

Draft Minute of Strathblane Community Council Meeting

September 09 Strathblane Primary School, 7.30pm

Attendees

Philip Graves	Chair of the Community Council
Margaret Vass	Vice Chair and Planning Convenor
David Anderson	Secretary
Fiona Murray	Treasurer
Bob Flashman	Roads
Elsbeth Posnett	Environment/tubs
John Gray	Web/IT/Planning
Pam Campbell	Rural Development Worker Stirling Council
David McNally	Police Constable, Central Scotland Police
Harry Doy	Project Engineer, Roads Department, Stirling Council

Apologies

Willie Oswald	Community Council member
Colin O'Brien	Councillor, Forth and Endrick Ward 2

Agenda

- 1 Welcome from the Chair and Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the last meeting August 09 and Matters Arising
- 3 Police Report
- 4 Roads
 - **Presentation by Harry Doy**, Project Engineer, Roads Department, Stirling Council
A81/Station Road Junction
 - Other
- 5 Planning Matters
 - a Planning decision-making on the Strathblane Community Council
 - b Ardunan Farm – further application for a farm house.
 - c Detailed plans for new house at Corrieknowe, Campsie Dene Road
 - d Other decisions pending: see Stirling Council's Public Access at http://planpub.stirling.gov.uk/publicaccess/tdc/DcApplication/application_searchform.aspx
- 6 Community Development Trust
 - a Progress with Village Survey questionnaire.
 - b The appointment of 2 Energy Auditors/Advisors for Strathblane
- 7 Local Development Plan
 - a New Timetable
 - b Strathblane Community Council's co-operation with the Carbon Neutral Group
- 8 Environmental issues
 - a Village signs and Notice Boards
 - b Village tubs
 - c Stirling Council's Wind-Farm Planning Policy Consultation
- 9 Finance
 - a Administration Grant and The Blane contribution.
 - b Photocopier future? Alternative sources of revenue?
- 10 Correspondence
- 11 AOCB

12 Confirmation of next two meeting dates

1 Welcome from the Chairman

Philip Graves welcomed everyone and thanked Margaret Vass for so effectively chairing the council meeting on 3 August. Apologies were received from Willie Oswald and Councillor Colin O'Brien

2 The minute of the last meeting was approved, proposed by John Gray and seconded by Margaret Vass.

Matters Arising

Mr Pickard's address to the council, 3 August 09

David Anderson advised that as Mr Pickard's planning application had been included on the August agenda, Mr Pickard was entitled to speak at the meeting. It was considered important, that members of the public and planning applicants should be encouraged to attend council meetings and freely express opinions. John Gray believed that there should be more from more people, rather than less from one.

For future presentations lasting longer than 10 minutes, advance notice was welcomed. This would allow the item to be formally listed on the agenda, be afforded full consideration and openly debated.

Mr Morris challenged 2 minutes points made by Mr Pickard, August 09.

- Mr Morris objected to wording of the recent local petition being described as 'inflammatory'.

Petition against Development on Dumbrock Moor:

We strongly object to the above applications for development on Dumbrock Moor. This area is adjacent to the Mugdock Country Park, it is a precious part of the Green Belt and it includes a designated SSSI. It is an area used extensively for recreational purposes and is enjoyed by many walkers, horse riders and cyclists from Strathblane and beyond."

- Mr Morris and other representatives from Moor Road, refuted the claim by Mr Pickard that flooding had stopped in Moor Road, as reported in the minute of the August meeting.

3 Police Report: Police Constable David McNally

- There was still no School Crossing Patrol Officer in post. PC McNally deputised when his shift schedule permitted.
- Thefts of JCB equipment and plant. On 29 June there had been theft of equipment from the Country House and in August a JCB and dumper truck had been stolen from Campsie Dene Road. PC McNally asked everyone if they would inform the Police if any JCB equipment was seen moving about at night or weekends, or being moved around on low loaders.
- There was a break-in on Moor Road on 7 August. Jewellery was stolen. The window on door was broken and access to the house gained by opening the door with keys left in the lock. PC McNally advised to keep both house and car keys hidden.
- There was a theft of binoculars from a static caravan at Arduan farm.
- Vandalism at Cuilt Brae during the time of road repairs. This was thought to be caused by an individual motivated by lack of access during the road resurfacing period.
- Road traffic Incident on Stockiemuir Road. Two people were seriously hurt, in a head-on car collision.
- PC McNally was questioned as to why there were no speed traps in Blanefield. PC McNally pointed out mobile speed traps were in operation. There were speed boards in Police cars stationed frequently at the exit of Ballewan Crescent.

