



STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 4th August 2008 in the Village Club

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

Apologies: Robert Flashman.

In attendance: -Cllr O'Brien, Pam Campbell, 7 public.

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

1. Welcome: - Philip Graves (PG) welcomed all present. The contact list and distribution arrangements for agendas was reviewed (PC Barr to be added) and PG offered to send agendas directly to any interested members of the public. ACTION PG

2. Minutes of last meeting:

a. Minutes of the June meeting: Approved. Proposed: John Gray. Seconded: Margaret Vass.

b. Matters arising:

- Helicopters – John Gray reported that he had not had any further response from Lothian Helicopters. No one present had noticed any flights taking place from Muirhouse Quarry over recent weekends. It was noted that weather patterns affected flight paths and that the company was currently active in the Erskine area. David Anderson, secretary, mentioned that he had received a letter from Bruce Crawford, MSP, about aircraft noise.
- Illegal caravan on Old Mugdock Rd. – Margaret Vass (MV) reported that she had received a letter that day from the Appeal Reporter upholding SC's enforcement action for removal of the caravan, although the Reporter had accepted that the timescale of 6 weeks, given by SC for the owner to repair the shed, was unreasonable. MV noted that the report was peppered with references to the 'remarkably sensitive area of Green Belt'. Willie Oswald referred to previous failed attempts to ascertain the ownership of the shed in order to get it demolished. It was agreed that the CC should ask that the shed be declared unsafe and therefore removed. It was also agreed that MV should acknowledge SC's speedy response to the unauthorised siting of the caravan. ACTION MV

3. Police report - In the absence of PC Barr there was no formal report.

David Anderson reported that he had witnessed parking along Mugdock Road, near the main entrance to Mugdock Country Park, at a time when there were many spaces in the east car park. It was thought that this might be a matter that the police could look into.

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

a. Site visit to Valhalla

Following an invitation from the owner's agent, some members of the planning group had attended a meeting with the agent and architect to look at the detailed plans. The proposed house was large, with five two storey wings, to accommodate the owner/manager and for entertaining clients; the design, materials and landscaping appeared to be tasteful and sensitive to the setting. Group members made it clear that they could not speak on behalf of the CC and a minute of the meeting was circulated to all CC members. The agent had subsequently asked MV to attend a visit with the SC planning officer but she had considered this to be inappropriate prior to submission of a detailed planning application. During general discussion (at the CC meeting) the following points were raised:

- The house was far too big particularly as it was originally understood that it was only for the (stable) manager and not the owner, and it was not necessary to entertain clients on site.
- Might the stable manager also require a house on site?
- Would a house and business of this nature require security fences?
- The extension to the stables did appear to indicate that business intentions were serious.
- The owners of an already well established horse breeding business at Kilmannan Farm, Blanefield, had been required to live in a caravan for 5 years before being granted permission for a house.
- It was disappointing that the owner had not been present at the site meeting to answer questions.

b. Outline application for a house in Campsie Dene Rd: - Despite strong opposition from the CC and members of the public, this had been recommended for approval and subsequently referred to the Planning Panel by Cllr O'Brien. The CC has been advised by Mick Stewart, Head of Planning, to attend the hearing and make a presentation.

c. Latest application for Ardunan Lodge. – This was expected to appear in the planning schedule shortly as recommended for approval. The application had been strongly opposed by the CC and had been referred to the Planning Panel.

Cllr O'Brien said that the date for both the above Planning Panel hearings was 25th September. CC representation had still to be decided.

d. Application for formation of a helipad at 20A Campsie Dene Rd. – Approved by SC.

e. Outline application for a house in garden grounds of 29 Glasgow Rd. – After looking at the plans the CC agreed neither to support or oppose the application. ACTION MV

5. Roads

Station Rd junction - David Anderson relayed a message from Bob Flashman, roads correspondent, to say that SC had looked at this junction and the next stage would be public consultation. Finlay Fountain thought that a speed camera would be the most effective and practical solution. It was pointed out that this had been requested at the beginning of the traffic management consultation for the A81, but the necessary criteria were not met; that speed cameras are a matter for the police whereas the current initiative is from the Council; that SC had allocated extra money towards roads - £3.5 million over the next 5yrs. Following a suggestion that the police be involved with the Council, Cllr O'Brien confirmed that this was already happening and that the Roads team had been improved.

6. Environmental issues

a. Lomond National Park boundaries review – public meeting to discuss options?

- Philip Graves explained that the CC was unsure of the general consultation process, of the pros and cons of being in the National Park, and of how best to ascertain the views of the village and of other communities in the area.
- Cllr O'Brien explained that - the boundary review was part two of the overall review of national parks and that there was no date set for this as yet - the LL&TNP operated differently from the Cairngorms NP and it has its own planning authority - there were widely differing opinions as to

the advantages and disadvantages of being in the park - the boundaries do not always match those of CCs - Fintry had decided not to pursue inclusion - some folk in Balfron would like to pursue it.

- Other comments raised were that if Killearn and Balfron communities were not interested in seeking inclusion then there was no point in SCC following it up; that some people felt that the management of the park was heavy handed and that there was lack of accountability in planning issues; that being in the park would protect the green belt; that national parks elsewhere in Britain were working well to protect the environment.
- There were various suggestions as to how to start the consultation process and PG suggested that it be included as an agenda item for the Area Community Planning Forum. It was finally agreed that Pam Campbell contact Fintry, Balfron and Killearn community councils to see if they were interested in having some kind of meeting.
- It was noted that details of the consultation could be found on the Government web site.

b. Ranger day with BTCV – Willie Oswald reported that he had been unable to attend and there was no feedback as yet from SC; the event had been organised by SC Access and Countryside teams and it had been arranged for a week day to allow a maximum of team members to attend.

c. Report from Elspeth Posnett (EP), environment correspondent.

