



STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING 5 MARCH 2007 IN THE SCHOOL

1. Members Present: - Willie Oswald, David Anderson, Margaret Vass, Fiona Murray, Elspeth Posnett, Alastair Smith, Marjorie Peddie, Finlay Fountain, Robert Flashman, John Gray, Philip Graves.

In attendance: - Cllr Berrill, PC Barr, PC Anderson. 5 public.

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

2. Welcome and remarks by Chair: Willie Oswald (WO) welcomed all present and extended a special welcome to Fiona Murray, new member for the Blanefield ward.

3. Apologies: - Pam Campbell (SC). WO apologised for failing to circulate the agenda to members, or to the library, due to a technical fault on his computer.

4. Minutes of last meeting: - Approved with no changes. Proposed - Marjorie Peddie. Seconded - Elspeth Posnett.

5. Matters arising: - There were none that would not be covered elsewhere on the agenda.

6. Police matters: - PC Barr updated the meeting and answered questions.

a) Crime report

- The past month had been fairly quiet with 7 crime files raised. 5 had been detected and were mainly in relation to road traffic offences, including one drunk driver.
- 2 thefts were undetected - one, a housebreaking at a cottage in the area of Mugdock Country Park, was a repeat offence with a number of mountain bikes stolen - the other was motor vehicle stolen from the lay-by at Loch Ardinning during an afternoon, and this was probably a random theft.
- There had been 3 road accidents with damage to vehicles only.

b) Parking in Station Road – Following concerns from the previous CC meeting about dangerous parking at the top of Station Road, PC Barr had found that the vehicle concerned was not parked less than 10 metres from the junction and so there was no offence. He noted that the parking area at the side of the house was full of rubble following a crash over a year ago. He will see if alternative parking arrangements can be made.

c) New Police Powers – Following discussion at the previous CC meeting, PC Barr had ascertained that where there is reasonable suspicion that a driver does not have a valid driving licence or insurance, the vehicle can be uplifted to a garage premises. The owner is then notified that there are 7 working days to claim back the vehicle after paying a fee of £105 and then £12 for every 24 hours of storage, otherwise the police can dispose of the vehicle.

d) Mobile Phones - The fine for using a mobile phone whilst driving had risen to £60, and within 24 hours if the new charge being implemented 7 drivers had been caught. In order to prosecute, the offence must be witnessed by two police officers. The driver is either stopped or is posted a notice of intended prosecution.

e) Community Wardens – The scheme is being extended to rural villages in April, following lobbying from Councillors. Roving patrols will help to engage with youths and address issues of nuisance behaviour.

f) Cold Calling – Killearn is part of a pilot project for a no cold calling zone. This is to raise awareness, and provide practical help, for dealing with bogus workers who prey on vulnerable people, especially the elderly who live alone.

g) Recent accident – PC Barr was asked if the accident statistics he had given (see 6a) included a serious crash on the A81 between the distillery and Duntreath the previous Wednesday (28th Feb). PC Barr will check this out.

h) Parking at the war memorial – Robert Flashman (RF) raised concerns about the problems caused by visitor parking in this area, including Campsie Dene Road which is privately owned. A local farmer was having difficulty getting through with tractors and trailers and it could prove difficult for an emergency vehicle to pass. It was noted that the Catholic Church car park was available for parking on Mondays through to Saturdays. PC Barr advised that the farmer should contact the police if he experienced problems with access. RF agreed to liaise with Stirling Council about the possibility of bringing in some parking restrictions.

ACTION RF

i) Mudock Country Park – The police have received an application for 2 officers to assist at the 5K race on the Sunday before Easter.

(WO thanked PC Barr and PC Anderson for attending the meeting.)

7. Planning: - (Update from Margaret Vass (MV), planning correspondent.)

a) General update - Applications over the last month had been for extensions and minor alterations only; the application to build an estate manager's house at Auchineden had been refused by SC; there was no news regarding the caravan at Edenmill estate, or proposed house at Valhalla stables.

b) Structure Plan - MV had received a copy of the draft 3rd Alteration to the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Structure Plan. Comments submitted earlier by the CC appear to have been assimilated. Leaflets were circulated around CC members and the public. MV referred to the drop-in session in Killearn church hall on Sat March 31st which is to give the public the opportunity to find out about the proposed changes and comment on them. There are no changes to the greenbelt in our area, and development in the rural villages is to be generally limited to infill sites. All written comments must be submitted by the end of April. MV will draft a response in advance of the April CC meeting.

ACTION MV

c) Landscaping – MV expressed concern at the recent planting of a cypress hedge along the border of the fields at Valhalla Stables and the A81. This seemed inappropriate for a countryside setting and would, in time, obscure the view looking out towards Loch Lomond, which is a significant feature of the area. There are no apparent legitimate grounds of objection. Reference was also made to tree planting in the field next to the manse, and to the planting of a cypress hedge on the field boundary on the west side of Old Mugdock Rd, just south of Moor Rd. Both of these appear to be precursors to pressure from landowners to extend the green belt boundary. Concerns were also raised about SC practise of granting planning approval conditional on landscaping, but not making the details of the conditions available to the public. This was of particular concern regarding the visual impact of the green belt boundary in Old Mugdock Road. MV agreed to ask for a change of policy so that the CC be informed of landscaping conditions and therefore be able to monitor them.

ACTION MV

Deer fence – Concerns were expressed that the green fence on Old Mugdock Rd, that had been erected without planning permission, could become legitimate if no action was taken

within 3 years. WO explained that this applied only in cases where there had been no formal objections.

