



MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING  
5<sup>th</sup> November 2007 in the School

1. **Members Present:** - David Anderson, Fiona Murray, Willie Oswald, Margaret Vass, Marjorie Peddie, Elspeth Posnett, Alastair Smith, Robert Flashman, Finlay Fountain, Philip Graves, John Gray. **In attendance:** - PC Barr, Pam Campbell (SC), 13 public.  
( SC = Stirling Council. CC = Community Council)
2. **Welcome** - Willie Oswald (WO), chairman, welcomed all present.
3. **Minutes of last meeting** - Agreed. Proposed: David Anderson. Seconded: Elspeth Posnett.
4. **Matter Arising** – In reference to informal discussions with WO prior to the meeting, Marjorie Peddie asked that some time should be allowed for Rosemary Morris, member of the public, to speak about the proposal for a wind farm near Balfron, as this could have serious implications for local school pupils. WO agreed to consider it later on in the meeting.
5. **Police matters** - PC Barr gave a brief report and answered questions before leaving early as he was on duty and it was fireworks night.
  - a) **Crime report** – There were 10 crime files raised in the Blanefield area during the past month, mainly thefts including a couple from vehicles.
    - Two separate break-ins to vehicles at Station Lofts, one overnight when the thief was disturbed by a resident. Property in the cars was thought to have prompted the break-in.
    - An attempted theft from a vehicle at Mugdock Country Park car park during the day.
    - A break-in to a storage container at the junction of Cuilt Rd and Stockiemuir Rd.
    - Vandalism to a boat in Southview Drive.
    - A break-in to a building under construction at Mugdock.
    - Theft from a car parked at Queens View car park.
  - b) **Liaison with Strathclyde police** – As much of the crime is suspected to have been committed by people from the Strathclyde area, local officers have met with the Milngavie Inspector to share knowledge and to set up joint initiatives, such as road checks, and leaflet drops into vulnerable properties.
  - c) **Road traffic accidents** – One collision with vehicle damage but no personal injury.
  - d) **Public consultation** – The police force is looking to see how to improve service to the public. Questionnaires are being sent to all community councils and 5 questionnaires were made available for members of the public.
  - e) **Q&A**
    - PC Barr confirmed that rumours of an assault related to an incident last summer when a group of youths intimidated a man on his way home after getting off the bus.
    - WO noted that some of the crimes mentioned were opportunistic and avoidable. PC Barr referred to the car thefts when property had been on display, and said that where this type of crime is successful it encourages the criminal to come back and try again.
  - f) **Correction to September minutes** – Andrew Barker has been promoted to Chief Superintendent and Gary Laurie is promoted to Temporary Superintendent in the role of Stirling Area Commander.

## **6. Strathblanefield Community Development Trust (SCDT)**

**a) Statement** - Robert Flashman (RF) (SCDT vice chairman) was standing in for George Thom, chairman, who had been invited by WO to speak to the CC about the Development Trust. After conveying George's apologies RF made a brief statement.

- A steering group was set up in early 2007 and decided to form a limited company with charitable status, initially in order to obtain funding for community projects.
- Two public meetings have been held and the membership now stands at over 100.
- The roles of the CC and SCDT differ mainly in that development trusts are independent, can apply for lottery funding, and can own property and employ staff; unlike CCs which are limited by being statutory bodies.
- The SCDT's mission statement is 'To assist in improving the quality of life for those who live and work in Strathblane, Blanefield and Mugdock, and also for visitors to the area; working in partnership with other organisations or individuals.'

**b) CC representative** - RF read from the letter from SCDT to the CC inviting the CC to nominate a member to the interim board of directors, but suggesting that RF be confirmed in that position as he had already demonstrated the skills required by the board. WO thought that the CC should have two representatives on the board but as it became clear that this was not appropriate the CC unanimously confirmed RF's nomination. Proposed WO, seconded JG.

**c) Greenheart (Gh) funds** – It was confirmed that although Gh was currently operating as a sub group of the Trust, there was no need to transfer funds from the CC to SCDT as they related to the paths project which was carried out in partnership with the CC, and Gh was hoping to use the remaining funds to repair the library path.

**7. Correspondence** – ( David Anderson, secretary, had circulated a list of correspondence to members prior to the meeting.) The following items were raised:-

**a) Future dates for CC meetings** – Dates, previously circulated to CC members, were agreed and will be sent to SC.

**b) CC vacancy elections** – Notices had been placed in local papers by SC. Applications were due in by Friday, Nov 9<sup>th</sup>. None received to date.

**c) Public art audit** – SC request notification of any outdoor art in the area.

**d) Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005** - draft policy statement available for review.

**e) Project notification letter for Burncrooks water treatment works** - £1.4 million to improve current facilities and make them easier to maintain. Information was passed to a member of the public who lives in the area of the reservoir.

