



STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 5 February 2007 in the School

1. Members Present: - Willie Oswald (WO), David Anderson (DA), Margaret Vass (MV), Elspeth Posnett (EP), Alastair Smith (AS), Marjorie Peddie (MP), Finlay Fountain (FF), Robert Flashman (RF), John Gray (JG), Philip Graves (PG).

In attendance: - PC Barr, Cllr Berrill (2nd half), 5 public.

(*SC = Stirling Council. CC = Community Council*)

2. Welcome and remarks by Chair: - WO welcomed all present and thanked Patsy Fischbacher (non CC member) for taking over the job of minute secretary.

3. Apologies: - Pam Campbell (SC). Cllr Berrill (will be late).

4. Minutes of January meeting: - Approved with no changes. Proposed DA. Seconded EP.

5. Matters Arising: - AS reported that the flood water in the horses field was to be pumped into the burn, subject to approval from SEPA.

6. Police Matters.

a) Crime report - PC Barr reported that, during January, 14 crime reports were raised for the Blanefield area and 10 of these were detected.

- Two cases were drugs related and were discovered during routine patrol at Mugdock park. There are more drugs cases in our area than elsewhere due to the proximity of Glasgow. Drugs are usually low level involving youngsters from the city.
- A notable apprehension was that of local disqualified driver with 11 outstanding warrants. He was also the suspected accomplice for the housebreakings of autumn 2006. He has since been convicted and imprisoned.
- The Kirkhouse Inn was broken into in early morning of 22nd Jan. This was surprising as the area was well lit and a porter was on duty. The police are hopeful of getting good forensic evidence.
- There has been some low level vandalism in the Kirkhouse estate eg trampoline damaged and garden ornaments removed and placed on roadways. Police are planning to get out on nights when youths are around to stop this behaviour escalating.
- Police are frequently aided by pictures of crimes recorded on mobile phones, and which are also sometimes posted on the internet.

b) Wildlife crime - PC Barr is involved with the national initiative against wildlife crime. Operation Salmon coincided with the start of the fishing season with police carrying out joint patrols with fishing bailiffs. Other operations are to follow.

c) Dangerous parking - EP raised concerns about dangerous parking in Station Road. A resident's car was parked at the top of Station Rd and another car was parked beyond it, right

on the junction with the A81. PC Barr pointed out that it was illegal to park within 10 metres of a junction. He will speak to the resident concerned.

d) Parking at Mugdock - PG referred to recent unreasonable parking at the main entrance to Mugdock Country Park with lines of cars stretching 3-400 metres both ways. PC Barr said that the police and park authorities are aware of the problem and attempts had been made to mark out passing places using traffic cones, but this was not very successful. Park wardens are used to direct traffic at times of special events. WO pointed out that parking problems were the main concern raised by the CC when responding to the planning application to extend Mugdock Plantaria to include a restaurant. Following discussion the CC agreed to write to SC Roads dept to ask that this matter be addressed before the better weather comes and the problem increases. Photographs will also be sent. (ACTION PG)

e) New police powers - It was noted that police now have new powers to confiscate vehicles if the driver cannot be shown to have a valid driving licence or insurance. PC Barr will inquire as to how this is to be carried out. Police can also give warning for driving in an unsocial manner, and after a second warning can remove the vehicle.

7. Planning

MV reported that the main issues for the past month related to SC decisions. There were also a number of applications for extensions, the most noteworthy being one for Auchencraig, Mugdock - no plans had been requested. There are ongoing issues of concern to the CC at Edenmill Farm and at Valhalla stables.

a) Outline proposal for new house on Old Mugdock Rd next to Browns shop. – Approved by SC. The CC had raised concerns about parking and access to sorting office. SC response is that off street parking will be desired and delivery to the office is only once daily and can be made using a trolley.

b) Second storey to stable block to create small house at Troughstone Cottage, Campsie Rd – Approved by SC subject to Section 75 to limit occupancy to stable worker and also to prevent new building from being sold separately from the main house.

c) New house to rear of 10-16 Craigenlay Ave. – Approved by SC.

d) Extension to house & garden ground at 22A Kirkhouse Rd – Approved by SC. Tree management report required. There is no existing right of way to Campsies, so development cannot be resisted.

