

**MINUTES OF TORRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20TH MARCH 2024
AT GREYHOPE SCHOOL & COMMUNITY HUB, TULLOS CIRCLE, ABERDEEN, AB11 8HD.**

OPENING REMARK:

The Chair opened the meeting by greeting and welcoming every attendee to the meeting.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies were noted for the following persons:

1. Lee Fairful - (Elected Councilor, Torry/Ferryhill): Currently on maternity leave
2. Michael Kusznir (Elected Councilor, Torry/Ferryhill): Absent due migraine.
3. Bety Lyon (Member, TCC): Unwell

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING & AGM

In the absence of any correction/addition/amendment, the minutes of meeting and AGM of 21st February 2024 was adopted as follows:

- R. MacLoud moved motion for adoption of the minutes
- D. Reid seconded the motion to have the minutes adopted

REPORTS:

Police: Police Report was already circulated on all relevant media and there were neither questions nor objections to it by anyone, prior and during the meeting.

Simon Watson: Clr. Watson began his report y informing TCC that the ACC Budget has been passed. He highlighted the freeze (zero increase) on Council Tax and mentioned projection of about £11M less in budget next year, £7M to be taken from reserve, He also decried tens of millions being allocated to Beach Project despite opposition to it. He concluded his report by reassuring Torry people of his willingness to listen to their questions regarding properties affected by RAAC adding that the impact in has on the community need to be considered.

Christian Allard: Clr. Allard started his report by sharing some of the highlights from Torry Locality Planning meeting which include some good questions that were asked by different categories of people concerned about the RAAC issue. He mentioned that E/M earmarked funds to support people across the city, pointing that TLP is ably representing Torry there. He concluded his report by pointing that the beach project would provide opportunities for families to enjoy at no cost.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON THE REPORTS

Questions:

The following questions were asked by the attendees:

1. Since the first letter in November, there has not been any support till date, why the support now that you want to eject people from their homes? Asked by a resident, name not noted
2. Where do you plan to move people to? Why was I deceived into taking a mortgage for a property that is 'faulty'? Asked by resident, Mr Yelmas
3. The homeowners of properties affected by RAAC have had neither update nor a contact to call. We're too old to get a mortgage now. Asked by resident-Mr. MacLoud
4. Can you honestly tell the community whether or not this has anything to do with South Harbour Development? By a resident, name not noted

5. The affected houses were sold to people in good faith. So, why are all these happening to Torry? We'll fight back! Asked by Linda H., (close to tears)
6. Keeping people's mental health hanging for 6 months is not fair. Comment made by a resident (name not noted)
7. Can the ACC be sued if they can't treat the issue of properties affected by RAAC like product recall?

Answers:

In an attempt to provide answers to the questions, Cllr. Allard answered as follows:

1. The time lapse can be explained. After the first letter in November was explanatory. Inspection & Risk Assessment followed till December, and then Special Committee meetings till February.
2. Regarding the question about where people will be moved to, I will come back with an answer later.
3. One-one-one consultation with people affected has been on-going since January to February. If there's anyone who has not received any letter at all, s/he should contact me immediately.
4. On the question about mortgage and homeowners, ACC is unable to legally respond to homeowners and that's why the UK and Scottish governments are being reached-out to.
5. Simon Watson confirmed that UK and Scottish governments are being approached, adding that being in opposition can be quite tricky in situations like this.
6. On the question as to whether there is any link between the RAAC issue and South Harbour Development, The CFO of PoA who was in attendance clearly stated that it has nothing to do with RAAC.

Reacting to the PoA's response to the suspicion of a link between RAAC and Harbour development, Simon Maclean, presented a pictorial fact that points out possibility of an initial plan to move people away from Balnagask area, adding that efforts are being made to substantiate it with facts, expressing wish that elected officers could be made to defend the facts under oath based on a legislative article he (Simon McLean) cited.

