 BO’NESS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2022**

**Conducted via Digital Media**

1. **Welcome**

Madelene welcomed everyone to the meeting. She asked that we respect each other and agree to disagree. We should not talk over each other and should put up hand if you want to speak.

**Sederunt**

Madelene Hunt (Convenor), Siobhan Samson (Vice Convenor), Brian Laird, Austin Reid, Robyn Adamson, Stuart McAllister, Val Spowart, Len Ainslie, Wendy Turner

**In attendance**: Lynn Munro, David Aitchison, Adrian Mahoney

Madelene Hunt asked that Wendy Turner be added to the info@email. so she can support with correspondence.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Gaele McFarlane, Stephen Baird, Owen Griffiths (Vice Convener)

1. **Presentation by Forth Environmental Link**

Jules Ryan of Forth Environmental Link gave a short presentation on her 20-minute neighbourhood project. Covid has impacted on her ability to hold face to face meetings but she has sent out an electronic questionnaire and has undertaken pop-up in the Town and Library. She also hosted a film and pizza night. She has been working with Falkirk Delivers, local businesses and the Community Clean Up group. The Project will be completed by the end of April 2022. She has received 90 questionnaires but ideally would like 100 or more. Madelene Hunt commented that having a 20-minute community is challenging in Bo’ness due to the hills and location of local schools. Jules explained that the Project is more about Active Living rather than a strict 20-minute community. From the questionnaires received so far people are asking for more variety of shops in the Town Centre and the Library to be used as a community hub. Madelene Hunt commented that having someone from the Housing Department in the Library would be helpful. Jules agreed to feed this back. Lynn Munro asked where her report would be delivered and Jules Ryan confirmed it would go to Falkirk Council. Lynn Munro said that Bo’ness is now seen very much as a commuter town and many opportunities are going to Linlithgow and Grangemouth rather than Bo’ness. Siobhan Samson said she didn’t believe the Library was large enough to be a hub for the Town as it would need to contain the One Stop Shop, Banks, Post Office and Job Centre – all of which have been lost from the town centre. She explained that the Town Hall would be a more suitable place for these services. Jules Ryan asked that anyone with comments can email her. Madelene Hunt noted that the questionnaire is available in the library.

1. **Minutes of the 9th February 2022 Meeting**

Approved by the meeting attendees.

1. **Matters Arising**

Town Hall roads – Madelene Hunt reported that pot holes at the Town Hall have been filled in.

Cemetery – Councillor Aitchison reported that the pot holes at the Dundas Street entrance have been filled in.

Library Project – Madelene Hunt reported that work at the Library will begin in July. There is no news on the fate of the Butcher’s Shop in North Street.

Champany Inn junction – Councillor Munro reported that the Champany junction is on the capital projects list. The challenge is slowing traffic coming from the M9 and the lack of lighting at the junction.

Whale Trail – no progress to date. Agreed to leave it to the next meeting.

Community Fridge Project – Austin reported that he had visited the Falkirk Fridge but it wasn’t clear how much use was being made of it. However, he believes this could work in Bo’ness.

1. **Reports**

Siobhan Samson reported on the Fuel Hardship Payment. This does not appear to be on the Falkirk Council website. Councillor Aitchison agreed to follow this up and will ask that this be drawn to the attention of the people of Bo’ness. Councillor Munro reported that the information she had received was about the Homeheat Support Project. Val Spowart reported that Falkirk Salvation Army is advertising the heating information.

1. **Correspondence**

Madelene Hunt had received an invitation to the opening of the new Exhibition Centre at SRPS.

Madelene Hunt had received a letter asking about promoting a business – Batman Vehicle – asking for permission to park in the town centre. Councillor Munro reported that he can come and take photos and this might be an opportunity to promote the town.

Siobhan Samson reported that she is not receiving emails from the info@ email address.

1. **Falkirk Council Budget Meeting**

Madelene Hunt reported that due to Brian Pirie having Covid the invitation to the Budget Consultation meeting did not go out before the end of the year. The invitation therefore arrived so late many people were not able to attend. Information on the number of people who attended should be sought. Councillor Munro reported that she had asked for details at the Executive meeting but it seemed clear the consultation had not really achieved anything.

Siobhan Samson reported on the 13th January meeting and said that not many were asking questions. Siobhan Samson believes that the Council have already made decisions about cost cutting. Councillor Munro reported that there will be a last-minute debate on the Budget. The challenge is lack of funding and wages have outstripped funds available. Either staff or services have to be cut. However, there is a reluctance to raise Council Tax. Siobhan Samson said the only facilities being discussed are in Bo’ness. Councillor Munro reported that details of these facilities had been leaked and this needs to be resolved. Siobhan Samson commented that there are only 3 Councillors to fight to minimise the cuts to Bo’ness. Madelene Hunt reported that the Budget meeting is on 2nd March but it is unlikely that we will know what the cuts will be until after the election. Councillor Munro reported that the Falkirk Community Trust (FCT) cuts were leaked but confirmed that FCT will cease to exist. The Strategic Property Review has not been reported to the Executive Committee. Councillor Munro reported that Malcolm Binnie (Douglas Duff’s replacement) is keen on Bo’ness but has not visited yet. Councillor Munro reminded the meeting that all departments have savings documents. The FCT list had been withdrawn due to it being closed down. She reported that buildings in Bo’ness will be moved to other departments. Councillor Aitchison reported that the consultation wasn’t very well done and that the public were not told the full story. FCT coming back in-house will be costly - £1m will need to be found annually to replace the rate relief. Val Spowart attended a Falkirk consultation meeting where a new Town Hall was being discussed. There were only three members of the public there.

1. **Mclaren Trophy**

Nominations had been received before the meeting for Bloomin Bo’ness and Bo’ness Community Clean Up Group. Robyn Adamson nominated Bo’ness Community Football Club. Madelene Hunt asked Wendy Turner to send out these three nominations and to ask for everyone to vote. Wendy Turner will collate the votes and report to Madelene Hunt. AT the end of the meeting Lennox Ainslie nominated Bo’ness Community Hospital but as this was not a charity ot an individual it was agreed not to put this forward to the vote.

1. **AOCB**

Madelene Hunt reported on her last visit to the Hippodrome that had been less than successful. A large queue was created by the new coffee machines and the Box Office appeared to be badly managed with attendees only able to pay by card as no cash was available. Councillor Munro agreed to report this back to Falkirk Council.

Councillor Munro asked about plans for the Queen’s Platinum Anniversary. Madelene Hunt suggested that Bo’net could bring this together with the possibility of a marquee at Kinneil House for a community afternoon tea. Bloomin Bo’ness are also planning a Jubilee Garden. Adrian Mahoney reported that funding is available from the Eden Project. Val Spowart reported that Churches Together will be running a tree-planting project.

Adrian Mahoney joined the meeting to report on the twinning project. Bowness and Solway Parish Council are keen to progress this. This will be put on the agenda for the March meeting

Madelene Hunt will again request a meeting with Brian Pirie.

**The date of our next meeting is Wednesday 9th March 2022 at 7pm on Zoom**

**PLEASE NOTE this will be a Zoom Meeting not an in-person meeting as previously noted.**