



STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 7th April 2008 in the Village Club

Members Present: - David Anderson, Margaret Vass, Willie Oswald, Marjorie Peddie, Elspeth Posnett, Alastair Smith, Robert Flashman, Philip Graves, John Gray. **Apologies:** Fiona Murray, Finlay Fountain, Pam Campbell (SC).

In attendance: - PC Barr, Cllr O'Brien, 11 public.

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

1. Welcome: - Willie Oswald (WO), chairman, welcomed all present.

2. Minutes of last meeting:

Approved with two minor amendments now incorporated into the final minutes. Proposed: John Gray. Seconded: Elspeth Posnett

3. Matters arising:

Alastair Smith has contacted Brenda Pell, Killearn CC, asking for information about the Killearn village signs, and is waiting for a response.

4. Police matters:

PC Barr reported on events during the past two months.

a) Crime report – 16 crime files had been raised and 11 had been detected.

- There had been 10 minor road traffic accidents. A recently qualified driver was also detected for drink driving.
- Between 9th and 18th Feb a car, parked in Dumbrock Crescent, was vandalised when the owner was on holiday.
- On 29th Feb there was a break-in to a locker at Blanefield House. There have been a few similar incidents here recently.
- On 1st Jan and 8th March bogus workmen called at a house in Moor Road to repair a chimney, and excess money was taken from the elderly resident.
- Between 12th and 13th March copper cable was stolen from Muirhouse quarry. This is part of a national crime trend. Scrap is now valuable because China and India are buying up a lot of material.
- On 13th March there was a break-in to an isolated house in Stockiemuir Road. The alarm was activated.

b) Road traffic accidents (RTA)

- There were two RTAs, one caused by a driver turning right from Station Road onto the A81 who did not see the vehicle coming from the south. The incident was witnessed by PC Barr.
- There were 10 accident files; 9 were vehicle damage only, 1 was a slight injury. Of these, 6 were on A81, 1 on B821, 2 in Southview Rd, and 1 on A809 Stockiemuir Rd.

c) New appointment – Ian McLeod is the new Deputy Chief Constable

d) Operation Eclipse – A recent operation to target undetected crimes was a success; figures have still to be released.

5. Planning: – Update by Margaret Vass (MV) planning correspondent.

a) General

i) Proposal for erection of storage shed, formation of raised area/helipad and installation of electric gates at 20A Campsie Dene Rd.

- MV reported on the facts but did not take part in the discussion or vote because she is a near neighbour.
- The following points were raised: planning permission is only required if flights take place on more than 28 days per year; some neighbours were objecting on grounds of noise nuisance and loss of privacy; the site is in a quiet residential area and the house and garden are in ‘countryside’ and close to fields with livestock.
- The CC unanimously agreed to oppose the helipad and shed. (ACTION MV)

ii) Proposal for erection of house on land at rear of. 41-53 Glasgow Rd Blanefield.

The CC agreed neither to oppose or support but to express concern about the access and parking at this point. It was noted that the house is small and that an earlier outline application recommended for refusal had been reconsidered by SC and then withdrawn by the applicant.

(ACTION MV)

iii) Proposal for erection of house in garden grounds of 62 Glasgow Rd, Blanefield.

The CC agreed neither to oppose or support. It was noted that outline permission is already in place.

(ACTION MV)

iv) Proposal for erection of house on former tennis court at Dineiddwg House, Mugdock.

- Philip Graves reported that the Mugdock Association had agreed to oppose the application but that Peter Spinney (PS), had put forward reasons for approval. PS explained that the applicant is elderly and would like to move from the main house to a smaller property; Historic Scotland had given their approval to the proposal for a small house to be built on the Tennis Court, but the planning officer was pressing for an addition to the main house instead; none of the 5 original plots are still available, 4 have been built and the fifth is at the detailed planning stage.
- The CC unanimously agreed to oppose the application because it was contrary to the Section 75 which limits the number of properties within the estate and because the site is in the greenbelt. (ACTION MV)

v) Proposal for overcladding of existing stables with side extension and vet porch at Valhalla, Old Mugdock Rd.

