



STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, 6 March 2006 in Strathblane Primary School.
(Minutes taken by John Gray)

This Meeting was chaired by Willie Oswald.

1. Welcome and remarks by Chair

2. Members Present:

Willie Oswald (WO), David Anderson (DA), Alastair Smith (AS), Elspeth Posnett (EP), Bob Flashman (RF), Margaret Vass (MV), John Cushley (JC) and John Gray (JG).

Others Present:

Cllr Alistair Berrill; 4-5 members of the public including Mr Mark Gibson (applicant agent for Edenmill Farm development), Eric Strachan (SCC Planning Group)

Apologies.

Philip Graves (PG), Pam Campbell (SC), PC Paul Barr

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Approved with 2 changes (items 5 & 12) (AS proposed, EP seconded). Matters Arising will be covered elsewhere.

4. Police Matters.

PC Barr had reported to WO that there had been some incidents of house-breaking recently. Police had had some success at preventing further crimes by stopping suspicious vehicles.

5. Planning.

a) Edenmill Farm – Report on Resumed Hearing of Planning Panel

MV believed the CC's site visit was useful. The adjourned hearing had taken place and MV had been given another brief opportunity to speak on behalf of SCC and the other objectors. We probably had Cllr O'Brien to thank for that unusual opportunity. MV had discussed her

proposed comments with the other objectors. She had stated that SCC's preference remained for a comprehensive application. She had expressed disappointment that no positive 'good neighbour' moves had been seen. Conditions, including the proposed Section 75 agreement, would be very important.

MV commented that, in her opinion, the roots of this problem lay at least partly in the planners' approach. This had given Mr Gibson false comfort. Other members concurred. Important lessons were to be learned.

Mark Gibson asked CC members to confirm that they had no objection to him selling local produce other than his own. This had been his impression at the site visit but members clarified that we expect that any activities permitted by the panel (including any S 75 agreement) will be limited to what is the right of any 'Farm shop' i.e. own produce only.

Some members had expressed concern that CC's position seemed to have changed from the decided position without a full discussion.

MV noted only limited time had been available for consultation between the site visit, and the date of the hearing had been brought forward to boot. MV had advised the Panel that SCC had not met, & explained that there was not such a change of position as some people had perceived. MV indicated that following the first planning panel and the visit she would have recommended to SCC that our stance on the application should change as there is no point in objecting to something that does not require planning permission and the conditions that we were requesting therefore could not be imposed. WO thought lessons could be learned for handling non-straightforward cases in future. A private meeting of CC members would be useful.

Eric Strachan asked if it might be appropriate to refer the conduct of SC planners in this case to the ombudsman? WO believed a high burden of error & evidence was required. MV reiterated that she was definitely not impressed with planners' conduct, but felt there was not such a strong case and referral to the ombudsman would be an empty gesture. Agreed.

b) General

Two residential plots at Dunglass View: MV recommended no objection. Agreed.

Red roof & extension at 19 Edenkiln Place: A site visit had been made by SC Planning officer (PMcK) and he is satisfied that the new tiles are to the same spec as the old ones, despite any appearance to the contrary. RF had heard independently that some effort had gone into sourcing the same tiles. EP to report to those who were concerned. Members found much to criticise in the design of this prominent development. WO lamented that the system seems to permit designs so long as they are not bad, rather than requiring that they actually be good.

Upfill of land opposite 43 Glasgow Rd: ES reported he had seen a letter from Planning (PMCK) to applicant raising concerns. It seemed SC was minded to refuse, or at least require better justification. WO had suggested the planners contact SC's Biodiversity Officer for advice and was concerned that this did not seem to be taken up by PMcK. JG wondered if PMcK thought this superfluous as he was minded to refuse on the evidence he had already.

6. Roads.

(a) A81 Speed and Traffic Management

RF had been in touch with the new person Andrew Fergus and thought progress was at last in sight. RF would be attending the Area Planning meeting on 16 March 2006 at which roads was the topic for discussion with other CC's in our cluster.

SC were considering installation of a 40 mph 'buffer zone' at the southern approach to the village (A81/Glasgo Road).

(b) Roads General

Dumbrock Rd had now been repaired . Kirkburn Rd may start March 2006.

Noted that Roads Dept did seem responsive in such matters, WO said he had found them found responsive for example on a broken manhole, and believed that Hunter Jamieson was doing best in real shortage of funds.

7. Correspondence

DA had circulated a list of communications received.

MV reviewed a letter announcing the formation of a steering group for new **Planning Advice Note** encouraging developers and public to communicate better between themselves in future. A draft would come for comment in 'Spring' 2006.

Consultation on the draft **Conservation & Recreation Plan for Milngavie Reservoirs** would be launched at a meeting on 7 March 2006. Unfortunately no SCC members were able to attend. AS reminded the meeting that there were CD-ROM copies of the consultants' massive report on the options for this amenity, which he had found fascinating reading

Stirling Council **Flooding Biennial Report** indicated that there were just three actions in the recent period within Strathblane/Blanfield. Culverts had been cleared in Dunglass View; Repairs in Craigenlay Avenue; video inspection under Southburn Road.

