



# Strathblane Community Council

Minute of the Meeting

Monday 11 May 2009

7.30pm

Strathblane Primary School

Page 1

**Meeting called by:**

Philip Graves, Chair of Strathblane Community Council

**Type of meeting:**

Community Council Meeting and General Meeting to discuss Housing Needs in Strathblane

**Note taker:**

Moira Drennan

**Attendees:**

Philip Graves	Chair of the Community Council
Margaret Vass	Vice Chair and Planning Convenor
David Anderson	Secretary
Bob Flashman	Roads
Elsbeth Posnett	Environment/tubs
Willie Oswald	
Fiona Murray	Treasurer
Patsy Fischbacher	The Blane
P.C. David McNally	Central Scotland Police
Claire Milne	Principal Planning Officer, Stirling Council
Margaret Turner	Regeneration Manager Housing Department, Stirling Council
Tony Teasdale	Director, Rural Stirling Housing Association
Pam Campbell	Stirling Council
Members of the Public	

**Agenda topics:**

- 1 Welcome from the Chair and any apologies**
- 2 Appointment of new minute taker**
- 3 Discussion on Housing Needs in Strathblane**  
General meeting to discuss housing needs in the village, as part of Stirling Council's consultation for the Local Development Plan
- 4 Minute of Meeting, April 09**
- 5 Police Report**
- 6 Planning Matters**
- 7 Roads**
- 8 Environmental Issues**
- 9 Correspondence**
- 10 Finance**
- 11 Community Development Trust**
- 12 AOCB**
- 13 Dates of the next two meetings**

Philip Graves welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the visiting speakers: Tony Teasdale, Pam Milne and Margaret Turner. Moira Drennan was introduced as the minute taker for the meeting.

Apologies: John Gray

Marjory Peddie

## Police Report

P.C. David McNally

P.C. David McNally reported on local Police matters:

- 15 April Minor assault at Glasgow Road
- 17 April A generator was stolen from the roadworks near the Duntreath.
- 19 April Theft from the Visitors' Centre at Mugdock Country Park
- 16 April Vandalism to the fence at Gowkstone Road. The damage may have been the result of a perceived restriction of access.
- 1 May A car was set on fire in the East Car Park. This crime remains undetected.
- 3 May Disorder in Station Road; parties out of hand, a few assaults, one serious. One person was charged, several arrests were made.
- 4 May Livestock worried by dogs on the Gowkstone Road. P.C. McNally advised that responsible owners should keep dogs leashed when exercising them near livestock, especially at lambing time.  
Philip Graves noted how Mugdock Country Park had notices to encourage dog owners to keep their pets on lead on the Moor during the nesting season.
- 20 April A vehicle collided with the bridge at Carbeth; no injury.  
April Almost a collision in Glasgow Road; a young girl was crossing unseen from behind a bin lorry. The girl escaped injury. Other matters briefly mentioned were: youths hanging around at Kirkburn Road and a litter problem near the library.

Philip Graves noted a fatal road accident at Ellangowan Road, an incident dealt with by East Dunbartonshire Police.

Mr Porter informed about a discussion, Young People Nowadays...

to be held on Saturday 16 May 10.30 to 12.30 at Balfron High School.

The panel of speakers:

May Nicholson Project Manager of The Preshal Trust,

Ken Wilson, Lecturer and Senior Tutor in Youth Work and

Ian Monteague Depute Head of Rosshall Academy.

This open meeting was organised by the West Stirlingshire branch of the Labour Party.

**Presentation:**

Claire Milne defined the Local Development Plan as a new style of development planning, stemming from the Planning etc [Scotland]Act 2006. It was considered to be simpler, in that it was one plan as compared to the former two-tiered plan and had a 20 year time frame. The LDP would ultimately replace the Structure Plan and the Local Plan. Included in the LDP were relevant authority policies and its proposals for land use. These policies included housing, business, industry, transport etc. The plan would contain a vision statement, a broad statement of how Stirling would develop in the future.

- The LDP would allocate land for development for a 10 year period
- The plan would have a time frame in which sufficient land was identified
- Housing needs would be identified over a shorter period
- The population projection for the area was important to the formulation of the plan. Stirling was considered an attractive place to live and the population was on the rise
- Housing needs and demographics of the area would determine the types of housing
- Economic and business trends were important factors

The Local Development Plan would pull all these strands together, set objectives and outline how these objectives were to be achieved.

Claire Milne stressed the importance of wide consultation with business, local developers, local community groups and the importance of feedback on local housing needs and other issues, such as the protection of Green Belt. An important part of the process was evidence gathering.

