

AREA COMMUNITY PLANNING FORUM 5

Strathendrick Suite, Balfroon High School

Wednesday 1 February 2006 at 7.00 pm

NOTE OF MEETING

PRESENT:

Community Representatives

Arnprior

Geoff Atkins, Community Newspaper

Balfroon

Bill Astley Jones, Balfroon CC

Jean Browning, Balfroon CC

Val Corry, Balfroon High School

Elizabeth Holmes, Balfroon Community Futures Development Trust

Carol Murphy, Balfroon Library

Mike Stone, Balfroon CC

Buchanan

Joe Twaddle, Buchanan CC

Buchlyvie

John Andrew, Buchlyvie CC

Carron Valley

Susan McPhee, Carron Valley CC

Croftamie

Alasdair McArthur, Croftamie CC

Anna Watson, Croftamie Community Council

Colin Wilson, Croftamie Community Trust

Drymen

Frank Bates, Drymen CC

Alison Brown, Drymen Community Development Trust

Bunty Fowler, Drymen Community Development Trust

John Gleave, Drymen Cc

Fintry

Alex Ellis, Fintry CC

Cicely Roy, Fintry CC

David Smith, Fintry Primary School

Ken Young, Fintry School Board

Gargunnoch

Duncan Leask, Gargunnoch CC
Ian Lees, Gargunnoch Church
Neil McRae, Resident
Geoff Peart, Gargunnoch CC

Killlearn

Christine Bowie, Killlearn CC
Jill McDougall, Killlearn CC
Brenda Pell, Killlearn CC

Kippen

Graham Fulton, Kippen CC

Strathblane

Robert Flashman, Strathblane CC
Willie Oswald, Strathblane CC

Others

Margaret Sparkes, Contact the Elderly

Elected Members

Councillor David Lonsdale, Campsies Ward

Officers

Pam Campbell, Susan Carragher, Lesley Gallagher, Les Goodfellow, Lyn Kennedy,
Margaret McKechnie, Sheila McLean – Stirling Council
Diane Davidson Kinghorn – National Park
Sergeant Jim Allan, Chief Inspector Kevin Findlater – Central Scotland Police

Apologies

Councillor Alistair Berrill, Provost Colin O'Brien, Kay Pollock, Killlearn CC.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Forum welcomed Brenda Pell of Killlearn Community Council who, following receipt of nominations for the role of Chair, had agreed to chair this meeting.

Brenda introduced the officers present.

2. Rural Roads Consultation – Feedback and Update Road Maintenance and Road Safety Projects

Les Goodfellow, Head of Roads & Transport, Stirling Council, gave a presentation which provided an update on the issues raised at the Rural Roads Consultation in August 2005, some background information on traffic growth and general roads maintenance and steps being taken to address road safety in the Stirling Council area.

Since 1997, public transport costs had significantly increased; at the same time motoring had become cheaper. This had resulted in an increase in traffic, with changing lifestyles leading to more people undertaking long distance commuting and more freight being carried by road. The underlying average traffic growth was 3% per year and was closely linked to the approved Development Plan. It could be anticipated that this growth would significantly increase over future years. If the proposed Major Growth Area went ahead, creating a town the size of Dunblane, traffic levels on main roads could increase by 35% around the city over the next decade.

The Council had a legal duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to manage and maintain all public roads in the area. Maintenance of roads was managed under the terms of the Best Value Code of Practice and a Roads Maintenance Plan adopted by the Council in September 2003. Information was presented on the roads maintenance budget position. The current recommended level of grant aided expenditure stood at £4.65m with an estimated backlog of £13.2m. The Council's actual expenditure to date in the current financial year was £3.353m, which represented an increase of £1.5m over 2003/04.

The Forum was directed to a handout, previously circulated in October 2005, which gave details of progress in relation to issues raised at the Rural Roads Consultation in August.

Les Goodfellow provided up to date information in relation to each point, as numbered in the handout.

1. Road Edge Deterioration

This issue was now included in road surveys and would be taken into account in the current year's road maintenance scheme.