**f) Scottish Executive** - The Planning Appeals Reporter will visit the site at Auchineden estate on Wed. 12<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**g) Waterwatch Scotland** – Public meeting in Falkirk on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**h) Endrick Valley Action Group** – Notice of public meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> Nov in Balfron High School regarding a proposed wind farm. (see Matters Arising and AOB)

## **8. Environment Issues**

**a) Update from Elspeth Posnett (EP) environment correspondent.**

- Library path – A no-entry sign for cars has been placed at the entrance to the path beside the library. SC is proposing to add another brightly coloured sign, requesting users, which includes horse riders, to stay on the path to avoid damaging the soft verges. Patsy Fischbacher (Gh) has written to express concern about the safety

implications of the second sign and to suggest that it might be more appropriate to have one sign only with wording to restrict access for cars etc and asking horse riders to use an alternative route.

- Flower tubs - Those by the chemist shop were damaged when new street lights were installed. EP will arrange for replacement tubs in the spring.

It was noted that the Chemist had been closed unexpectedly when the doctors' surgery was closed for a NHS training day. There was some discussion as to how this might be better advertised in future.

**b) Katrine Water Project community forum** - Philip Graves referred to the minutes of the last forum meeting, previously circulated, and confirmed that the access road to the treatment works was to be reduced to a single track, as per the conditions of planning approval, and this would help to avoid the temporary works site becoming a public car park. The works structure was complete and planting had begun at Barachan.

**c) Muirhouse quarry** – It was noted that tipping was taking place and lorries were coming from both directions. WO confirmed that there was planning permission to fill up the quarry with inert material.

**d) Helicopter flights**

- Muirhouse farm update – Pam Campbell (SC) referred to her recent email to WO advising that Andrew Gardiner (SC) had visited the site and had confirmed that there was no evidence of a permanent hard standing. He had been informed by the helicopter company that they operate tours from the site on two separate occasions every month. These run from 10.30 through to 15.30 but are less frequent during winter months. During these periods 3 helipad staff are on duty and 1 pilot provides the tour. In light of this there is no breach of planning control, but should Mr Gardiner receive information suggesting that the position on the ground had changed, or that the operation had intensified, he would follow this up. Pam reminded the CC of her previous advice to note dates and times of flights and to inform SC if these do not comply the permitted times.
- Campsie Dene Rd - MV was concerned about helicopter flights into private property. It was a particular problem for livestock, and a cow had fallen and broken its neck the same night as a helicopter had landed. Pam said that there were several private helicopters in the Stirling area but planning permission is required for a helipad. She will make inquiries.

**9. Finance** – Nothing to report

**10. Planning** – (Up-date from Margaret Vass (MV), planning correspondent)

**a) The planning group** had met to consider the following applications.

- Edenmill farm. - Proposal for 1 farmhouse and 2 workers cottages. – (A draft response and critique of the applicant's detailed justification had been circulated to all members.) The CC welcomed economic development in principle but felt that there was insufficient justification for a development of this size and nature in the green belt and countryside. Members also questioned the accuracy of some of the figures and the future tenure of the businesses concerned. The application was unanimously opposed. Finlay Fountain thanked the group for the very comprehensive written report. (Copy of response - Appendices 1a & 1b – can be read in the library.)
- Ardunan lodge. - Proposal for replacement house and demolition of lodge. – (A draft response had been circulated to all members.). (An earlier application to retain the lodge and build another house on the site had been recommended for refusal by SC

but the applicant had then withdrawn the proposal.) The CC's main concerns were that: inability to extend the lodge did not justify demolishing it or building a new house, especially as this was in the Green Belt; the lodge contributes to the character of the area in the previous application it was said to be of architectural merit; the proposal includes a new access onto the A81. After looking at the plans the CC unanimously agreed to oppose the application but to ask that, should SC grant approval, a Section 75 be attached to keep the two plots as one entity. (Copy of response - Appendix 2 – can be read in the library.)

Following discussion about the access from the A81 at the lodge having recently being opened up to allow access to the hotel, it was noted that the access road belongs to the hotel and SC has no authority to close it.

- 41-53 Glasgow Rd. - Outline proposal for house. - An earlier application had been refused by SC but approval has now been granted for a smaller house. A detailed application will follow. Mick Stewart, Head of Planning, had offered to meet with the planning group to explain the change of decision but this was not considered necessary. There had been no objections from the Roads department.

**b) SC planning application response forms** – These have been changed to include all the details of the particular application. MV has requested a similar template for e-mail responses.