Local people's views were important in the planning process on issues such as the extension of the conservation area in the village, the development of renewable energy schemes. These were issues that needed to be teased out.

There will be a 3 year timescale to gather local people's views and put forward ideas

**Presentation:**

Margaret Turner spoke about the local housing strategy, how it tied in with the Local Development Plan and the process of joint consultation with communities.

The Local Housing Strategy looked at the needs of different groups; single people, older people and aimed to quantify the housing needs of the people in Stirling.

Stirling Council had 5000 council houses. Due to the 'right to buy' initiative, there were 58 council houses left in Strathblane and only 3 larger than 3 bed roomed. Of the 5000, there were only 300 re-lets

It was important to have the right housing, in the right place, for the right people. An important consideration was how to determine people's needs and how to meet them. Aspirational needs were also of importance.

Philip Graves asked how land could be acquired.

Pockets of land could be identified through landowners. Landowners could approach the Council directly and offer a viable site. Information could be supplied through the Scottish Rural Property and Business Association: there was no special way. Information was shared between Council Departments.

Another question was raised regarding the timescale for the Main Issues Report. This was until the end of June and expressions of interest until September. Claire Milne considered that questionnaires were a good way to engage people, providing they were not too onerous, just sufficiently comprehensive to get some information back. Claire Milne was asked to suggest suitable questions for inclusion. It was however considered that Stirling Council should not rely on the Community Council's questionnaire and that it was Stirling Council's job to collect views on planning issues.

**Presentation:**

Rural Stirling Housing Association was formed 20 years ago in response to the lack of affordable housing in the Stirling area. The aim of this independent organisation was to provide and manage high quality affordable housing, to meet the needs of communities in north and west rural Stirling. The membership fee was £1.00 and the membership of mainly tenants, totalled 350. Members elected a management committee of 15. The headquarters of the organisation was in Doune.

RSHA were developers and managers of rented accommodation and were registered social landlords

Affordable housing was mainly developed through Housing Association grants. The RSHA worked in partnership with Local Councils and provided a variety of accommodation, from bungalows to cottage flats, meeting a variety of needs, such as those for people with mobility difficulties and providing types of housing not delivered by anyone else.

Willie Oswald questioned the low membership fee. Tony Teasdale replied that people would join if they were interested and that the £1.00 fee was a statutory requirement.

Mr Teasdale distributed copies of Rural Stirling Housing Association's Annual Report 2007/2008

**Philip Graves invited questions to the speakers.**

- **Margaret Vass** thought the Expressions of Interest process seemed rushed and was glad to hear of the extended September deadline. Claire Milne pointed out that there was no pressure to come up with specifics; vague indications, ideas would suffice.
- Margaret Vass questioned where in development planning process could local communities affect local housing strategy. Margaret Turner assured that there would be lots of sessions between now and autumn, Claire Milne then outlined the programme and timetable for preparing the plan and public involvement in the plan. From October 2009 to 2010 would be the period for local community groups to comment on the Main Issues Report.
- **Philip Graves** pointed out that the housing market area was bigger than the council boundaries and that this should be taken into account. Mr Graves then spoke of the supply and demand effect on house prices and questioned if this projection was included in the assessment of housing needs.

Claire Milne said market demand for housing and income levels were both factors influencing housing needs.

- **Willie Oswald** asked if there was any collaboration with East Dunbartonshire and pointed out that the developments in Lennoxton would impact on housing.

Claire Milne was aware of cross boundary issues and acknowledged that Strathblane related closely to East Dunbartonshire and was aware of the need for Stirling to get into debate with East Dunbartonshire.

- **Patsy Fischbacher** asked if the Community Council identified need, how could it be guaranteed that it remained as this and not simply an opening up of land for developers. Claire Milne replied that if there was a need for particular housing, specific tenure must be clear and there would be need for evidence. Clear parameters were essential and it must be clear to developers that these would remain in perpetuity. Tony Teasdale explained the shared equity scheme and the 80% golden share that ensured control was retained over how the property was sold on. Claire Milne added that policies of affordable housing were well established. Section 75 Agreements bound developers to build a specific type of housing and this was a legal agreement.
- A question was raised on the issue of green belt and whether or not it still gave added protection. Claire Milne replied there had been a change in Scottish government policy and the objectives were now different. The new criteria were landscaping, open space recreation and the long-term development of the boundary of the settlement. The Green Belt was up for review. An independent review would take place in the next couple of weeks, until July. Consultants would then make recommendations for the Council to consider. The Green Belt was open to legal challenge. The Council was obliged to reflect Scottish Government policy.
- There followed some general discussion on the collection of evidence. Claire Milne considered the questionnaire to be important, as the percentage of affordable housing must be clearly stated in the Development Plan. Surveys and public meeting were expensive items for the limited budget of the Community Council. Tony Teasdale pointed out that the tenants of RSHA could not be expected to cover costs, but would consider the matter. Claire Milne had an extremely small budget but considered that maybe the team would facilitate the exercise. Philip Graves asked for sample questionnaire questions.