- Camping and litter on the moor was raised. PC McNally pointed out that camping was allowed for a maximum of three days on open ground and that campers must act responsibly. A no camping policy would be impractical to enforce. PC McNally offered to liaise with the Park Rangers at the Visitors' Centre regarding the litter on Dumbrook Moor.

4 Presentation by Harry Doy, Project Engineer, Roads Department, Stirling Council

Mr Doy introduced a proposed plan for the Station Road B 821/A81 junction. There was an urgent need to provide a safe crossing for those using the junction and for nearby residents.

The cause of the problem was excessive speed and poor line of sight. The geometry of the B821 was poor and involved a steep hill start.

A light controlled junction was considered, but there were risks for traffic travelling north to south. There was a crest in the hill, followed by a bend and cars might slam into others sitting below the ridge of the hill. Traffic speed needed to be reduced before cars reached this point.

The three-point plan involved:

- 1 the removal of a grass verge and the creation of a chicane in front of the converted church on the Glasgow Road
- 2 the improvement of site lines and pavement improvement at the junction itself
- 3 the installation of a traffic signal scheme at the A81/B821 junction

Mr Doy then outlined the proposed traffic calming measures:

- The creation of a flatter dwelling area for cars approaching up Station Road. This raised table-top would also improve visibility
- Pushing out part of the pavement at the junction A81/B821
- As the Netherblane junction had poor width of road to allow for speed reduction measures, a chicane effect was to be created further along the road, removing the grass verge from in front of the converted church

Questions were invited

How effective would the chicane be?

Mr Doy predicted the speed of cars would be reduced below 30mph for the 85th percentile. The measure would not be a panacea but would solve many issues.

Mr Robert Gray challenged the effectiveness of the proposed measure and pointed out that the proposed chicane would throw heavy traffic close to the side of the converted church, increasing damage to the building from traffic vibration.

The removal of the grass verge and the building of a chicane would create an extreme danger to those entering or exiting the property. The chicane would create a blind exit; and on entry, traffic would be stopped on the Glasgow Road. If Stirling Council removed the safety zone of the grass verge, residents' lives would be put in danger and the safety of other road users would be compromised.

Why can't traffic lights be installed at the old Post Office?

This junction has been studied, but physically, speeds needed to be reduced.

What about speed bumps?

Speed bumps were unsuitable for bus routes as passengers could be thrown in the air. Speed cushions were preferable as they reduced the speed of cars and larger vehicles could straddle them.

Margaret Vass pointed out that traffic has been effectively slowed down in other Stirlingshire villages and cited examples such as Buchlyvie where there were countdown signs, in and out of the village. In Strathblane there were none from the north, only a variable speed sign that worked intermittently.

Mr Doy was aware the disadvantages of the proposed chicane to the residents of the converted church, if and especially until the 3 parts of the programme were completed. There would likely be substantial and prolonged delays. Landowners could delay matters, e.g. if land were to be purchased, work could be done within a reasonable time scale. If not, compulsory purchase could admittedly, take years.

Why was there no fixed site speed camera on entrance to the village?

These cameras were felt to be an effective deterrent to speeding drivers. PC McNally informed that there were no static site cameras in the Stirlingshire area and that mobile units were considered the way forward. This was a management decision and a justification of the decision could be found on the council website.

It was argued that average speed cameras were effective on motorways, but less so in villages, as speeding drivers come out of their homes, speed up, but do not get caught on camera. Others disagreed.

Other traffic calming measures were put forward as alternative suggestions to the proposed chicane; crash barriers, speed bumps, false chicanes, and roundabouts

Mr Doy continued, and suggested that the first part of the plan could be built this year.

Traffic lights were to cost an estimated £35,000, although the biggest cost would be the compulsory purchase of the land at Ballewan for a roundabout. The landowner could hold up the process for years.

There were absolutely **no** guarantees that all of the scheme would be financed in the foreseeable future.

What about a chicane on the Netherblane side of the road?

The present land use was parkland. Mr Doy foresaw difficulties, such as moving the BT fibre optic ducts and possibly objections from residents with communal ownership of the property.

Margaret Vass questioned Mr Doy as to why there was no proper signage to slow down traffic, or count down signs

Mr Doy said there were rumble strips. Elspeth Posnett questioned the existence of these strips and and suggested that Mr Doy look out for these non-existent strips on his way home from the meeting.