**c) Enforcement issues** –

- Caravan in field off Old Mugdock Rd – A planning contravention order has been served on the owner who says that the caravan is needed to store tools and materials for repairing the barn. The land is leased by Valhalla. SC are visiting the site weekly.
- Caravan at Edenmill – A retrospective planning application was refused by SC. Further investigation and a site visit are required before issuing an enforcement order.
- Others – An unauthorised development in Cuilt Place; a satellite-dish pole in a garden in Milndavie Crescent; deviation from planning permission in Dumbrock Crescent.
- Alastair Smith commented that it would be nice to hear the final outcome of enforcement issues. John Gray referred to a recent instance in Kirkburn Drive where SC had negotiated a resolution to a planning breach concerning a fence that was adversely affecting neighbours.

**d) Planning conditions** – MV commented on the unfair practise of some applicants who cleared sites in advance of submitting a planning application and were not penalised for doing so, whereas others who behaved correctly receive strict planning conditions.

## **11. Roads**

**a) Draft policy for Old Mugdock Road.** - WO apologised for not having put the CC's draft response into the library to allow members of the public the opportunity to comment, as was promised at the previous CC meeting. The letter had taken longer to prepare than had been expected. (A copy of the response - Appendix 3 – can be read in the library.)

**b) A81 and speed traffic management** – ( The plans had been available for viewing by cc members during the tea break). RF reported that the steering group had met with Alastair Dawson (SC) to discuss the proposal drawn up by SC in response to the steering group's earlier recommendations. The scheme consists mainly of road markings (centre line hatching or lines at the sides of the road) from the junction with Ballewan Crescent to the zebra crossing, and for three traffic islands for the area between the junctions with Campsie Dene Road and Station Rd. The steering group had welcomed the proposals in general but suggested deleting the traffic island between the junction of Campsie Dene Rd and the entrance to the cottages at Wood Place to allow for parking, and asked that the centre line at the shops be off-set to favour the shops side of the road and give space for parking and

delivery vans. Mr Dawson was also asked to see if the gateway at the north could be emphasised. Works estimate is £17,000 and money is available, but ongoing maintenance is a separate budget. It was noted that a similar scheme in Buchlyvie was successful in slowing the traffic. The CC endorsed the steering group's response.

Finlay Fountain raised his concern about pedestrian safety at the crossing island outside the Kirkhouse Inn, and said that Mr Dawson had agreed to look at this.

**c) Street lighting** – WO referred to an e-mail from SC explaining that replacement lights had not been installed from opposite the Edmonstone Hall to the Blane Valley Inn following objections from residents that the lampposts would obstruct the narrow pavement. WO will write to SC to express the CC's disappointment that it was not consulted about this. RF was asked to request improved street lighting in connection with the traffic calming measures.

**d) Mugdock Rd** – Philip Graves (PG) had received a copy of a letter from a Mugdock resident to EDC complaining that the 30mph speed limit is illegal and should be lifted.

**e) CALA proposal in Milngavie** – PG referred to the recent proposal to build 550 houses, plus businesses, between Hillfoot and the west of Scotland rugby ground. The EDC local plan only allows for 300 houses and does not include the 30-40 acres at the rugby club. The increase in traffic would impact on surrounding communities as would the closure of the sports centre for 18 months. SCC had not been informed and had missed the chance to send in comments. It is expected that CALA will either appeal or submit another proposal.

## **12. Area Community Planning**

**a) Next meeting** - 7.0 pm. 26<sup>th</sup> November at Balfron High School.

**b) Priorities** - Pam Campbell reminded the CC that they had not informed SC of their priorities for the area as requested. She passed over a questionnaire for completion asap.

## **13. A.O.B.**

**Prospective wind farm near Balfron** – Presentation by Rosemary Morris.

The proposal is for nine, four hundred and six feet turbines. This has implications for our community because there are potential noise nuisance and health issues for school pupils. Problems encountered elsewhere include stress, headaches, sleeplessness, dizziness, nausea, tinnitus and vibro-acoustic disease. Air turbulence is the major cause, and this is affected by land contours and weather patterns, and so the problems are unpredictable. The proposed wind farm is out-with the recommended safe distance from a residential area. There are proposals for other wind farms in the Stirling Council area which have implications for tourism and house prices. There have been a number of cases of house sales falling through because of plans for a wind farm close by. Rosemary provided literature for members of the CC and the public to take away and encouraged everyone to attend the public meeting in Balfron High School at 7.30pm on Wed 28<sup>th</sup> Nov.

It was generally agreed that this was an important issue for the community and it should have been a separate agenda item. WO apologised for the short time given for Rosemary to speak.

**14. Date of next two meetings** – 3<sup>rd</sup> December and 7<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm in the school.