or at the AGM. It is hoped that the report might be made available through the council to other groups involved in community asset transfers.</p> <p>SCIO The SCIO year end has to be 31 March. An Accountants Report is needed to progress this as OSCR need this.</p>	WE
4	<p>FINANCE – REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE (MW) MW presented the draft statutory accounts, and gave details of the income breakdown (Aberdeenshire council £44k, Caravan Club rent £3k, and various Tolbooth income items as detailed.) The biggest expense was for wages for the caravan park wardens, and small amounts for development worker (who has now left)</p> <p>STP cost of legal fees £5k (net) relates to the caravan park asset transfer.</p>	
5	<p>COMMUNICATION – REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATION (WE)</p> <p>WE now had an invoice for hosting & domain renewal. There had been issues with the website, but these were now resolved.</p> <p>There is a "Directors Box" – and we must start to make use of it. It is straightforward, there is secure access, and it is a good forum for us to use. If you download and update documents, remember to update the version number. We need to get directors to start to use and trust it.</p> <p>Newsletter. WE has a number of items for newsletter, which will help to get STP's work recognised. It is suggested we do one every 2 months – as we are not ready for monthly issues. This needs the support of directors and member organisations. WE is to invite members to submit content. Also directors (particularly those leading projects) will need to prepare an update (which ties in with monthly Mearns Leader updates.) Bear in mind it has to be written as news to get coverage.</p> <p>The home page of the website now has a subscription button.</p>	<p>Everyone</p> <p>Everyone</p>

6	<p>STRATEGY -REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY (DS) DS has not had project reports from everyone. Once he has them, everyone will get a copy. The deadline for this is 3 weeks from today (15 October).</p>	Everyone
7	<p>BUSINESS PLAN ITEMS</p>	
	<p>QUEEN ELIZABETH CARAVAN PARK The caravan park has been full virtually every night. As far as the embankment is concerned, feedback from the Caravan Club suggests this is being resolved slowly, and in due course that will maybe lead to an increase in the number of tent spaces. There is also progress on a proposed dog walking area.</p> <p>On the proposed planting – the Caravan Club has responded with suggestions which might also save money.</p>	
	<p>OPEN AIR IN THE SQUARE The police have said they will work with the OAITS committee – so it is all go. A deficit is still predicted and sponsorship is crucial to the success of the event.</p>	MW
	<p>ALL WEATHER FACILITY</p> <p>Consultation is taking place this week at the leisure centre. There are leaflets for comments and members of the All Weather Surface committee are there – it is reasonably busy. The next step is a presentation at the Community Council on 8th October.</p> <p>The Community Council are then to progress the planning application on behalf of the All Weather Surface Committee – and they have agreed to provide limited costs too. Once the planning application is approved, it will go out to tender. An application for match funding will be made to Sport Scotland. Doubling the amount would give a really good facility, but even without that something should be possible. Total, Shell, Talisman, and Nexen might all advertise...</p> <p>Council money has to be allocated by the end of March, so the plans need to be passed and out to tender by then.</p>	
	<p>TOWN HOUSE / CLOCK TOWER Already covered above</p>	
	<p>LAND TRAIN MW advised the she had received an email from Rachel at the Leader. Her response was that the train was NEVER too heavy for the Braes. There was a delay whilst waiting on the coach parking space, which went in on 16 July. A temporary order in place – for 16 weeks from 1 August, and it seemed that would suffice.</p> <p>The weight limit is supposed to be 3 tonnes. However the sign says the limit is 2 tonnes, not 3. The train is 1800kg. The sponsors and drivers are in place but even if the train could now run do we actually want a train in October? When April comes we will have to start over. To go to all that work just for it to be shelved was disappointing. MW said it was an Email from Mark Skilling that killed it, but a lot of stuff is still in place. The train can be ordered and set aside, but the coach parking is only temporary. Councillors RC and GC said they would support an extension of the coach parking area. GC suggested that Mark Skilling should be told the problems, and it was also suggested that he be invited to the next meeting.</p> <p>There was a Facebook debate about the bus stop, and one suggestion was to limit it to certain hours of the day. There is also a parking consultation going on until the end of October. The train was a novelty. MW said she was not inclined to take the train project forward next year.</p>	MW/DS