Philip Graves concluded that there would be no resolution of this issue at the present meeting.

Mr Doy would reflect on public opinion and review. A decision would be made by November 09.

Spending in the current financial year was mentioned.

The Community Council arranged an ad hoc meeting to discuss the matter within the next week.

Stirling Council could however overrule recommendations made by the Community Council.

On behalf of the Community Council, Philip Graves thanked Harry Doy, Project Manager.

5 Planning Matters

- It was clarified that the sub group makes no decisions, but makes recommendations to the Community Council at monthly meetings. Communications could be conducted via email and decisions agreed electronically.
It was also agreed, in the future, to hold a Council meeting in July.

- Ardunan Farm 09/00/570/PPP

“Nothing in the supporting statement which was not considered in the previous application and in the reading of the policy on which the application was decided.” John Gray.

The Strathblane Community Council agreed to oppose the latest application to replace the barn.

- The dilapidated caravan remained on site. An enforcement action had been taken against the caravan, which ought to have been moved by 1 May. A further application had been made for the caravan to remain for reasons of seasonal work, until 14 September.
- Corrieknowe
John Gray reported that key information had been unavailable. Key documents were not on the system.
The plans had gone through.
Pam Campbell agreed to contact Stirling Council with a view to improving communications between Community Councils and Stirling Council Planning Department.

6 The Community Development Trust

- £1000.00 had been allocated by Strathblane Community Council to the creation of a questionnaire.

The Strathblane Community Development Trust commissioned an independent market research company to undertake a programme of consultation with the residents of Blane and Strathblane. This questionnaire offered villagers an opportunity to tell the partners working within the area, including the Community Council, the CDT and Stirling Council, opinions of the area at the moment and priorities for future developments. The questionnaire aimed to provide an opportunity to influence the content of the Local Development Plan and contribute to the positive development of the village.

- Energy Auditing

Philip Graves was to be involved in the energy-auditing programme, on a professional basis, working with SOLAS insulation.

7 Local Development Planning

- Margaret Vass informed that the consultation period had been extended from October 09 until June/July 10. This more realistic timescale was welcomed.
- The Carbon Neutral group will be invited to do a presentation to the Community Council in 2010 [relevant to Local Development Planning]

8 Environmental Issues

The village noticeboards had been painted and were currently in transit.

Work on the village tubs had not progressed as planned.

Philip Graves will report on the Wind Farm Planning Consultation document [Stirling Council]

A formal letter had been received from Stirling Council restating that the condition and maintenance of the path from the Kirkhouse to the Village Club was the responsibility of the residents. There was no wheelchair access or lighting. Owner mediation was suggested, as was the possibility of Stirling Council serving an amenity notice to tidy up the area.

9 Finance

The Council had previously agreed to donate £415.00 per annum to the Blane. Traditionally the Community Council had produced articles for The Blane to inform and raise awareness of local matters and council decisions. However, council income had fallen and there was some debate on whether or not a donation to the Blane would meet the specific criteria for use of the administration grant.

10 Correspondence

Letters

- Letter to Stirling Council on Gaelic Place Names

- Stirling Council: Notice of Planning Panel Meeting 06/08/09 Ardanan Farm again on schedule
- Letter from Strathblane Community Council to Stirling Council on Planning Application 09/00447/REM
- Stirling Council: Notice of Meeting of the Executive 13/08/09
- Stirling Council Advance Notice of Special Planning Panel Meeting 27/08/09 [nothing for our area]
- Stirling Council Joint Forum meeting 31/08/09 *
- Stirling Council Notice of Special Planning Panel meeting 27/08/09
- Stirling Council Planning Policy regarding Wind Farms and other Wind Turbine Developments
- Stirling Council Rural South West Forum Agenda for meeting 14/09/09 *
- Stirling Council: Street Cleaning and Ground Maintenance
- Stirling Council: Potential funding opportunity for Broadband *
- Scottish Ambulance: Service Future Strategy: comments invited
- Rural Stirling Housing Association AGM 14/09/09 *

* Document communicated to Community Councillors by email

Circulars and notices

- Stirling Council Focus, Autumn 2009 edition
- Association of Scottish Community Councils' Journal for Spring 2009
- Pam Campbell highlighted information details from Public Services: elections

On behalf of the Community Council, Philip Graves thanked Willie Oswald for his response to the document: the National Model Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils.

The dates of the next meetings: Monday 5 October and Monday 2 November 09.

The meeting ended at 10.00 p.m.