Kincardineshire Development Partnership

Kincardineshire Development Partnership
Board of Trustees Meeting – Thursday 20th February 2025 at 2pm
Community Room, Stonehaven Community Centre

Minutes

Present:
George Cruickshank – Newtonhill, Muchalls & Cammachmore Community Council
Bridget Scott – Bettridge Centre
Peter Flockhart – TRAK
Eeva-Kaisa Arter – Catterline, Kinneff & Dunnottar Community Council
Henning Wagner – Mill of Benholm Enterprise (arrived at 2.10pm)
Starkeeper Morton – The Haven (left meeting at 4pm)

Apologies:
Ian Hunter – Stonehaven & District Community Council

In Attendance:
Mairi Eddie – KDP Development Worker
Margo Titmuss – KDP Windfarm & Funding Officer
Kate Matthews – Save our Mearns (for part of meeting)
Brian Wade – Save our Mearns (for part of meeting)

1. Welcome
The Chair, George Cruickshank, welcomed all those present and thanked them for attending the first meeting of 2025.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes
The minutes of the formal meeting of 14th November 2024 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. They were proposed by Eeva-Kaisa Arter and seconded by Bridget Scott.

3. Matters Arising.
All outstanding matters arising to be covered under the agenda.

4. New Member Requests
New membership requests were received from Benholm & Johnshaven Horticultural Society, Mearns Youth Club, ADHD Adventures Ltd, Lethen Archers and Mearns Writers. All were approved unanimously.
A request was also received from Bervie Brow Research Station & Reserve Limited. As no Constitution/Articles were provided, it was agreed that this would be requested prior to a decision being made.

Mairi highlighted a potential discrepancy in the KDP Constitution with regards to membership of corporate bodies and unincorporated bodies.
Action - Mairi is to seek clarification and feedback to the Board.

5. Finance Update
The Finance Report and Cash Flow were shared in advance.
New projects are contributing in part to the running costs of KDP, and as a result, as it stands, there will still be funds available to pay for core costs into 2026.
Bridget stressed that the priority remains on filling the financial gap, and that it is essential that additional funding is sourced.
Henning suggested charging for KDP membership, which has historically been free. There was some discussion around this, and it was emphasised that many of our members are in a similar situation with regards to finances. The possibility of a tiered fee structure was mooted. Questions over how this would impact any future KDP funding requests and the effect on our members was discussed.
No decision was reached.

6. Save our Mearns Presentation
After a brief discussion at the November meeting about the potential of KDP being asked to manage additional windfarm Community Funds, the KDP Trustees were keen to understand more about the current energy infrastructure projects in the pipeline for Kincardine & Mearns, and the impact these might have on our communities.
Kate Matthews and Brian Wade of Save our Mearns joined the meeting to talk about how the largest of these projects: the Hurley substation and the Tealing to Kintore Pylons (TKUP), is affecting some of our communities. They also explained that if these projects are approved, it could open the gates to multiple applications for further developments for battery storage, solar farms, further windfarms, etc.
Kate & Brian explained to the Trustees the toll this is having on individuals and the wider community, and the growing realisation within communities of what may be ahead.
After Kate & Brian left the meeting, the trustees discussed how the proposed infrastructure projects may impact on KDP taking on new Community Fund projects, if asked.
Starkeeper suggested considering the Constitutional implications on whether KDP proceeds with additional Community Fund involvement.
It was discussed that any decision needs to consider what is the best thing for KDP.
It was agreed that the issue requires further discussion, and that a subgroup should be formed to move this forward.
Action – Margo to provide a copy of the Constitution to the Board.

7. KDP Development Officer Report

Mairi shared an update in advance. Main points being:

- KDP Funding – Area Committee has agreed a one-year extension to the SLA. The Rural Partnership Fund was cancelled due to Council cutbacks. An application has been submitted to the Foyle Foundation. A new Lottery Fund has been announced which aligns well with KDP's view for the future. Mairi is going to discuss with Suki Mills of the Lottery.
- Community Planning - Successful bid to carry out a food access project, which will be led by Julie Gray, with KDP administering the £4000 fund. Transport project very likely to go ahead, and KDP will need to take on a Development Worker for the duration of the project.
- Growing Network – very successful 'Community Fruit Growing and Orchard Maintenance' workshop, with 12 gardening groups represented. Network is working together to ensure community plant displays continue, despite Council removing funding.
- KDP Member Questionnaire – see Agenda item 10.
- Bervie Strollers – group continues to meet regularly and more walkers joining. Taster sessions arranged to try new activities eg. dance, tai chi and seated yoga.
- Coming Up – potential involvement with the Hutton Institute to advise on community engagement. Planning for Climate Adaptation workshops. Potential Third Sector Forum.

7. Windfarm Update

Hillhead of Auquhirie - reopens on 1st April 2025. Application process is now online.

Meikle Carewe - reopens on 1st July 2025.

St John's Hill - currently open until 31st March 2025. No applications to date, but this is not unusual. Applications often arrive just before or on the closing date. Application process is now online.

Tullo & Twinshiels – Bridget attended panel meeting. Only 19 applications received, and 12 awarded funds. Bridget has been invited to a meeting to discuss criteria and was asked to share her points for discussion in advance. Email sent to the administrator detailing our concerns with some of the criteria; specifically supporting projects within the area of benefit, regardless of whether the groups have an office in the area, and clarifying the criteria regarding statutory funding.

9. Community Led Tourism
Introduced by Henning, who would like KDP to consider facilitating a network for Community Led Tourism.
He explained that there are many groups running tourist activities in South Aberdeenshire who are receiving limited support. A network would bring the groups together to support one another.
Action – Henning to produce a discussion document to share with the Board, for further discussion at the next meeting.
Action – Margo to investigate funding options.

10. KDP Member Questionnaire
A questionnaire was produced and shared with the KDP Membership. The aim of the form was to better understand what we are doing now that groups find useful, the gaps we may be missing, and where we should be concentrating our efforts in the future.
We received a remarkable 38 replies, which contained very positive feedback. This will be used to inform the future KDP Strategic Plan.
A summary of the responses was shared with the Trustees at the meeting.
As an incentive to participate, a £100 prize was offered to one of the groups participating, in a name out of a hat process. The winner, Kinneff & Catterline Parish Hall, was chosen at the meeting.
Action – Margo to advise Kinneff & Catterline Parish Hall that they were the winners and transfer the £100 to their account.

11. AOCB
None

12. Date of Next Meeting
The next meeting will be on Thursday 17th April at 6.30pm. The venue will be Mill of Benholm.

The meeting closed at 4.50pm.

Minutes taken by Margo Titmuss

I, GEORGE CRUICKSHANK hereby confirm these minutes reflect a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed: _____ Date: 21.04.25