A **Weight Restriction Orders for 2006** include the road around Mugdock Country Park insofar as it is within Stirling boundaries. The limit is 7.5 T 'except for access'. Contrast Tak-Me-Doon Road (Kilsyth) which has an absolute 7.5T limit - access or not.

8. Environmental Issues

The Bollard replacement and 'No Golf' sign have both been ordered - no problem with funding.

Dougie Flynn had advised EP that **Gabions** were being looked at with interested parties, including representative from Rural Housing who were believed to be the owners of the lad affected.

JC, EP and Patsy Fishbacher had met Chris Waddell who had proposals for planting of shrubs around the Library to reduce grass cutting. Also about a bog garden in a corner of the school field. This helps the school achieve 'eco'school' status. He will come back with plans. Slabs are not his thing - he would prefer to plant trees.

Dougie Flynn is also investigating the obligations of land owners in light of the muddy state of the path up the Horses' Field, which is apparently called **Skittle Street**.

Breaking bricks at **School railing** will be inspected, in response to EP sending photographs to Rebecca Maxwell, Head of Planning and Resources, Children's Services, SC.

Scottish Water have opened the **Ash Track** to horses, as a result of lobbying by local horse owner through MSPs and others. There is already damage to the footpath around the gate. Greenheart have consulted with SW's Gordon Bell who suggests it would be more sensible to remove a few railing and open up a parallel path for horses on the grass side of the fence. This was agreed in principle.

Members are very concerned at the state of this and other **paths which are used by horses** and being made unsuitable for use by pedestrians, including those walking to school. JC wondered if KGV football field rules which do not mention access by horses could be used to control access by horses, but WO believed that the Access Rules introduced by the recent Land Reform Act override older rules like those. Nevertheless it was an important principle of the new rules that access is not free for all, but subject to reasonable consideration of other users. Some paths will be suitable for horses and others not. In practice, riders are found to be abusive when challenged. Members who have spoken to the SC Access Officer have found her dogmatically in favour of horse access. We should seek to ensure that SW and others in authority are aware of the limits in the Access Code.

Next **Greenheart** meeting will be on 17 March 2006, with the aim of clarifying the role of BTCV and to develop a new strategy with more community involvement. RF attending in place of AS EP who cannot make it at the appointed time.

The **LCDF grant** award had been given at £5925, when we had asked for £10370. LCDF said the difference because some of what we asked was seen by them as 'revenue' items, not on-offs. PC would be putting an enquiry in to see if this could be reconsidered. SC had not replied yet on the request for £3457 out of the Stirling Landfill Tax fund.

9. Finance.

AS requested confirmation whether there was any condition attached to the £1000 grant. WO said there were none. EP would investigate again the research on replacement notice boards, which was seen as a suitable use for at least part of it. Another proposal was to put part toward refurbishing the floor of the Village Club as VC has problem raising funds for this particular type of job.

AS note we have £4k saved, so need not limit our expenditure to the £1000.

JG requested clarification of the ownership/responsibility for the several halls within our village. So far as the members were aware: the Scout Hall is believed to be Scouts district property; Edmonstone Hall is leased by a management committee from its owners; Village Club is owned by SC via deed of gift; Kirk Rooms is owned by church. Last application to Lottery was a joint application by Edmonstone Hall and Village Club.

10. Community Planning, Consideration of Cluster Community Projects

WO had circulated a note with several suggestions for this windfall £29k to be spent within the cluster. There was some debate about the merits of different proposals, such as convex mirrors for difficult junctions, a cycle network feasibility study and other things. JG added the possibility for shared CC website developments if the Scottish Executive project failed to get funding this April. It was stressed that these were only tentative suggestions and issues such as the robustness of different types of mirrors (for example) would be fully considered before a final decision could be made. However, that did not mean things should be ruled out of consideration at this early stage, particularly as we had to find something that met the approval of all the other communities in the cluster. Through Pam Campbell WO would identify the best contacts within the other CC's and float these initial ideas, while making clear they are only suggestions for consideration/investigation rather than concrete proposals.

11. Land Reform Act Part 2 – Community Right to Buy.

WO apologised he had not yet been able to prepare the briefing paper he'd promised. It was hoped another issue of *The Blane* would follow shortly, allowing wider consultation.

14. AOCB.

During the meeting, members and others attending had a tea/coffee break at which DA noted that Fair Trade coffee had been purchased, following the resolution made in 2005.

The Chair read out a letter from two members of the public, addressed to him as SCC chair, copied to all CC members on the subject of "Edenmill Farm" It questioned his motives and actions and called on him to resign. Decision - Noted.

15. Dates of future meetings

Next meeting is Monday 3 April 2006 in the Village Club.

Alternative dates are needed instead May, August & Nov due to clashes with Cluster meetings. July is normally skipped.

Proposed dates to keep a reasonable regularity of meeting are: Tuesday 2 May, 5 June, 31 July*, 4 September, *either* 30 October *or* Tuesday 7 November(*in Village Club), 5 December 2006.

These are to be confirmed and venues booked by DA.
