



# STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at 7.30pm, Strathblane Primary School

### **Present**

Philip Graves (Chair), David Anderson (Secretary), Margaret Vass (Vice Chair/Planning), John Gray, Elspeth Posnett

PC David McNally; Cllr Graham Lambie; 11 public

### **1. Welcome from the Chair & any apologies.**

Willie Oswald, Robert Flashman, Fiona Murray (Treasurer), Marjorie Peddie; Pam Campbell (Stirling Council)

### **2. Minutes of December's meeting.**

The Minutes of the December 2008 meeting, circulated in advance, were approved. Proposed EP, seconded MV.

### **3. Police Report**

PC David McNally reported on the past month's events.

On 5 Dec there had been a substantial theft of red diesel from storage tank at Craigaliam Loch. On 6 Dec a party in the Edmonstone Hall involved vandalism of toilets, which is under investigation. Christmas morning 1.30am at Kirkhouse Inn a disturbance resulted in a smashed window – culprit spent Christmas morning in Stirling police custody. New Year's Day possession of drugs was found. A drink driving offence was detected following an alert from residents. There had been 4 road traffic accidents in Balfron/Blanefield area: at Milndavie Rd junction a minor collision; a vehicle in ditch above Devil's Elbow; a vehicle fault caused the car to overturn just S of the Kirkhouse Inn roundabout; another minor incident from loss of control.

### **4. Scottish Power – Report on site selection for sub-station.**

PG read a report from WO re Scottish Power developments. It remains difficult finding a site. WO met SP representative, but of 8 places reviewed out on A81 only 2-3 feasible. The ideal

one is opposite Ballewan Crescent but landowner reluctant. Another is on the other side of the A81 beside Ballewan Crescent.

## **5. Planning Matters.**

### **a) Replacement house for 22 Campsie Dene Road**

Plans were reviewed – there was concern not so much over the increased footprint, so much as scale & elevation on a site where the existing house is prominent & somewhat in front of the ‘building line’. Switching smaller houses for big houses is generally undesirable. Drainage is an issue on this private road. Agreed 'neither support nor object', urging planners to review the above. **Action MV**

### **b) Edenmill application for a house and tea room**

This is 2 applications: 08/00825/DET Part change of use to form tea room, extending building & extending play area; 08/00824/OUT House on access road and siting of landscape business.

MV noted, by way of background, that the separate application for an estate manager's house was still pending. What had been withdrawn was the justification, not the application itself.

SCC remains concerned how these developments are to be justified, when previous applications have been refused. The new applications are confusing as they refer to the need for accommodation on site to support animals, which can be a relevant planning ground. At the same time, however, the submitted grounds ask that these justifications not be considered in isolation from the other businesses, which are not valid grounds. SCC knows from evidence submitted in the appeal & approval of Auchineden House (different applicants), revealed that Edenmill's leases for Christmas tree business, cattle etc. were to lapse in spring 2009, and would not be renewed. Only a small minority of the livestock can be on this site, so how is this location central?

Members were disappointing the applicant Mr Gibson was not here to explain, as we need again to understand more about the business plan. How does applicant propose to preserve jobs etc. after loss of lease? Are we to suppose that the plan is to relocate the landscaping business to the farm? Planning permission to do this was refused in 2002, although apparently the business continues from site (local residents confirmed 6-7 vans are permanently based there).

At Hearings attended in Jan 2006 the planning Panel chair urged the applicant to come forward with comprehensive plans for the whole site and warned against a repeat of the rash of retrospective planning applications that had been seen up to then.

In short the CC still has difficulty in understanding plan. The Land Use Report attached to the applications was considered, but left us full of questions.

One of the neighbours present had obtained a ‘Business Plan for Edenmill’ from the planning officer, which for some reason was not online. Passed to MV. The neighbour asked that the Council be urged to verify the claims.

For both applications, all present agreed that the access road is the major stumbling block for the increase in business activity at this site. Neither the neighbours nor SCC have principled objections to the businesses *per se*, but the present access is inadequate for present visitor and good traffic, and increased activity will only make things worse. Concerns include the poor sight lines at the junction with the main road, and also the long single-track section which is not suitable for meeting vehicles. Other businesses have to make proper provisions for access and this business should be no exception.

