



## STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

**Monday, 5 June 2006 in Strathblane Primary School.  
(Minutes taken by John Gray)**

This Meeting was chaired by Willie Oswald, and followed the AGM held the same evening.<sup>1</sup>

#### **1. Welcome and remarks by Chair**

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their patience during the business of the AGM, and promised to move the business swiftly on, allowing as much time as possible for the presentation on paths and access laws.

#### **2. Members Present:**

Willie Oswald (WO), David Anderson (DA), Philip Graves (PG), Elspeth Posnett (EP), Robert Flashman (RF), John Cushley (JC), Alastair Smith (AS) and John Gray (JG).

Others Present:

Richard Barron, Senior Access Officer, Stirling Council, and colleague Richard Hunter.

Cllr Alistair Berrill; Pam Campbell (Stirling Council); PC Paul Barr and around 12 members of the public.

#### **3. Apologies.**

Margaret Vass (MV)

#### **4. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

Approved (proposed AS, seconded PG). Matters arising would be picked up elsewhere.

#### **5. Police Matters.**

PC Barr reported as follows.

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<sup>1</sup> Item numbering differs from the Agenda, which covered both meetings in one sequence.

Over the past 2 months the police had opened 28 'crime files' in total in the local area. 17 of these were 'self-generated', i.e. raised by police themselves for e.g. speeding, driving while on the phone, lack of seatbelts.

Police were still finding a some Class C drugs, but there was thankfully no sign of harder drugs being used in the community.

**Housebreakers** had been disturbed at the back of a house on Glasgow Road. Increased police presence after this seems to have deterred further activity.

Road traffic enforcement was continuing. Concerning **parking/waiting near school**, yellow lines were painted soon after the last meeting. Police had been monitoring the behaviour of school run traffic, and 6 warnings had been given, so that word was now getting about to respect the new restrictions. From August, enforcement would begin, with a £30 penalty for offenders.

PC Barr reported that the local **Knife Amnesty** bin was lying empty, although the amnesty period was not yet up. Police find that this community is a relative oasis amid the national problem of knife crime.

AS asked how many of the traffic files involved drink-driving. PC Barr said that there was only one case in the period.

PG had observed a new **burnt-out car** around Mugdock. PC Barr said this is still a fairly regular occurrence, but numbers were down recently. He believed that better security of cars is reducing this type of offence.

## 6. **The Access Code/Stirling Core Paths Plan.**

Richard Barron, Senior Access Officer, Stirling Council, gave a presentation on SC's **Core Paths plan**, and answered many questions on this and particularly working of the Access Code, assisted by his colleague Richard Hunter.

Mr Barron explained that the Land Reform Act 2003 requires each local authority to prepare a Core Paths Plan, identifying a network of routes for giving the public reasonable access throughout the area. These can be of any kind of surface, not necessarily constructed to any standard. Key requirements are that they be identified as core paths, they will be signposted at key access points, and boundary crossings will be designed to permit access for all. Thus stiles would be replaced by kissing gates as part of implementing the plan.

The plan is to be completed by February 2008. A preliminary assessment and draft plan have been produced. A second round of consultation in each CC is underway, together with surveying the network to identify the scale of upgrade work required, this to be completed by September 2007, with a Draft Plan to the Council in November 2007. Mr Barron handed out survey forms which members of the public can use to nominate routes that they would like to see included in the survey. New paths can be suggested where there is an unmet need, just as important existing paths should be identified.

Further information can be found at [http://www.stirling.gov.uk/index/leisure/countryside/core\\_path\\_plan.htm](http://www.stirling.gov.uk/index/leisure/countryside/core_path_plan.htm).

WO thanked Mr Barron for his presentation, and for offering to take questions. Discussions at recent CC meetings have raised a number of issues surrounding the Access Code. The CC would be asking a number of questions about that, and questions would then be invited from the public.

Q (WO): Who pays for **horse gates**, as seen at Station Road/Cuilt Brae? A: Anyone at present. SC have money for access work.

Q (WO): There had been a consultation done in 1999 which may be taken into account; also have SC seen the 'local walks' leaflets available in the library? A: SC would seek copies: the new access laws allow these to be more widely publicised.

Q: (WO and others raised many questions around horse riding affecting paths and other users. The following summarises key questions and answers.) A: SC had found no evidence of general conflict between horse riders and other users, in practice. PG noted that Mugdock Country Park receives 600,000 or so visitors in a year, including riders, cyclists and walkers, yet accidents are very few in practice.

SC itself had no powers or duty to restrict any activity, so long as motorised vehicles were not involved. The new legal regime places the responsibility fully on the individuals and groups using the countryside to judge for themselves whether their usage is reasonable. It had been suggested that signage could be placed indicating where certain paths were considered 'not suitable' for different uses. This had not been agreed and education was the only approach currently available. Scottish Natural Heritage was currently producing leaflets for different groups of users; the latest is one for dog walkers, for example, and one for riders had been seen previously. RB noted dog waste laws still apply.

AS noted there is a court case pending somewhere in the Highlands, where a landowner locked gates against horses, for fear of damage to path surfaces. The outcome of this may give guidance. There was particular concern about damage to the football pitch, when not in use, which could lead to injury to players. RB said the law left it to the responsibility of players to protect themselves. The horse rider would be liable in principle, but difficulty in proving an individual hoof print was caused by an individual rider would normally make legal redress impossible. SCC had been asked previously for fencing to guard the football field. Perhaps this could be raised again as a solution?

RB's best suggestion was for engagement in discussion with the riders involved, and making more copies of the SNH leaflet available would help too. Incidents of verbal abuse by riders when challenged about path use were out of order and could be reported to the police.