2. This point did not relate to the Rural South West.

3. Timber Transport Routes

A national agency was looking at this issue across Scotland and should consult with all Community Councils who might be directly affected.

4. Signage Exacerbating Deterioration of Unsuitable Routes

It was noted that any licensed vehicle could travel on any public road, with the exception of roads restricted by height and/or weight limitations. If specific sites could be identified, members were asked to notify the Roads Service.

5. Improved Spend on Roads

A report would be submitted to the Environment Committee on 11 May 2006 outlining expenditure. This would be circulated to Area Community Planning Forums.

6. Input of Community Councils and Area Community Planning Forums to Decision on Road Spending Priorities

The Forum was asked for suggestions on how this might be achieved.

7 & 8. Spending Priority on Road Edges, Cleaning of Drains and Culvert and Cutting Back of Vegetation

These points had been covered in 1 and 5 above.

9. Supported Home to School Travel

This had been debated by Environment Committee in November 2005 but to deal effectively with this issue would require a doubling of the winter maintenance budget.

10. Budget Allocation

This had been covered in 5 above.

11. Tourism and Logging Operations – Impact on Road Condition

This was included in roads maintenance criteria. If a large volume of traffic could be shown, this would give weight to increasing priority.

12. Cleaning of Signs/Streetscape Management

This issue would be the subject of further debate and would be included in discussions at the forthcoming consultation meetings on 7 and 8 February 2006.

13. Temporary Road Closure Procedures

All Community Councils would be consulted on temporary road closures, except in the case of emergencies.

In terms of road safety, Stirling Council, in partnership with Central Scotland Police and others, had issued a Road Safety Plan in 2006. Copies of the Plan had been circulated to Community Councils.

A project plan had been created for each school in the Stirling Council area to highlight safer routes to schools. A copy was available on request.

Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Councils worked with Central Scotland Police in monitoring road traffic accidents resulting in injury. Road safety schemes were actioned at an average rate of 6-7 per year and it was hoped to increase consultation with communities on these schemes. The current assessment and prioritisation policy was adopted in 2001 and would shortly be reviewed, in consultation with communities.

The presentation provided statistical information on road casualties and a downward trend was noted and welcomed. This was particularly significant in view of the increasing volume of traffic and indicated that, in general, roads had, in the Council area, become safer.

3. Road Safety

Sgt Jim Allan of Central Scotland Police (CSP) gave a presentation on the Force's Road Policing Strategy 2003-2006 and its implications for road safety. The Road Policing Unit covered every road and street in the CSP area, which included Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Council areas.

The strategy emphasised the importance of ensuring that all members of the community, who were all road users in some form, could use roads in safety and free from the fear of being involved in an accident. It focused on the key approaches of:-

- Education – At all ages by way of school visits, media involvement and campaigns.
- Engineering – The Police Collision Investigation Unit and Collision Prevention Unit worked in partnership with Councils and this was vital in making vehicles and roads safer. Every incident involving injury was investigated and lessons learned.
- Enforcement – Campaigns to highlight risks and maintaining detection levels to enforce legislation in relation to speed enforcement, drink and drugs driving, seatbelt legislation and dangerous or careless driving.
- Encouragement – Use of media and partnership working with other authorities and the community to promote responsible road user behaviour.
- Evaluation – Reactive and proactive methods to change approaches to meet emerging issues and trends.

Sgt Allan outlined the methods used to achieve these aims and produced statistical information on road collisions in the Stirling Council area and the Central Scotland Police area as a whole. He confirmed that the road condition was one of several areas investigated in the case of an accident and any issues arising would be reported to the Council and the Procurator Fiscal if appropriate.

Sgt Allan and Les Goodfellow took questions from the floor.