e) Edenmill Farm – Residential caravan is still on site without permission. SC will address this concurrent with the other related issues. A member of the public asked what was happening about the farm shop that had been publicly advertised before Xmas. MV replied that it was not operating but JG had found the shop open & selling meat products during the time of xmas tree sales. SC are monitoring the situation. MV will ask again for a copy of the Section 75. She explained that this restricts the range of products that can be sold in the shop to produce of the farm itself. (ACTION MV)

f) New house at Valhalla stables, Old Mugdock Rd – Waiting response from SC. It was agreed that in the event of approval being recommended MV should immediately contact Cllr Berrill.

g) Site visits – MV reported on the visits to the moor and to a private house, 'Mornish', in Moor Rd. Both had been very helpful and informative, but she emphasised that the CC could not get involved in neighbour disputes. WO thanked Mr Pickard for showing the CC members around his estate and explaining his conservation and development plans.

JG was concerned about the apparent contravention of planning regulations regarding the height of the new wall built by Mr Pickard on the boundary with 'Mornish'. WO

explained that this information was already with the enforcement officer and he had forwarded it to the planning officer. He noted that there would be an opportunity for the CC to make formal comment once a retrospective planning application was made.

h) Planning legislation - WO asked as to when the new national planning regulations would come into effect. MV understood that it would be phased in over some considerable time. DA noted that the Scottish Executive are now consulting on their national strategic planning framework.

8. Roads

Update from RF followed by other issues raised

a) Traffic management - Brian Roberts (SC) has written to say that the work to create a safer route to school from the Kirkhouse Inn car park should be completed by the end of March. He now needs to know the community's priorities for the next phases, though the outcome will depend on available funding. RF will establish a steering group of representative members of the public to discuss this. (ACTION RF)

b) Road repairs have been carried out on Old Mugdock Rd and bollards placed beside the deep drainage ditches. SC cannot be sure for how long the work will be effective.

c) Flooding around the area of the Blane Valley Inn has been investigated by SC who suspect that it is due to a gully problem. There is no indication of when this can be repaired.

d) Steps in Campsie View Drive - Following complaints about the difficulties of negotiating these steep steps, especially for children, and adults with buggies, SC has inspected the steps and will continue to monitor their condition. The CC is also asked to keep a check on them. RF explained that although the steps provide a recognised 'safer route to school' there are no funds at present to repair or redesign them as all the SRTS money has been allocated to the route from the Kirkhouse Inn car park. It was suggested that SC are asked to provide a handrail beside the steps and arrange for the tree branches to be trimmed from around the street light at the steps. PC Barr thought the tree might be in police grounds and will investigate responsibility for this. (ACTION RF)

e) SC area cluster meeting - RF, AS and MP attended the Jan meeting. They learned that the village was to receive two sets of flashing warning lights instead of the four requested. However, in recognition of the long standing problem, the two would be made permanent. The new one (at the Blane field end) will be connected up by the end of March. The CC was encouraged to get in touch with Jim Allan, the police safety officer, if there were any problems. Jim Allan will also speak to Brian Roberts (SC) about on going concerns regarding the safety of the zebra crossing and the possibility of changing to a pelican crossing.

f) Zebra crossing - There was general discussion about the safety and use of the crossing. PC Barr had received a lot of complaints when it was first installed but not many recently. It was generally recognised that pedestrians should adopt a more cautious approach when using the crossing than some appeared to be doing at present. WO commented that many drivers are unfamiliar with these crossings but SC is planning to introduce more of them.

g) Substandard lighting - WO referred to the longstanding problem of poor lighting on sections of the A81. He has learned that the lights are inspected every two weeks, but the schedule for refurbishing would take several years. MV questioned Stirling Council's priority for first replacing concrete posts, as many of these are not on main roads. AS reported that earlier inquiries about overhead power distribution and street lighting revealed that the wooden poles are considered to have a life of about 40 years but many are well over this. WO pointed out that poor lighting affected road safety and might influence the priorities of the traffic management scheme. RF was asked to raise this with SC.