## **7. Community Council Vacancies**

WO had given consideration to co-opting members to serve for a time prior to the next election, but there was firm proposal at this stage.

## **8. Environmental Issues**

EP reported on various issues. It was noted that Streetscape officer Billy Connolly was on extended sick leave and new contacts would need to be clarified.

EP had received some clarification on the status of the **Leddriegreen path**. The answer seemed to be that this path was not owned by SC but it was down to SC's Streetscape dept to manage. No maintenance had ever been observed. Historically responsibilities had been mixed up between Community Services, Streetscape, Countryside etc., and SC's databases were not maintained as well as they should have been. Pam Campbell will check further.

The **Bollard** at the end of Park Place had apparently been ordered now. There was discussion of the nearby **Dog Waste bin** being unused because of its location at the foot of steep banking. A move to the street would not be popular, but a more accessible location, perhaps with the provision of a dedicated pole, would be welcome. Pam Campbell will investigate.

It was proposed that **flower tubs opposite the Kirkhouse Inn**, where one had been damaged, would be would be relocated somewhere else.

EP had heard indirectly that SC were not aware of or involved in **the felling of trees by Minster's Brae**: the presumption is that this was a private action of the land owner.

PG reported on a meeting about the **Milngavie reservoir draft conservation plan**. The meeting had broken down as there was not sufficient time to consider EDC's response. Current proposals seem to include a car park at Bankell opposite the reservoir on the A81. The current plans seem to respect the Milngavie Conservation Area which, although not within SCC boundaries, is generally to be welcomed.

Cllr Berrill reported on the **closure times of the public toilets**. This had apparently been instructed prematurely by an over-enthusiastic official and would be reversed. What was meant to be happening was a systematic review of costs, including overtime payments to village officers, this review be concluded by the end of June for consideration [by councillors?] prior to any decision.

Someone had seen council grass cutting team take their van with equipment along the library path to access the play park. This is inappropriate and consideration should be given to placing a bollard, or rocks or other restrictions as previously discussed.

## 9. **Planning.**

PG had been deputising for MV in her absence.

**Norbreck Moor Rd.** CC's comments opposing the application had been filed. Planning & Policy Manager Peter Morgan had advised in the meantime that boundaries are not affected by this (see also below).

**Extension at the Wildings, Moor Road.** CC's comments opposing the application had been filed.

**Planning Contravention Notice - earthworks on moor.** Edward Pickard believed concern over this was unwarranted. He explained that the fencing on the moor was doe to allow regeneration of the disturbed ground, and was in no way an extension of garden grounds onto the moor. He believed SC was satisfied with the situation and no further action would be forthcoming.

**Outline application: South Lodge, Auchineden.** CC's comments opposing the application had been filed.

**Edenmill Farm residential caravan.** The proposal to move the caravan had not yet appeared on the Planning Schedule. The owner, Mark Gibson asked what was the response of the CC to the proposal. WO explained that CC had decided at its last meeting not to make any response until a formal application had been filed. The previous meeting had resolved to ask MG which neighbours had been consulted on the proposed move. MG said he had consulted the Auchineden shareholders and Mr Robert Gibb.

**18a Campsie Dene Road.** No further correspondence had been received.

**11 Campsie Road: house in garden ground.** No objection would be filed.

## 10. Roads.

### (a) A81 Speed and Traffic Management

RF reported that there had been no progress on the Safer Routes To School and related proposals. Plans and costings were awaited from SC. It was understood that the owner of the Kirkhouse Inn was checking that insurance considerations would not be an obstacle to participation in the new park-and-walk scheme.

The 40mph buffer zone had been placed with contractors so should happen at some point.

RF will try to get access to the statistics gathered by the detector associated with the electronic '30' sign.

### (b) Roads General

Nothing particular to report.

## 11. Correspondence

A list of correspondence had been circulated by the Secretary. Specific items discussed were:

Advertisement for nominations in the '**Standing Up to Antisocial Behaviour Awards Scheme**' had been replaced and passed to local shops for display.

Pre-consultation replies are due by 21 June 2006 on the **community council boundary changes**. This affects other areas far more than ourselves.

We were being asked for a view on **Polling Places and Election Posters** for the elections in 2007. Use of the school on election day is inconvenient. Alternatives should be considered but would have to be suitable: the Village Club for example has too poor access, especially for motor vehicles. The previous restrictions on election advertising were considered a great success and we should request that they continue unchanged. EP to respond.

Following on from the Minutes of the Area Community Planning Forum meetings, Pam Campbell reported that the communities involved had voted narrowly in favour of spending the **windfall funds** on forum-wide projects, rather than splitting the money to be used by individual communities on their own projects. Pam would be sending more information in the coming days.

**12. Finance.**

AS reported that the application for paths funding had now been granted.

**13. Land Reform Act, Part 2, Community Right to Register Interest in Land**

There was not sufficient time for discussion of this topic at the meeting. WO had prepared a discussion paper which members should review for discussion at the next meeting.

**14. AOCB.**

Stirling Assembly 17 June 2006. WO can't attend. JG will attend, and any others interested. WO also cannot attend conference on 24 June 2006 and asked others to consider whether they could attend.

JG briefly introduced Alan Campbell who was setting up a community website [www.strathblanefield.org](http://www.strathblanefield.org). SCC was invited to participate with a page on this site. A discussion paper had been prepared which JG handed to CC members. Responses would be welcome as AC was keen to have any CC page up and running at the launch of his website, which was imminent.

**15. Dates of future meetings**

Next meetings are 31 July\*, 4 September 2006, (\*in Village Club)

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**These draft minutes have not yet been approved by the council.**

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