	<p>IMPROVING OUR TOWN CENTRE</p> <p>No report</p>	
	<p>GAS WORKS CAR PARK</p> <p>MW said on 21 August she received an email saying we can have the car park with immediate use. Since then she has had no response to 4 emails to the Council and the opportunity is slipping away. MW and DS will put an offer forward.</p> <p>At the moment the value of the car park is perhaps £50k and we have a chance to purchase it at that price. If the owners were to get planning permission, then the value might be £240k</p> <p>We can perhaps assign the caravan park income; the owners of the gas works site have said they will accept deferred consideration. The land is "industrial" now. If we have a plan in place, we can put in planning application for use as a car park. There are 2 gates, so through movement possible. There is quite a bit to do, but we have got first right of refusal. However they are on site now removing contamination. There was some discussion about raising funds and it was thought we could raise £50k but not £240k.</p> <p>DS asked whether planning permission could be refused. Andrew Newton thought it would be treated as just another application, but that it was for housing was not itself a reason to object.</p> <p>MW said we must lodge an application for change of use to get the discussion going. DS thought when the application goes in, there will be local interest. Then we could get back into negotiations with the owners.</p> <p>DS –asked RC & GC to raise the unanswered emails with Mark Skilling so that we could get a reply from him. They agreed to do so, but also suggested DS and MW spoke to the head planner for advice.</p> <p>The concern remained that whilst that is going on the owners were themselves pressing on with decontaminating the site with a view to going for their own planning application, and that we are losing the "first refusal" option.</p>	<p>MW & DS</p> <p>DS / MW</p>
	<p>PLANNING FOR REAL</p> <p>We are waiting for comments back from members.</p>	
	<p>MARINA</p> <p>Alan Sutherland suggested we talk about a "harbour development" instead of a Marina. A Lottery CCF funding application has been made, and they are looking at it in detail.</p>	
	<p>BERVIE BRAES ROAD</p> <p>This has already been covered above</p>	
8	<p>BUSINESS ITEMS</p>	
	<p>CONSTITUTION / SCIO APPLICATION</p> <p>DS advised that a second load of questions had been answered and we were waiting to hear further.</p>	
	<p>DISBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR QECPS INCOME</p> <p>There were funds that could be disbursed, but in view of the discussion about the Gas Works car park, it was agreed to leave them for now.</p>	

	<p>OAITs had asked if we would underwrite risk, and the answer was yes, a request for support would be welcomed.</p> <p>Initially we had intended to deal with disbursements ourselves, and then we planned to do so jointly with OAITs. We need to look at that again for the next meeting.</p>	Agenda
	<p>ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE AGM The AGM is scheduled for 26 November, with the usual agenda. The venue is the Invercarron Resource Centre (next door) with the same caterer as last year.</p> <p>It was agreed to approach the Caravan Club for a speaker (DS to approach Tony Barnett.) A possible alternative would be to approach OSCR for someone to talk on SCIOs and applying for that status.</p>	DS
11	<p>AOCB Community forum. An Email from Emma Kidd had confirmed there won't be one for Stonehaven. There will be one in North and one in South. The explanation not to hold one did say the appropriate forum would be developed at the appropriate time, but they wanted more time to get details of the community centre and who was using it.</p> <p>Proposed new rural partnership. There were meetings in May and June, with a further one scheduled for November. Membership is open to constituted groups from K&M. DS thought we should take an interest but he was not sure if we should take a seat. After discussion it was agreed we should indicate an interest and leave it at that.</p> <p>Information on Living Streets Scotland had been received.</p>	DS
12	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS 22 October 2013 26 November 2013 (AGM followed by directors meeting) No meeting in December 25 January 2014 (4th Tuesdays of the month)</p>	