



STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 1st September 2008 in the School

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

Apologies: Fiona Murray, John Gray - late arrival, Pam Campbell (SC)

In attendance: - Cllr Berrill, PC Barr, 8 public.

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

1. Welcome: - Philip Graves (PG) welcomed all present.

2. Minutes of last meeting: Approved. Proposed: Elspeth Posnett. Seconded: Marjorie Peddie. PG noted that the draft minutes were on the community website prior to the meeting.

3. Police report - PC Barr apologised for not being at the August meeting. He gave an update and answered questions.

a. Crime report - There were 27 crimes recorded in the Blanefield area since the CC meeting of 4 June: these were varied in nature, some serious and 14 detected.

- 19 June – robbery on a bus travelling from Glasgow. A 22 year old male had been arrested and dealt with.
- Between 1 April and 24 June a quantity of copper was stolen from a radio mast in the Auchineden area and this could have created a dangerous situation.
- Between 1 April and 4 July 5 1/2 kilometres of copper cable, valued at £35,000, was stolen from junction boxes adjacent to the A81 between Milngavie and Strathblane. There were no witnesses. Theft of scrap metal is part of a growing national trend.
- Between 10 & 11 August a horse box was stolen from property in Old Mugdock Rd.
- Between 23 & 24 August, 13 chickens, as well as feeders and water troughs, were stolen from an allotment at the top of Cuilt Brae.
- One male was found in a vehicle with drugs and an offensive weapon.
- A number of assaults were linked to a local care home.
- 3 males from Drumchapel had been caught fishing without permission in the Carbeth area.

b. Road traffic collisions (RTC) – Due to the high number of RTCs, probably related to the poor weather, police had carried out a traffic campaign in the Balfron police area, using the radar gun and, since the June CC meeting, 53 road traffic offences had been detected.

- There were 13 RTCs: 11 were on the A81 and one of these, on the bend at Dumgoyach, had caused serious injury. There had been a number of others in the vicinity of this double bend and PC Barr had spoken to Cllr Lambie about what the Council might be able to do. Philip Graves reported that SC chief executive had told the CC that some money had been allocated for work in this area.

- c. Questions & Answers
- Asked about the recent damage to the Kirkhouse bus shelter, PC Barr said that he was not aware of this and it would probably not be a police issue unless alcohol was involved.
- Asked about the forthcoming deer commission meeting PC Barr said that he had not been contacted but would follow this up. It was agreed that Philip Graves (PG) and David Anderson would attend on behalf of the CC.

Following a question from Cllr Berrill, PG noted that the meetings were about general issues but had originally come about because of the high number of accidents in the area. PC Barr thought that the deer cull at Mugdock was continuing.

- Following questions about the problem of parking outside Mugdock Country Park during big events, PC Barr explained that the police are expected to respond to a request for help, but, as there is no official restriction to parking on the road, it is difficult to stop it. Rangers work within the park, and communicate by radio with police, but unlike the police they have no power to stop vehicles. Police can also cone off areas to prevent the formation of long queues of parked cars. The park authorities pay for these services and the evidence is that when the police are involved there are fewer problems.

Asked about problem parking at other times PC Barr thought that the only long term solution was clearway legislation, although the CC could ask the Council about clearway signs.

- d. **Annual report** - PC Barr handed out copies of the chief constables annual report.

4. Play park redevelopment – update from Simon Jones.

- Simon explained that he been involved with the Greenheart (Gh) group for several years, first with the work to upgrade the paths and now as chairman of the play park group which was working in partnership with the Community Development Trust. A business plan had been drawn up and the design had recently been amended following consultation with the community. There were two options: one for the play area only and the other to include a bike track around the lower open green space. The overall cost was £125,000 including drainage and landscaping. Plans were being drawn up to start local fund raising and submit grant applications and the group were looking for more helpers for this. Simon circulated a copy of the revised drawing and asked the CC for a letter of support.
- Following questions Simon clarified that: SC had no duty to provide but would pay architect fees, and insure, inspect and maintain the new play area; the quote included reinstating the library path which would be used as the vehicular access; elements of the design would be prioritised and the final plan would depend on how much money was raised(within an 18month period); the target was for 10-15% to be raised locally; the group was working with the School Parent Council to avoid competing over funding applications for the school MUGA; the existing roundabout may be removed by SC and Gh was asking for a temporary replacement.
- PG thought that there might be a possibility of getting a financial contribution through a section 75 planning agreement but this was considered only appropriate for large developments.
- PG was happy to write a letter of support from the CC. ACTION PG

5. Report on July's CC meeting with Keith Yates, SC Chief Executive.

Mick Stewart, Head of planning, and three councillors were also in attendance.

PG reported that the meeting had been called to address the CC's concern about the way its views frequently appeared to be ignored, particularly in relation to planning and traffic issues. There had been a wide ranging discussion and Keith Yates had been helpful. However since then there had been two further planning decisions dismissive of the CC's views, (see 7a), and this had led to the resignation of two CC members.

PG asked Finlay Fountain to read out his letter of resignation which also reflected the frustration of the CC as a whole, and PG then read out Alastair Smith's resignation letter. (AS had agreed to continue with all the projects in which he was involved and to carry out the duties of treasurer until another was appointed.) PG noted that Keith Yates had said that the CC should not get bogged down in planning issues and PG thought the CC should recognise that its influence was limited and that it needed to encourage more members of the public to write to SC about contentious applications.