- New flower tubs are being stored in the redundant recycling pavilion and EP was going to arrange for these to be painted when she was contacted by Andy Orr, on behalf of the football club, asking to take up last year's offer from the Criminal Justice Service (CJS), to paint the football pavilion. EP therefore suggested that the CJS also be asked to paint the tubs. Agreed. ACTION EP
- A local resident had written to SC about the poor state of the footpath leading from Leddriegreen to Kirkhouse Rd. EP pointed out that ownership of the path had not been clarified and Pam Campbell agreed to follow this up. EP noted that the path had been cleared of weeds last year by the CJS.
- EP had followed up a concern raised by a resident and discovered barbed wire on the banks of the burn beside the wooden bridge that links the play park to the football field. Pam Campbell offered to refer this to the relevant SC department.
- The hedge above Campsie View Drive had been cut without EP having to request it as previously.
- The basement of the Village Club had flooded once again.
- The school railings had been painted during the holidays but were spoiled by the crumbling brick base. In March 2006, Rebecca Maxwell, Head of Planning and Resources, had promised to speak to the Property Dept about the bricks and get back to EP, but had not done so. Pam Campbell said that Rebecca was no longer with that dept, but that she (Pam) would make inquiries.

d. Notice boards – Alastair Smith reported that he and John Gray had made an application to SC Community Pride Fund for £526 towards the provision of a new CC board (total cost £1026) for the grassy area beside the bank. Landowner permission has still to be confirmed. ACTION JG

e. Village signs. – AS had ascertained that the three Killearn village signs cost £3,052 but the supplier was no longer in business. AS will look for new suppliers and updated costs. ACTION AS

7. Consultation on CC governance– Scottish Executive survey

WO had been asked to review the paper and reported that:

- He had drafted a summary of the proposals and would circulate it to CC members shortly.
- As the consultation had been issued some time ago he had responded on behalf of the CC.
- The proposals were largely modelled on SC policy and he considered that the bulk of them were acceptable.
- Two proposal that differed from current SC policy were that a notice of CC meetings be displayed 10 days in advance; and that draft minutes be produced 7 days after the meeting – WO had argued that this was impractical unless the Council provided a secretarial service.
- He had agreed that there should be a common election day for all CCs.

- The question of corporate legal status was considered to be a divisive issue but he had thought this would not apply if it was made optional.

8. Correspondence

A list of correspondence had been circulated by David Anderson, secretary, prior to the meeting and he referred to the following items.

- a. SC re advertising CC vacancy elections** – It was agreed to send details of the vacancy in Mugdock ward. ACTION DA
- b. Central Scotland Fire and Rescue Service consultation** – Leaflets had been handed out to members and they were asked to respond individually. ACTION ALL
- c. SC consultation for application for pressured area status re affordable housing** – It was agreed to support the proposal to remove the right to buy until there was alternative housing. Proposed: WO. Seconded JG. ACTION DA
- d. SC distribution of Council agendas** – These will be circulated by email in future. DA said that he would forward them to CC members and omit them from the correspondence list.
- e. Stirling CND** - Invitation to participate in signing of the Scottish Covenant for Peace. – This was considered inappropriate for the CC.
- f. Association of Scottish Community Councils: ballot for reformed constitution.** - This had been passed to the chairman. Response due by 30/9/08.
- g. Invitation to Milngavie Water Treatment Works opening ceremony** (continued from last meeting) – DA had represented the CC and gave a brief review of the event.
- h. Tennis club** – JG referred to an email circulated prior to the meeting. The club was fund raising to refurbish the all weather court, now 10 years old. There was a shortfall of £3,000 / £4,000 (total cost £28,000) and the club wondered if the CC could make a contribution. Following discussion it was agreed that this would be inadvisable as there was a danger of creating a precedent. Pam Campbell offered to help source suitable funders.

9. Finance

Alastair Smith, treasurer, reported that he had applied for and received an admin grant of £378, and had renewed subscriptions to Scotways: The Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society and to Planning Aid for Scotland.

10. Promoting of community website and SCC financial support

- Philip Graves emphasised the need to increase public awareness of the site and noted that he had advertised it on the CC agenda. He reported that Alan Campbell had returned the CC's donation as it was not required but it was agreed that John Gray should discuss, with Alan, the possibility of using the money to provide a function for private and public CC consultation.
- It was agreed that second draft CC minutes could be placed on the website at the discretion of the chairman.

11. Report of SCC's meeting with SC Chief Executive Keith Yates – This was deferred to the next meeting prior to which CC members will have a short informal discussion.

12. AOCB

WO referred to his email circulated prior to the meeting - he had arranged for SC to replace the missing padlock on the locking pole at the entrance to the KGV football field only to discover that it had disappeared by the following day. A member of the public reported that it had been removed due to a misunderstanding, and would be replaced once the key holders had been given due notice. WO questioned the overall effectiveness of the locking pole and raised concerns about parking and speeding in the area but there was insufficient time to discuss these issues.

13. Dates of next two meetings: Mondays, 7.30pm, 1st September, 6th October, in the school.