The CC agreed neither to oppose or support but to comment on landscaping and the inappropriate planting of leylandii. (ACTION MV)

vi) Planning Panel decision.

Permission had been granted for houses in the grounds of The Firs, Aros, and Tamarac (Moor Rd) and 40 Old Mugdock Rd, without a section 75 agreement to contribute to the upgrading of Old Mugdock Rd, following a Reporter's decision re extra traffic and road safety.

vii) Approvals

- Bus shelter opposite Kirkhouse Inn car park.
- A number of house extensions.
- Replacement house at Lower Lodge Station Road.
- Extension to shop at 65 Glasgow Road. This appeared in the planning schedule without the CC's comments re the window, but this was rectified and the window design comments have been taken on board.

viii) Enforcement

A notice has been served against the residential caravan (Old Mugdock Rd) as there was insufficient evidence for retention in the greenbelt and countryside.

ix) Muirhouse Quarry

Following inquiries, wheel washing facilities were found to be satisfactory but the quarry has been closed for the past two weeks. SEPA and the police have visited the site. Works traffic and Works access only signs have been requested to comply with the planning approval conditions. (see 6g)

x) News issues

It was reported that:

- the Local Plan First Alteration had been modified and the new version was not available in the library,
- a small towing caravan had recently been put in the field above Brae Head on the Cuilt Brae, and the field had been fenced,
- the verge at the junction of Drymen Rd and Cuilt Brae had vanished and the pillar box had been removed. The PO are aware that it has moved but are unaware of its location. MV thought it was a planning condition to move it slightly.

MV agreed to make inquiries.

(ACTION MV)

b) Consultation with local communities – myth or reality? (see 5. a.vi)

- WO suggested that this discussion be postponed due to lack of time and so MV just gave a brief report: the main issue was that of maladministration by SC which led to the Tamarac refusal being appealed and granted, with the Reporter saying that the Section 75 could not be enforced; this was wrong because the offer to upgrade Old Mugdock Road (OMRd) had been made by the developers; now there were to be 4 new houses in gardens and no improvements to OMRd; this is development by stealth; 9 houses accessing OMRd were turned down in 1998 and since then 8 have been granted approval.
- Louise Bennet (Tamarac) said that she was upset by the comment in the CC email to the Panel, saying that the applicants 'had run rings around the local community'. She said that she had done 'everything by the book'.
- Edward Pickard (Aros, The Firs) explained the background to the consultation between SC and developers regarding the Section 75 agreements - his lawyer had advised a Section 69 (a lump sum payment) and said that a Section 75 would be unworkable, but the letter had not been circulated; SC had said that it was a procedure and implementation matter; the policy had been approved and the cost had then risen.
- All agreed that the matter had been mishandled by SC and that no-one wanted the road urbanised.

- The CC apologised to Louise Bennet and Edward Pickard for the comment in the email to the Panel, and MV explained that the CC had consistently argued that the Tamarac application should have been considered separately and had upheld Mrs Bennet's right to go to appeal for non-determination.
- The CC agreed to invite Keith Yates (SC chief executive) to a private meeting along with local councillors, to discuss the overall concerns. WO noted that only individuals who have suffered loss or damage to health can appeal to the ombudsman, and that groups such as CCs do not qualify.

6. Roads: Up-date from Robert Flashman (RF), roads correspondent.

a) Old Mugdock Road (OMRd) – Kate Smitheson (SC) has said that the improvement scheme has been put on hold and that further consultation is no longer appropriate. (see 5avi, 5b). OMRd is now 60th on the priority list!

Edward Pickard suggested that the CC lobby SC for some measure of improvement. RF advised that following suggestion from JG he had requested that road edges be repaired; vegetation on two of the bends be cut back; passing places be maintained; and investigation be made into the possibility of providing a footway at selected areas.

b) A81 – Road markings are being put in place though there was a temporary halt because of bad weather.

c) Speed activated sign – This is back in place but still does not appear to be working. The original fault had been caused by a circuit board fire in the radar unit. RF will follow this up.