6. CC vacancies

- The appointment of a new treasurer was deferred to the next meeting.
- David Anderson was asked to notify SC of the two new CC vacancies for the forthcoming by-election and to bring election notices to the next meeting. ACTION DA

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

a. Approvals for Ardunan lodge and house in Campsie Dene Rd.. (See point 5.)

Ardunan lodge.

- The CC was desperately disappointed not to have been granted a hearing at the Planning Panel especially when it had been encouraged by Mick Stewart to request this. MV was particularly aggrieved not to have been able to reference the Appeal Reporter's recent comments about the 'remarkably sensitive area of greenbelt', or to answer the applicant's solicitor's charge that the CC was deliberately postponing the hearing.
- In response to the first application the CC had asked that the lodge should not be demolished, however permission for a new house is now conditional on the lodge being demolished first.
- Because the application had been referred to the Planning Panel at an early stage the recommendation to approve had not been published in the planning schedule and so the public had not had the chance to comment.
- Whilst the Planning Panel had discretion not to grant a hearing it was considered surprising that they had done so when three councillors had supported the CC's request for one.
- The CC agreed to the request for a meeting from the head of the planning panel, Cllr MacPherson, and will invite all three councillors, along with PG, MV and John Gray. ACTION PG

New house in Campsie Dene Rd.

- Councillors had pushed for a CC hearing at the Planning Panel but it had been refused; however the planning officer had answered the points raised which centred around whether or not the house was needed for an agricultural business.

b. Application for electrical substation in Blanefield (just behind speed activated sign).

The Post House Gallery had expressed concern that the work was now scheduled for Nov/Dec instead of Oct and that this could have a detrimental effect on the business.

c. Enforcement issues

- An enforcement notice had finally been served on the residential caravan at Edenmill Farm. On behalf of the neighbours Leslie Malkin thanked the CC for their persistence in following this up.
- SC had received notice of non-compliance regarding wheel washing facilities (presumably at Muirhouse quarry).

d. Outline application for a house in Milndavie Rd – The CC agreed neither to support nor oppose. ACTION MV

e. Caravan off Old Mugdock Rd. – MV clarified that the Appeal Reporter had given until May 2009 for the caravan to be removed in order to allow time for the shed to be repaired. MV also noted that planning permission was needed to substantially repair the shed.

f. SC planning customer satisfaction survey – MV to respond. ACTION MV

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

a. A81 speed / traffic management

- The speed activated sign in Blanefield was operative and appeared to be having some effect.
- Traffic islands had not yet been installed beside Netherblane because SC was still waiting for the new design to be finished and supplied.
- It was hoped that consultation between SC, residents and safety officers, would take place shortly regarding Station Rd junction. Unofficial feedback was that a major change would cost millions and that SC is looking at the possible impact of traffic lights. Finlay Fountain thought that the speed activated sign had originally been installed to see if a speed camera was necessary.

b. General issues

Marjorie Peddie referred to the accidents at Dumgoyne (see police report 3b) and suggested that the CC also follow this up with SC as there had been 33 accidents there requiring an ambulance. Following discussion it was agreed to make inquiries as to what was currently being considered and then discuss this further at the next CC meeting. ACTION RF

9. Environmental issues

a. Village signs – Alastair Smith had initiated inquiries and was waiting for feedback.

b. National Park – It was noted that the review of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area (LLTNP) was an agenda item on the Community Area Planning Forum for 22 September. Elspeth Posnett and Marjorie Peddie agreed to attend on behalf of the CC. The CC also agreed to accept an offer from a local resident, who is an architect on the LLTNP, to speak to a CC meeting. ACTION EP & MP

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

- Arrangements had been made with the Criminal Justice Service (CJS) to paint the outside of the football pavilion, the adjacent wooden bridge and the new flower tubs. The CJS will also move the tubs and provide the compost. The CC will provide materials and liaise with the football club. ACTION EP
- Pam Campbell had reported that she was seeking to clarify the Council's position regarding the crumbling bricks supporting the school railings. She had also confirmed that SC has no responsibility for maintaining the path that links Leddriegreen Rd to Kirkhouse Rd (it is not a core path and is not recorded as a right of way). A local resident will speak to BT about the hazardous manhole cover.

10. Community consultation: Scottish Executive survey

PG reported that he had received the bi-annual newsletter of the Association of Scottish Community Councils which comments on the current consultation. He will forward the website link to CC members. ACTION PG

11. Notice boards: grant application success

Now that funding is in place John Gray will request permission from the landowners to erect a board on shared land by the bank. (*see 13a*) ACTION JG

12. Correspondence

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

- a. Deer Commission** – Invitation to meeting on 22 September (see 3c). ACTION PG & DA
- b. Consultation on town centres & local high streets** – not considered relevant to CC area.

13. Finance – written update from Alastair Smith (AS), treasurer.

a. Grant award - The CC had been awarded £500 from SC Community Pride fund towards a new notice board near to the bank. £500 was already allocated to this project and this coupled with the grant means that only about £30 is needed from CC funds for this project.

b. Photocopier – Income from the copier in the library was seriously down and AS could not get the meter readings, paper usage and cash takings to reconcile. Lynne James has said that she will monitor all aspects of the photocopier's operation.

c. CC funds - The current a/c is sitting at £1767.59 and there is £2704.37 in the Gold Account.

14. Community website – The CC will continue to promote this as much as possible and JG will discuss this with Alan Campbell, web master. ACTION JG

15. Dates of next two meetings - Mondays, 7.30pm, 6 October & 3 November in the school.