C. Allard, however maintained that population is always changing.

The Q & A session was concluded with an announcement of a proposed meeting/forum scheduled to hold on 24th March at White Cockade. Time is 6pm and all are invited.

Wrapping up the session, the Chair urged elected Councilors to always put politics aside and working together for the common good of Torry Community. He concluded by asking the following questions on behalf of Torry:

1. If ACC truly bought back a property affected by RAAC recently as alleged by a resident at this meeting, why would the Council buy back a property they claim not to be good for habitation?
2. Supposing the resident's buy-back claim is anything to go by, will it not make sense for the Council to buy back all the 'defective properties' they sold to unsuspecting homeowners in good faith?
3. Supposing the claim by the seller, that the affected properties are no longer safe for their owners to inhabit, will it not be morally expected of the seller, to treat the 'unsafe properties' as defective products and recall them immediately at no cost/negative impact to the unsuspecting buyer?
4. Do you believe it is fair and morally sensible for ACC to on one hand claim that they cannot legally respond to homeowners, and on the other hand assume legal obligation to legally eject them from properties they legally own, which were legally sold to them by a legal entity which now claims to be unable to listen or speak to them?
5. Finally, why Torry again? Is Torry the only community in Aberdeen that has properties with RAAC? If not, why have you chosen to start with Torry?

The above questions will be sent to the councilors by email and the community will be expecting answers by email or at the next TCC meeting in April.

PORT OF ABERDEEN PRESENTATION

With a three-man delegation consisting of the CFO, Communication Manager & Harbour Master, PoA's presentation started with an introduction of the port as an organization. A relatively small port with 110 direct employees, largest in Scotland by Throughput and aims to be UK's first net zero port by 2040. The Communication Manager co-presented and stated that the presentation to TCC is in response to questions around community engagement asked at the last AGM, adding that PoA is currently in the process of expanding CSR Programmes.

Q & A for PoA

Questions:

1. Have you got permit for STS Bunkering at the South Harbour, as I have seen that happening? Asked by D. Reid.
2. What are you doing to stop HGVs from plying city roads?
3. How are you giving opportunities to young people to work?
4. What's the nature/structure of relationship between PoA & ETZ?
5. What's PoA's plan regarding St. Fitticks? What's PoA's interest in the land on St Fitticks Park or the Golf Course? Will the Turley Report be revived or refreshed. The report showed an ambition to gentrify the old Harbour and further industrial expansion around the South Harbour.
6. Who oversees ETZ governance?
7. Why are there no Torry Community members on their board?

Answers:

In response to the above listed questions, the PoA teams provided the following answers:

- There is no STS Bunkering license in place yet. It is in process. We're not aware of STS Bunkering happening without permit but we'll investigate it.
- We have several measures in place to prevent HGVs from plying city road but we see that some of drivers still find ways to default. We'll continue to work to prevent it but we'll also appreciate your continued support through vigilance and sharing photo evidence.
- We provide internships, Apprenticeship, Entry Level and Experienced positions to help young people to get work
- The CFO sits on ETZ board but nobody from ETZ sits o PoA board.
- ETZ governance is overseen by Opportunities Northeast, Scottish Enterprise and PoA.
- Responding to question about Net Zero, PoA stressed that they're taking steps but managing it carefully to avoid impact on community.
- PoA confirmed that they're handing off St Fitticks and that it will be returned. They also confirmed that there are no plans to reduce Torry to small residential area surrounded by industries.
- When asked how he'll vote if returning St Fitticks was to be put to a vote, CFO PoA said that he'll abstain.
- PoA also categorically said they had no interest in the land, neither St Fitticks Park nor the Golf Course.
- Responding to the question about if Torry Community members are on their board and if not why, PoA said it will be worth mentioning at the next AGM and that TCC is invited to attend the AGM.

AOCB: No other topics was discussed due to time constraint.

ADJOURNMENT/CLOSURE: Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Simon McLean and seconded by David Reid. The meeting ended at about 9:15pm.