

Callander Community Council

Secretary's Report

I have satisfactorily set up a Google group to consolidate email communications for Community Councillors. This system enables all of us to see the incoming mail as it arrives, and avoids the tedium of me reading it all aloud. I have previously circulated the undernoted rules on the use of the group, and will be proposing that these be formally adopted.

1. The Group is only for elected Councillors
2. Any email exchanges within the Group are strictly confidential to the Group Members alone.
3. If any Councillor has worries about disclosing "private" information then don't disclose it, but remember the point about confidentiality.
4. The purpose of the Group is the dissemination of information.
5. It is not a chat forum.
6. Is not a vehicle for complaints about other members or office bearers.
7. It is not a 24/7 continuous Community Council meeting.

Please remember our function is to serve the Community, not to find fault with each other. Despite this statement, I have continued to receive complaints expressed in intemperate language.

The security of Google Groups was challenged by one Councillor. I am happy to discuss security with any Councillor who has personally set up a Google Group, analysed security issues and found relevant solutions.

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Following our agreement at our September meeting, I investigated the proposal from Gavin McLellan to initiate a new formal Association of Community Councils. It seemed that this organisation was being proposed in order to hold the NPA to account. I pointed out to him that formal associations were created from informal ones, when sufficient commonality of interest and purpose were established by discussion. However he called an inaugural meeting. Attendees at this inaugural meeting were expected to sign up to a constitution which included creating a committee empowered to commit member Community Councils to joint communications and actions, and in addition obliging member CCs to make financial contributions. I declined to attend that meeting, expressing reservations in common with several others. I believed it was wiser to wait and see what happened.

In fact, those CC representatives who did attend, declined to support the formation of the formal association, and decided on a twice a year forum instead. Clearly, we have the opportunity to join that forum, if we wish. I have no further information to assist in making that decision, but will attempt to find out more.

In parallel, Trevor Geraghty of Strathard Community Council, who also demurred at Gavin McLellan's proposals, suggested a four times a year forum. This has been discussed with amongst others, Michelle Flynn of Stirling Council, and Trevor's suggestion has morphed into a revival of the Trossachs Area Network, encompassing additional organisations. I propose that we have a vote on joining that.

Finally, you will be aware that the NPA are contemplating holding regular meetings with amongst others, Community Councils. Despite my reminder, no Community Councillors sent me comments on the questionnaire initiated by Gordon Watson. As a lone voice, I supported having regular meetings.

Alex Mitchell
For 9/11/20