



STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 4th February 2008 in the School

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

Apologies: Marjorie Peddie

In attendance: - PC Barr, Cllr Lambie, Pam Campbell (SC), 30 public.

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

2. **Welcome:** - Willie Oswald (WO) welcomed all present.

3. **Minutes of last meeting:** Approved with two amendments now incorporated into the final minutes. Proposed: David Anderson. Seconded: Alastair Smith.

4. **Police matters:** - Update from PC Barr.

a) **Crime report:** There were 13 crime files raised, 9 had been detected and most of these resulted from the road traffic campaign.

- There was one theft by house break-in at the Carbeth huts and inquiries are ongoing.
- During the winter road safety campaign (7th to 27th of January) 29 offences had been detected, eg vehicle defects, licence offences, careless driving and speeding.

b) **Road traffic accidents:** There had been 3 RTAs at the top of the sharp bend exiting the village to the south, and one, with slight injury, on the A81 at Duntreath.

c) **Dead deer:** PC Barr had arranged for the carcass in Campsie Rd to be removed.

d) **Speedier justice:** - Over the next 8 weeks the force will be conducting Operation Eclipse targeting four strands of crime, thefts; anti-social behaviour; domestic and family abuse; road safety and road crime; in order to fast track arrests and sentencing. There will therefore be more police in the area.

5. **Special Business** - Representatives of Scottish Power (SP) made a statement and answered questions regarding the recent spate of power cuts in parts of Blanefield.

The Blanefield end of the village is on a different circuit to the rest of the village where the line is underground; the tree cutting programme has been accelerated; the whole network is being surveyed; SP are working to improve customer service. SP will come back to the CC when the survey is completed.(Further details are attached as an appendix to these minutes.) After the discussion opportunity was given for members of the public and SP reps to discuss details.

6. Planning - Update from Margaret Vass (MV) planning correspondent.

a) Valhalla Section 75 – The CC has written to Mick Stewart (SC) expressing bitter disappointment at the approval of a house in the greenbelt and asking that the condition should tie the house to the specific stud farm business only (the house would then be demolished should the business fold), pointing out that the agents have specified that the house is being financed by private business, that the application is for a manager’s house and not for the owner, and also asking for conditions on tree planting and the removal of the leylandii along the A81. In reply MS said that demolition may require suspending standing orders as conditions can only be based on the decision reached at the Planning Panel which was limited to restricting the occupancy. The CC agreed to ask MS to consider the option that the house could be removed and built elsewhere should the business fail. (ACTION MV)
In response to concerns from members of the public, MV outlined the history noting the CC’s strong opposition to the application (see minutes Jan 08) and explaining that the conditions of approval were the only opportunity that the CC has to influence the final outcome as these had still to be agreed by the Planning Panel.

b) Proposed extension to shop at 65 Glasgow Rd - After looking at the plans the CC agreed neither to support or oppose, but to ask that the new window be similar to the existing one. It was noted that the extension was two storey but small. (ACTION MV)

c) Proposal for replacement house at Lower Lodge Blane Ave. - After looking at the plans the CC agreed neither to support nor oppose. It was noted that the house had already been demolished (ACTION MV)

d) Telecommunications masts –A register of masts in the SC area can be seen on line.

e) Enforcement issues

- Enforcement notice has been served for siting of caravan on land north of Valhalla, Old Mugdock Road.
- New case received by SC - importation of materials onto land and siting of portakabin at Moor Rd.
- It was noted that the current enforcement system is not very effective but that new planning legislation should lead to improvements.

f) Old Mugdock Rd – MV has not been sent a copy of the draft policy as promised, she will chase this up. (ACTION MV)

g) Planning seminar – WO had attended a seminar on the new planning act and he will produce a report on this before the next CC meeting. It is now possible for members of the public to log onto the Scottish Executive Planning web site to review consultation.