(ACTION RF)

h) Junction of Station Rd and A81 - PG raised concerns about safety in this area and the lack of any proposal to address this. RF acknowledged that SC has no solution at present.

i) Damaged tree – AS reported concerns raised by a member of the public. Deep drainage ditches have recently been created at the sides of the bend exiting the village to the south. During heavy rains the flood water has undermined the roots of a tree which is now in danger of coming down. RF agreed to investigate. (ACTION RF)

9. Environmental Issues

(At this point WO informed Cllr Berrill, who had arrived late, about the issues of poor street lighting and problem parking at the country park)

a) Old Railway – WO referred to emails that had been circulated around CC members re a second community action day being organised by SC countryside ranger for 25th March. There was an option to invite BTCV (British Trust Conservation Volunteers) to supervise repairs to the steps. It was generally felt that this was not a priority but that it would be more beneficial to repair the handrail at the steps and cut back vegetation to create a separate route for walkers to avoid the muddy track used by horses. It was also noted that there are long term plans to create a cycle/ bridle path along the old railway. WO to liaise with SC.

(ACTION WO)

WO reported that an action day to clear the steps in Mildavie Glen was to be organised by SC in Sept.

b) Greenheart (Gh) - WO asked Patsy Fischbacher what Gh's timetable and priorities were. She reported that:

- Plans were in hand to remove some of the railings at the top of the ash track to provide an alternative route for horses. Letters were being sent to local riders, as requested by Scottish Water, and notices will be put at either end of the route.
- Work to set up a community development trust has begun following discussions with Pam Campbell (SC). The initial objective is the play park but the trust will be constituted so as to be able to take on any other projects that the community wishes to pursue in the future. Pam advised that it would take three months from establishment of the trust to obtaining charitable status.
- The new design for the play park has been on display in the library for over a month and some consultation has already taken place.
- A group will be set up to carry out further consultation and do the detailed work needed to make funding applications. Pam has provided copies of the business plan for Killearn's play park, and this will be used as a guide. The aim is to be ready to submit grant applications by the time the trust is up and running. Killearn took two years from start to finish to acquire all their funding.
- Gh are grateful for the CC's support in the past and hope to continue the good relationship.

AS noted that the CC had acted as banker for Gh for all the paths work. It is currently doing the same for the School Board for some of the funds for the multi purpose sports pitch. AS was not sure if this would include the money to be donated by the Scottish Football Association. Patsy thought that this would probably be paid directly to SC.

c) CC update - EP reported that:

- The grating on the culvert at the burn in Southburn Road is still to be cleared.

- Pam Campbell is still waiting to hear if SC will take responsibility to maintain the path link from Kirkhouse Rd to Leddriegreen Lane.
 - EP is waiting for a response from SC re the duties of the village officer. Complaints have been made that leaves have not been cleared from the pavement in the area of Netherblane flats. It was also reported that paths around the school had not been swept. EP is aware that other communities have similar problems.
 - Pam Campbell is organising a series of three meetings about the function and setting up of community developments trusts starting on 12th March in Balfron High School. The CC will receive official notice shortly.
- d) A member of the public raised the following issues:
- A vehicle had driven around the locking pole at Park Place. This was now possible because the level of the ground between the roadway and the burn had been raised following recent work to rebuild the river bank. There is now a danger of the new banking being damaged. EP agreed to make inquiries. (ACTION EP)
 - A horse lorry was seen parked in the library car park where horses were off loaded and taken along the library path. It was noted that several similar incidences had taken place lately but Fiona Aborida, from the stables, had spoken to those responsible. CC members and members of the public were urged to pass details to Fiona if this should happen again. It was pointed out that it was illegal to off load horses in a public car park.

10. Correspondence –

A list of correspondence received was circulated to CC members prior to the meeting. DA referred to the following items:-

- a) **Seminars** – i) Pride in our Community on 17 Feb. ii) Dental Services in Forth Valley on 7 Feb. iii) National Planning Framework on 19 Feb. EP agreed to attend meeting i) or get feed back from it. (ACTION EP)
- b) **SC Transport Strategy** - public consultation document passed to WO for review. Response date 16 March.
- c) **SEPA View** – Passed to EP for review.

11. Finance

AS reported that all bills have been paid. Funds stand at over £5,000. (approx £3,000 is allocated to projects)

12. Report of Area Community Planning meeting.

RF reported that there was nothing of significance that had not been noted earlier on in the meeting.

13. Dates of next meetings:

5th March (school). 2nd April (village club)
The AGM will be on 11th June.

These minutes have been approved.