- Q. (Croftamie) Is roads maintenance planning based on the assumption of a 35% increase in car use prediction over the next 10 years?
- A. Yes, it is based on the Council's Development Plan and the predicted increase in traffic growth.
- Q. (Croftamie) Do restrictions in spending result from a lack of investment by central government?
- A. This is reduced over a period of time. Investment is starting to increase.
- Q. (Croftamie) Will this lack of investment continue or can you predict a time when this will change?
- A. Stirling Council will be judged against other Councils and information on the roads network will be published by Audit Scotland.
- Q. (Balfron) Where is the criteria taken from when calculating road usage? Are future plans for housing development within the capacity of the roads network?
- A. Information on roads capacity is generally correct. The Council will be returning to the community to explain in further detail.
- Q. (Balfron) How far behind is the Rural West area in terms of budget spending on maintenance against the Code of Practice?
- A. Unable to specify for the Rural West area in isolation as different roads are measured each year. The current estimated backlog is £13.2m against a recommended level of grant aided expenditure of £4.65m.

Following a question from a member of the audience, Chief Inspector Kevin Findlater undertook to clarify some statistical information on detection of road traffic offences and report back to the next meeting.

In closing, Sgt Allan and Les Goodfellow invited members of the Forum to submit any additional questions to Susan Carragher who would pass them to Central Scotland Police and to appropriate Council officers.

4. Action Plan – Working Groups

Sheila McLean advised that a number of communities had put forward representatives to take part in the Working Groups to look at the key priorities identified at earlier meetings for taking forward into an Area Plan.

Lists were displayed and communities who were not represented were encouraged to suggest nominees.

Sheila undertook to contact the volunteers to set up the first Working Group to look at roads maintenance and road safety.

5. Action Plan – Introduction to SMART Planning and Workshops

Lyn Kennedy introduced the Forum to the process of SMART planning as a means of taking forward the Area Plan.

S pecific
M easurable
A chievable
R ealistic
T imescaled

Members were directed to draft templates of the Area Plan and a list of roads priorities previously identified which had been tabled. The Forum split into workshop groups to suggest key aims and measures which would then be progressed by the Working Group. The Area Plan would be used to influence partner agencies in dealing with areas of concern in the community.

Feedback from the Roads Working Group would be given to the next meeting, when the next priority issue of Policing & Crime would be progressed.

6. Allocation of £29,800 Funding

Stirling Council had agreed funding of £29,800 to each Area Community Planning Forum. This funding would enable the Forum to identify and make progress on significant projects which met the priorities which had been previously agreed.

Details of the criteria to be followed in spending this funding were circulated as follows:-

- Projects should be one-off projects, which did not generate additional revenue implications or expectations of continued funding;
- They should also be specific, realistic and able to be completed by March 2007 and relate directly to the priorities identified by Area Community Planning Forums;

- Payments could only be made to recognised organisations eg constituted voluntary organisations, or established businesses/suppliers;
- The funding should make a significant impact. This was more likely to occur if the £29,800 was spent on a small number of projects;
- The funding could be used to contribute to a bigger package of funding, as long as the project was in line with agreed priorities;
- The funding could also be used to pay for additional short-term work or, in some instances, overtime costs but not to pay for the recruitment of new posts that would require an ongoing funding commitment from the Council.

Lyn Kennedy gave further information on the process. Projects would require to be discussed and approved by the Forum. Proposals must be submitted by 31 August 2006 with completion of spend by March 2007. Full details had been supplied to Community Councils and Development Trusts.

Brenda Pell further confirmed that all Community Councils had received a one-off payment of £1,000 for spending in their area. The £29,800 grant, however, was for the entire Forum area and if split between the 12 Community Councils, would result in less than £2,500 each. It might be more beneficial, therefore, for the Forum to agree a project which would benefit every community in the Forum area.

It was agreed that each Community Council seek the views of their area on how best to spend the funding and to gather suggestions for projects. This information would be fed back, in the first instance, to Pam Campbell for consideration at the next meeting, when a decision would be taken.

7. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

The Forum noted the following arrangements for future meetings:-

- Monday 8 May 2006 – Drymen
- Monday 7 August 2006 – Buchlyvie
- Monday 6 November 2006 – Gargunnoch

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and, on receiving a vote of thanks from the floor, declared the Meeting closed at 9.00 pm