(ACTION RF)

d) Station Road junction (see 4b)

- RF had been in touch with Brian Roberts (SC) about the recent accident at the junction of Station Rd and A81, and Brian had also received a number of inquiries from Cllrs, MSPs and press. Funds have already been allocated in the 2008/9 budget for design work at this junction. Andrew Fraser (AF), of Central Scotland Roads Accident Investigation Unit, has visited the site and spoken to the resident, but no recommendation can be made until the exact circumstances of the accident are understood. RF has asked that Alastair Dawson (SC) attends a site meeting with other interested parties once the latest stage of the A81 Traffic Management Plan is complete when the overall situation can be reviewed.

- There was concern for some immediate action to improve safety at this junction and for the affected property in particular. The metal railings were badly damaged and SC Housing Dept. is proposing to use the insurance money to replace like with like. WO noted that the property that was damaged is owned by SC; that the Council had a duty of care to make the garden safe for the family; and that part of the ground might be used to widen the bellmouth. WO also noted that the lighting junction box, installed by SC and sited 2 yards from the junction, obstructed visibility for vehicles turning left out of Station Rd. RF noted that SC was considering putting in a mini roundabout at East Ballewan. WO offered to write to SC with a copy to Cllr Berrill.

(ACTION WO)

e) Safer routes to school – 20mph roundels have been painted on Kirkburn Rd and Southview Rd, but two roundels are incomplete. Access protection markers at the entrance to the garages in Dumbrock Rd, which were to have been painted at the same time, have been omitted. RF will follow these up.

(ACTION RF)

g) Quarry access – RF had written to Dow Group about problems caused by lorries leaving mud and loose gravel on the A81. The managing director had confirmed that the situation will be monitored more closely in future. WO said that people who use the road should report any problems. (see 5.a.ix)

h) Milndavie Rd closure – The road between the junction with Old Mugdock Rd and the A81 will be closed from 9.30am to 3.30pm on Wed 23 to Sun 27 April.

7. Environmental issues:

a) Flower tubs - Fiona Murray is arranging to replace the broken tubs and Elspeth Posnett will trim the plants. (ACTION FM & EP)

b) Flooded path – Dougie Flynn, SC ranger, will meet with interested parties on Wednesday morning, to inspect the path between the football field and burn, with a view to repairing the damaged drainage.

c) Core paths – Patsy Fischbacher reported that, following the last round of consultation, two paths in this area had been removed from the core paths plan: the short spur from the Cuilt Brae, past Ardoch House, to the West Highland Way; the old railway from Station Rd, through Duntreath Estate, to the West Highland Way.

d) Village notice board – John Gray had e-mailed information and pictures of various boards prior to the meeting. There was insufficient time to consider this further at the meeting.

e) Bird boxes – Edward Pickard reported that barn owls are nesting in the boxes that were put up in Long Bog wood.

8. Correspondence:

a) A list of correspondence was circulated to members by David Anderson, secretary, prior to the meeting. The following items were referenced.

- Forestry Commission Scotland consultation
- SC planning training sessions for community councillors on 26/4/08
- Final round of Core Paths consultation – 2-5pm and 6-9pm in Killearn on 7/5/08
- SC – Scottish Broadcasting Commission event.
- Copy of a letter to SC from Mrs McLeary, Netherton House, regarding traffic vibration nuisance.
- Copy of letter from MSP Bruce Crawford to SC Keith Yates regarding state of pavements in Station Rd. WO noted that this was a longstanding issue.

b) WO reported that the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust (formerly Stirling Landfill Tax Trust) are looking for nominations to be a trustee. Meetings are 3-4 times a year. WO will circulate details via e-mail. (ACTION WO)

9. Finance – nothing to report

10. Area community planning

The next meeting is on 9 June.

11. Date of next two meetings – Mondays 12 May and 16 June, in the school. The June meeting will start with the AGM.