The minute of the April meeting was approved, subject to minor alterations and corrections. Willie Oswald proposed the minute, which was then seconded.

John Gray will send out the amended minute.

### **Planning Matters Margaret Vass**

- The house at land west of Sosna, Moor Road

The planning application was neither supported nor opposed.

- House in the field east of Old Mugdock Road, in place of derelict barn

This application was discussed in detail and vigorously opposed.

- Reporter's decision on Kilmardinny, Milngavie

Philip Graves opposed the building of 500 new houses and pointed out there were 300 on the original development plan.

Concern was expressed on the closure of the Allander Sports Centre. The centre would be demolished before another was rebuilt, which would have an adverse effect on sports facilities in the area on Judo, gymnastics and swimming clubs.

Philip Graves will write a letter and then send to the appropriate officials and representatives in EDC. Willie Oswald suggested emphasising that there should be no closure until the replacement is operational and that East Dumbarton should consider the interests of the whole community, not simply the property developers.

### **Roads Bob Flashman**

- The speed-activated signs should be operational imminently.
- Some potholes remain; some were fixed, others not.
- At Station Road, traffic lights would be feasible, as would be improving the footpath. Consideration was given to slowing down traffic before the junction.
- Refuge islands at the monument and Netherblane. It was considered that a chicane system and an island would work best at the monument and at Netherblane, only an island. Awaiting proposal.
- At the school gates in Kirkburn Road, the white lines and zig-zags have been removed. This has created a safety hazard for children who faced parked cars when coming out of the school gates. Bob Flashman suggested parental pressure through the school but also promised to take the matter direct to Brian Roberts at Stirling.
- In front of the Kirkhouse Inn, lorries were having great difficulty negotiating the mini-roundabout. The close proximity of the refuge island was thought to cause lorries to stray over the grass verge.
- Stirling District signs are missing. The signs were stolen 7-10 years ago for their aluminium content and have not been replaced.
- The junction of Milndavie Road and Old Mugdock Road; at this dangerous corner there were lines on the east side but not the west.
- The children's roundabout was to be replaced at the end of June. [John McKay]

### **Environmental Issues Elspeth Posnett**

- The village tubs have been removed for painting and renovation. Elspeth Posnett was congratulated on her much appreciated work and effort.
- Algae in the phone box in Dumbrock Road was to be cleaned up by British Telecom.

#### **Community Action Day 26 July 09**

Willie Oswald advised that Stirling Council Ranger Service was organising this event. Volunteers were needed on the day. **Importantly**, suggestions were needed as to which areas of the village would benefit from the action. People should advise Douglas Flynn if they planned to attend.

'Strathblane

A chance to give something back to the local environment by giving some time and energy to a part of Strathblane in need of some TLC. Watch for the posters nearer the time.' **Stirling Focus** Spring 2009

### **Correspondence David Anderson**

- The Way Ahead: General Practice BMA
- Gaelic Place Names: Standing Order 16. Willie Oswald expressed an interest in this topic of dual place names. David Anderson passed the letter from Stirling Council to Willie Oswald.
- NHS Forth Valley, 27 May 09. Anyone interested see David Anderson, emails to chairman or secretary.
- Best Practice for Community Councils, Margaret Vass suggested this document was useful reading for all members.

### **Finance**

- **No Report**
- Elspeth Posnett reminded the council of the cost of lets for meetings held in the village club which had taken place in the past and remained unpaid as SCC had not been invoiced: 10 meetings at £12.00. This was approved. A contribution of £12.00 to the electricity bill for Christmas tree lighting was also approved. Elspeth Posnett will invoice the secretary for payment.

- A supplementary administration grant will be submitted to cover secretarial costs [n.b. calendar year not tax year]

#### **CD Trust**

- Bob Flashman reported that the survey cost £12,000. A small working group was to be set up. Philip Graves was invited and agreed to join the steering group
- £106,000 had been allocated for the energy audit and there was to be a meeting with the contractor in September. There was to be an opportunity for all houses to have a thermal energy photo to determine heat loss. The £106,000 would also cover training and advice on how to improve insulation.
- Willie Oswald suggested contacting both Fintry and Comrie and attending any open evenings and days to glean further information on the success of the programme.

### **Dates of next 2 Meetings:**

8 June 09 AGM in Strathblane Primary School

3 August 09 in the Village Club