(ACTION WO)

7. Roads

a) 30mph warning sign. - No further response from SC regarding the delay in repairs. Pam Campbell offered to make inquiries at SC, and Cllr Lambie offered to contact the manufacturer.

b) Old Mugdock Rd (OMRd) policy – Cllr Lambie reported that SC had already discussed the proposals and decided the policy. The cost had almost doubled and would be passed on to the developer, and arguments for a footpath had not been listened to. (Cllr Lambie will send minutes of the Council meeting.) MV was utterly appalled that once again the CC had not been given the opportunity to comment on the proposals in spite of assurances to the contrary. Members of the public were concerned about the potential loss of rural character and were astonished that the findings of the Roads Dept. during the CALA inquiry had been ignored. (Cllr Lambie was asked to remind other cllrs of these findings.) They were also concerned

about the impact of increased traffic on recreational users of the road. The CC reassured the public that these points had been put forward by the CC and that the initial request was for a policy to stop any further development accessing onto OMRd.

c) Kirkland Avenue – Local residents were concerned about fast traffic where children were outside playing and would like to have a 20mph installed. Pam Campbell suggested that residents contact the Council at 0845 277 7000 or email info@stirling.co.uk where they are guaranteed a response within 14 days.

8. Environmental Issues

a) Proposed wind farm at Ballindalloch Moor.

- Finlay Fountain explained that he had called for a public meeting to address public concerns after having been approached by a resident in his ward. He had gone to the meeting with an open mind to listen to both sides of the argument and had come away convinced that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages - in particular that wind power was intermittent (only 35% efficient) and needed a back up source on permanent stand by; that disturbance of peat bog led to release of large amounts of carbon dioxide; that engineering works have been shown to upset local eco- systems and contaminate adjacent water courses; and that low level noise and amplitude modulation can cause health problems.
- John Gray (JG) reported that the CC had received an e-mail from the Blane Valley Carbon Neutral Group recommending that the CC neither support or oppose the application. JG considered there was nothing in the letter that undermined the arguments of EVAG.
- During discussion it was also noted that Npower had acknowledged that noise from the turbines would be heard in parts of Balfron when traffic there was not busy; that the site appears to be right on the border of an Exclusion Area, in a prominent site, clearly visible from the sensitive, excluded areas of the National Park or the top of the Campsies and from many parts of lowland Stirlingshire; that SC is currently working to define acceptable sites for wind farms; that in response to health concerns DEFRA has initiated inquiries into the issue of amplitude modulation from large wind turbines; that at the end of the public meeting a straw poll amongst Strathblane residents found a majority of 15:5 against the wind farm.
- In light of all these concerns the CC voted, with one abstention, to oppose the application.
(ACTION PG)

b) General up-date – The litter in Campsie Road appeared to have been blown away and maintenance of the hedge beside the village club was being re-examined, although it had been cut back last October.

c) Deer seminar – WO had attended the meeting and would circulate a short note on this before the next CC meeting.

d) Helipads – JG had circulated a draft letter addressed to Lothian Helicopters to raise concerns and initiate a dialogue about noise and intrusion affecting local residents by flights from Muirhouse Farm. The draft was approved.
(ACTION JG)

9. Correspondence

A list of correspondence had been circulated to members by David Anderson, secretary, prior to the meeting. There were no items of note.

10. Area Community Planning. Next meeting: 25 Feb, 7pm at Balfron High School.

11. Finance – Nothing to report.

12. A.O.B.

a) Up-date from Cllr - Cllr Lambie circulated a newsletter of his recent Council activities and reported that there would be a Council meeting on 28th Feb at which Roads were hoping to be allocated increased funding. He referred to recent successful collaboration between the three ward councillors in obtaining permission for a nursery at Balfron, and felt that this evidenced the advantages of the multi- ward system.

b) Planning Panel – It was agreed that the CC should write to SC Chief Executive regarding the failure of the consultation process regarding Valhalla and the policy for OMRd and also to ask that Planning Panel members should be required to debate issues openly and give reasons for their individual decisions. (ACTION WO & MV)

13. Dates of next two meetings. Mondays 3rd March in the school and 7th April at Village Club.

[Appendix: Scottish Power Document](#)