

MINUTE OF MEETING

MID DEESIDE COMMUNITY TRUST – BOARD

17th February 2021 at 7.00 pm

Conference Call on Zoom

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| Present: | Alan Emslie (AE) (Chair), Johnathan Kitching (JK), Mark Mitchell (MM), Nadine Stuart (NS), Lynn Mackie (LM), Dave Marshall of MDCC (DM), Brian Rae (BR), Cllr Peter Argyle (PA), Richard Smout (RS), Duncan Cassie (DC), Kirsty McLean (KM), Garden Designer for Station Square (Guest) and Gail Amey (GA) (Minutes) |
| Apologies: | Wilson Forbes (WF) |
| 1. | Welcome and Approval of Minutes: Minutes of 20 th January 2020 were approved by MM and seconded by LM. |
| 2. | Accounts: GA put forward the quote from Grant Considine to audit the end of year accounts for 2020 for discussion. |
| 3. | Project Updates: Station Square Renovation Project The designer of the station square project was invited to speak to the Board to explain the changes to the design resulting from a meeting with Aberdeenshire Council and the time restraints on the project. Changes were made to the type of planters, central island and benches. Excavation work is not recommended at the north of the car park due to the location of drainage pipes and restricted elsewhere if there are utilities below. We will plan to conduct an ultrasound survey of the area to identify the underground utilities since Aberdeenshire Council do not have complete records. There have been reductions to benches and considerations to the type of planting to ensure greenery throughout the year using evergreens and structure by using larger plants. The use of large boulevard style pots would add structure and is a means to reduce excavation and future changes to the design. The bins, lights and benches would be painted to bring them together in a unified design. Two lease agreements were discussed the first being a full lease agreement of the area which would mean all liability would befall MDCT. There will be opportunities to close the area without permission required from the council and to make money from parking fees. Included within the first option would be the change to the location of the EV charging bays by moving them to the back of the building and the removal of the sign. The second option is a legal maintenance agreement for the changes MDCT proposes. MDCT will be responsible for the upkeep of the benches, planting and pots. Aberdeenshire Council will still clear the snow and mow the grass in the area and be responsible for the fabric of the area under the second agreement type. With this option the EV charging bays may be situated in the north area. Regardless of both options it was highlighted that the planted Christmas Tree in the central island could pose a problem due to concerns of root damage to the tarmac. The board however decided that the mitigations in place were sufficient and we should propose to keep the Christmas tree in the island. Discussions ensued as to the pros and cons of the lease options and the Board decided that Option 2 would be the preferred choice. The following points were recommended by the Board that bolted down benches are imperative, EV points |

are better suited to the back of the building, planters to be raised to reduce debris below and make them easier to clean around and the importance of a bicycle rack in the main square even at the expense of a parking space. NS informed the board that the pre-tender questionnaire is being compiled and the deadline to go live onto Open Procurement Scotland is the 1st March 2021. There are tight time constraints so due diligence will be made to ensure the chosen contractor can meet the skill set required and time deadlines. NS was tasked to go back to the council to discuss what was proposed in the meeting. KM then left the meeting.

Transport

The Dial-a-bus is continuing a 3-day service throughout lockdown following COVID guidelines. Community transport is non-operational, but we hope to resume when the schools return. Only three journeys have been required for the vaccination programme so far.

The Board discussed the unused operational grant that needs to be returned to ACTI on the 31st March 2021. GA has applied to various funders to get support for the deficit in the DCT accounts.

Woodlands

Not much to report due to large amount of snow and ice cover over the last month. AE stated that the MDCT is due to produce an update to the 2010 – 2030 woodland plans since the last one was in 2010. We will plan to apply for funding for this as well as other woodland projects such as path and road repairs and improved signage. The surplus of trees from recent planting within the Bell Wood will be used by Aboyne Paths & Tracks and Community Garden projects.

ABPA

Nothing to report.

Wheelers

A couple of funds have been targeted going forward.

Aboyne Paths Group

JK updated the Board on current projects. Fencing on the river bank upstream of the bridge and on the link path between the Men's Shed and the castle, will hopefully go in before the end of the month (Feb). The issues on the Low road seem to have quietened down. The bottom gate is now open (but now damaged from the flood). Positive discussions have started with the Aboyne Glen Tanar link path. Work on castle wood is on hold until face to face meetings can take place. Work parties are on hold.

Huntly Hotel

The project is now coming to the end of the feasibility study. DM advised that the final claim for payment can be made by presenting the invoice. No updates on new owners.

Aboyne FareShare

Two new volunteers have come forward to help with the project.

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| | <p>January has been a quiet month, with the weather affecting some collections. We are continuing to work with the groups already registered with us. In addition to this, we are working with the Rotary Club to deliver food parcels to families in need. At the moment this is very small scale, but may develop further. As indicated last month, we are now working with Aboyne Dinnet Church to provide food for the community. They have set up a food pantry in a shed next to the church in Huntly Road which is open seven days a week during daylight hours, and is free for anyone in need to use. It is early days, but it is hoped that this resource will be used by the whole community as a much-needed source of food in Aboyne.</p> <p>We are pleased to have been chosen as the recipient of St Thomas’s Church in Aboyne’s Lent Appeal. As well as using the money received to buy regular additional supplies, we are hoping to set up a similar event at Easter as the one at Christmas, offering food parcels (including Easter treats) for families and individuals in the area who are needing additional help. Easter Sunday is 4th April, so the event would be planned for the preceding week.</p> <p>Discussions with groups who are regularly collecting have indicated that there are certain food items they would welcome which we do not receive from FareShare, as well as toiletries and household items such as washing powder and cleaning sprays. As the grant received from Aberdeenshire Council’s Community Food Fund has to be used before 31st March, these funds are being used to buy in these goods, which are proving to be very popular.</p> <p>COVID-19 Support Support is ongoing we have now received over 1300 requests since March 2020.</p> <p>CPR Deeside Nothing to report.</p> <p>Community Garden RS is still encountering problems contacting the owner of the proposed site but has had an encouraging discussion with regards to another site. Aboyne Castle development will need further discussions with landowner. After a recce by DC to the site with RS a couple of days would be required to make the proposed improvements.</p> <p>H&W Nothing to report.</p> <p>Jubilee Fountain Nothing to report.</p> <p>Education No update.</p> |
| 4. | <p>A.O.B.:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New project - <i>Socially-Engaged Artist in Residency in the Village of Aboyne, An Open Art Studio for the Village and surrounding area.</i> Successful |

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| | <p>funding has brought £12k to the project with future proposals being prepared by AE.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Garden Group – it was proposed that a group of volunteers be found to care for the plants on completion of the Station Square Project. 3. Cross Community Group – due to Staycations in 2021 is was put forward that a cross community group including MDCT, rangers and local land owners get together to pre-empt problems arising from increased visitors to Aboyne and local areas. Problems may arise from a shortage of parking in the area, litter, or damage to landowner’s property such as fencing/paths. JK was tasked to orchestrate a group to devise a visitor management strategy in preparation for the summer. |
| | <p>Date of next meeting: The next meeting will take place on 17th March 2020 at 7pm via Zoom.</p> |

Date Approved**Chairman**