Proposal for extension at Auchencraig, Mugdock – Although this is very large it does not increase the overall footprint of the building.

8. Roads:- (Update from Robert Flashman (RF), roads correspondent.)

a) East Ballewan – RF had received complaints about dangerous overtaking on this stretch of the A81 where there had been two recent near misses. He has referred the matter to Sergeant Allan, accident prevention officer.

b) Substandard street lighting – RF had prepared a letter to SC and was waiting for the chairman's response before sending it, as requested at the previous CC meeting.

c) Station Rd junction with A81 – Finlay Fountain referred to a recent accident on the Stockie Muir Rd, when traffic had been diverted causing severe problems in Station Rd. He suggested that traffic lights at this junction would resolve such problems, as well as generally making it safer and easier for vehicles to exit onto the main road. It was pointed out that SC had rejected this idea because it would lead to queuing on Station Road where there are parked cars.

d) Parking at Mugdock Country Park – Philip Graves has written to SC about the problems and is awaiting a reply.

e) Old Mugdock Road – WO apologised for not following up the CC's letters of 2005, requesting a policy restricting future building development that would require access onto this road. He has now written and received a reply indicating that the matter is to be looked into over the coming months and the CC will be consulted after June.

9. Environmental issues: - (Update from Elspeth Posnett (EP), environment correspondent)

a) Boulders – EP thanked Mr Pickard for placing boulders at the entrance to the library path and beside the bollard at Park Place.

b) Utility works - McAlpine have filled in the holes left by recent roadworks in Kirkhouse estate, and have marked the verges that need re-instatement.

c) Pride in our community – EP is awaiting feed back from the recent conference.

d) Path ownership – There is still a question as to the ownership, and responsibility for maintenance, of the path link between Kirkhouse Rd and Leddriegreen Lane. Pam Campbell (SC) is pursuing this issue with SC corporate asset manager, Robert Horn.

e) Village walkabout – Following correspondence between Patsy Fischbacher (public) and Jenny Elliot, the new SC StreetScape officer, Patsy and EP are to meet with Jenny to show her the various problem sites and familiarise her with the area. CC members were asked to email, Patsy and/or EP, details of specifics they wanted brought to Jenny's attention.

f) Old Railway Action Day – WO reminded members of the plan for 25th March. Patsy noted that there was a short article in the Blane newsletter about this.

g) Flower tubs – Marjorie Peddie offered to help with these.

h) Access issues – A member of the public was concerned about horse riders using the narrow paths from the library and across the children's play park. It was explained that the issue of responsibility is with the user and therefore riders cannot be banned outright at present.

i) Mildavie Glen – A member of the public reported that rubbish had been thrown down the steep banking beside the burn at the top of the glen and that a SC sign post had been pulled out from the top of the glen path. WO encouraged the public in general to report such incidents to SC via e-mail to info@stirling.gov.uk ; the information will then be directed to the appropriate department. PC Barr could also be informed.

j) Visitor parking for Mugdock Reservoir – Philip Graves (PG) reported that a suitable site had still to be allocated for a permanent car park to replace space lost from Glasgow Rd and that this was a condition of planning approval for the water treatment works. The enlarged Drumclog car park was originally intended for temporary use only. There had been fears that the temporary works parking area would become permanent, but this was not desirable for security reasons. Peter Spinney, (Mugdock Assoc.) has resigned from the Scottish Water conservation and recreation forum, due to dissatisfaction about the way this issue is being, or not being, addressed. PG will follow this up on behalf of the CC and raise the issue at the next forum meeting. He asked that CC members send him any comments in advance. It was suggested that parking space might be allocated in arrangement with Esporta. ACTION PG.

k) TACTRAN Regional Transport Strategy consultation – An executive summary had been sent to WO. He considered that the attached questionnaire was very simplistic. The overall plan is for an integrated system but does not, in his estimation, sufficiently address the needs of the south west area, especially regarding cycle networks, parking and public transport links to hospitals. He noted that only 16% of the population use public transport in the TACTRAN (Tayside and Central Scotland) area. The document can be seen in the library. WO will draft a response and circulate to members. ACTION WO

10. Correspondence:-

A list of correspondence received was circulated to CC members prior to the meeting. David Anderson, secretary, referred to the following items.

a) SC Stirling Local Transport Strategy 2006 - is available for consultation..

b) Telecommunications seminar to look at future sites – talk to SC and CCs on 21st March.

c) Scottish Executive National Planning Framework leaflets - distributed to CC members and members of the public.

11. Finance:- Alastair Smith, treasurer, reported that all bills had been paid.

12. Area community planning:-

New CC members had received an update from SC and will circulate it to other members and to Cllr Berrill.

13. A.O.B.

a) Notice Boards – John Gray was finding these difficult to use and will investigate replacement boards. He asked for any relevant literature to be passed to him.

b) Recent site visits – A member of the public asked if the CC would produce a minute of the recent site visits to Mr Pickard's estate on the moor, and to Mornish in Moor Rd, as these covered issues that were in the public interest that had not been noted in the minutes of the February CC meeting. There was an exchange of views ranging from, on the one hand, that the meetings had been of an informal and confidential nature, to the view that the CC represents the community and should be open and transparent, and should therefore have taken a note of the main findings. MV pointed out that the feed back from these visits was similar to that following a site visit to Edenmill estate. WO concluded that the CC should consider the implications of this issue for future site visits. He then closed the discussion.

14.. Dates of next meetings:

2nd April in the village club. 14th May in the school.