Apparently the preferred southern access using the farm track running to the bridge south of Carbeth Inn had been blocked by the land owner. Owners alongside the current single track road have declined to contribute land to permit widening. It was recalled that application for small park in 1980s was rejected for reasons of inadequate access. At that time, a middle way for a new access had been considered, running more directly to the main road from the site, and perhaps that should be revisited.

Agreed MV will write in objection, re-using arguments submitted on previous objections.  
**Action MV.**

JG also suggested that we rebuke SC strongly for not placing on the online system the key 'Business Plan' document when (a) recent applications had been made very contentious by virtue of the fact that the decision makers had access to far more extensive materials than the CC or the public, and (b) from the history of the present case it should have been apparent that the Business Plan was a fundamental part of any consideration.

#### **c) Demolition & replacement of house at Norbreck.**

Plans were reviewed for a very modern looking house. It was noted that the applicant has existing planning permission for extension, but found the structure of the existing building would make a poor foundation. Rather than build over it, the applicant (present) explained the replacement building would be better looking.

Agreed to neither support nor oppose. **Action MV.**

In reply to a question from the floor, it was explained that the CC would rarely actively support an application, especially for a private house, so was normally either opposed or neutral. Approval depends on many technical criteria which the planning officer is best placed to judge & decide, and CC should not seek to override objections from residents which have not been heard.

#### **c) SCC's response to SC's Housing in the Countryside draft policy.**

JG had submitted a lengthy document on behalf of CC. There was not time to discuss but progress is awaited.

#### **d) Consultation on Local Development Plan**

Comments due in shortly. MV thinks the timetable is not bad, except one key consultation stage will coincide with CC elections.

MV to be contact person.

## **e) National Planning Framework – NPF2 consultation.**

MV explained NPF2 is required because NPF wasn't consulted on properly. Members to review materials.

## **6. Roads.**

### **a) A81 and Speed/Traffic Management**

GL confirmed Duntreath realignment work expected later this year.

### **b) General**

A resident concerned about lack of white lining. E.g. side lines at Devil's Elbow, roads by Buchlyvie. JG mentioned the quality of the white lining that had been done seems poor – lines at roundabout, zebra etc. are already faded to nothing.

Carbeth residents spoke about state of road through to Carbeth. GL noted that Cuilt Brae maintenance is on the council's schedule for 2009-2010. £50k+£50k over two years. The state was so bad along the whole road it is doubtful whether £100k fix it.

It was noted that 25+ residents can raise a petition for matters which the Council must then consider – the meeting agreed this was a good idea and signatures will be collected without delay. Full range of measures to be included. **Action PG?**

Resident asked about OMR gritting policy. Unfortunately we must accept that minor roads are not a priority for the council – hard enough to get e.g. Crow Road gritted. Can request salted grit bin – seemingly this is often empty.

## **7. Environmental issues.**

### **a) Village signs**

Members are Considering wording & locations: WO and JG had both circulated suggestions. Agreed to review scale and proportions of previous proposal to reduce building costs. Suggestion to display consultation in Library. Suggestion to consult through next Blane in March. Heritage Society another source of expertise. Community involvement important. One resident questioned whether this project is worthy of the expenditure.

**WO nominated to lead on this after his return.**

### **b) Village tubs**

FM can organise work party when weather more fitting.

### **c) Christmas Tree**

– success!

**d) Noticeboard.**

AS may help. Do we have to spend financial year? Question for FM/Alastair Smith. JG to chase planning permission, RBS consent. **Action JG**

**8. The Blane – Contributions & Advertising.**

Members & residents are urged to think of potential *new* advertisers in order to boost *The Blane's* revenues without tapping the same loyal sources. **Action ALL.**

**9. Correspondence.**

DA had circulated a list to members.

**10. Finance.**

Nothing to report in absence of Treasurer

**11. Promoting of strathblanefield.org.uk website – Planning section?**

**PG/AC to progress.**

**12. Community Development Trust – update on Village Survey project**

PF says Grant application has been filed. News awaited.

**13. AOCB.**

**14. Confirmation of next two meeting dates.**

DA confirmed the next two dates and proposed dates for all 2009: **2 February, 2 March,** 6 April\*, 11 May, 8 June (AGM), 3 August\*, 7 September, 5 October, 2 November, 7 December 2009,

All 7.30pm in Strathblane Primary School except \* in Village Club.

**MINUTES APPROVED AT FEBRUARY MEETING**