

Duneaton Community Council Chairman's Annual Report 2018/19

Chairman Malcolm Muir

General

Duneaton Community Council provides impartial and non-political support for six village communities, each with its own character and priorities and each with its own hinterland of farms and other more remote properties and businesses. Communications remains a key issue, with regular public transport a distant memory and many residents still unable to access useable broadband speeds. This year, all six villages have been actively represented on the Community Council and all the villages have now their own working groups and project programmes, supported by our community Development Officer, Liz Steele. We are an open and accountable group and would urge anybody with a question or issue, or even just interested, to attend our meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 in Robertson Hall; you will be made very welcome. With the increasing amount of money coming into the area via the windfarm operators, it is vital that everybody should have a say in how these significant resources can best be used to enhance this beautiful area, its rich heritage and the quality of life of its residents. The recent award of £600,000 to the regeneration of the Abington schoolhouse shows just what can be achieved when people come together to work for their own communities.

Micro Grants

We continue to manage monies from both the Clyde Wind Farm Fund and other funding sources. The Micro grant application scheme continues to be popular for funding local community-based projects and we hope that community engagement will continue to access this excellent method of funding. It is great to see such a wide range of project ideas now coming from all six villages.

The Clyde Windfarm Extension Fund

This new fund will see an annual allocation of £50,000 being made to each of six Community Councils in the wider area. Clearly, this represents a significant, new source of funding and needs to be administered transparently and invested in projects and activities that will bring long-term benefits to the area. Duneaton CC has agreed to work with Biggar, Symington, Thankerton Community Councils to combine four allocations into one annual fund of £200,000 per annum. This will offer a much greater degree of flexibility and would enable much larger, strategic projects to be funded in any one year, if desired. The fund will be administered directly by Scottish and Southern Energy, through a panel on which each of the four participating Community Councils will have two delegates.

Community Council Liaison Group (Clyde Wind farm)

The Community Council Liaison Group (CCLG) continues to meet, maintaining a conduit between SSE and the Community Councils affected by their respective developments. The committee is hosted by SSE Renewables and comprises of 2 representatives from each community council affected by their developments.

Communications

This time last year the DCC's Facebook page had 160 likes, and is now up to 186, a 16% increase.

The website averages 113 page views per month from 51 people.

Conclusion

Duneaton Community Council remains active and in good health and both succession and communication will be improved by the active network of village committees. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all DCC members who have worked so hard over the year and, of course Liz, our Community Development Officer, who is becoming a well kent face across the DCC area. Can I wish everybody a Happy Christmas and New Year.