



Minutes of Meeting of Bridge of Allan Community Council

Held on Tuesday 16th November 2021.

Due to Covid-19 this meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

Present: Mike Watson (MW) Chair; Janie Meikle Bland (JMB) Interim Vice Chair; Leslie Harkness (LH) Secretary; Alasdair Taylor (AT) Treasurer; Anna Doeser (AD) Communications Officer; Sandra Davidson; Bill Fortune (BF); (SD); Alastair Heron (AH); Vicky McDowell (VMcD);

Apologies: Siobhan Hencher (SH); Andrew Drummond Baxter (ADB); Duncan McDougall (DMcD) Associate Member; Moira Randall (MR) Associate Member; Alyn Smith MP; PC Paul Gilliland; PC Dee Chalmers; Lucy McCormick (LM) Minute Secretary; Graham Russell (Chair of Friends of Bridge of Allan)

In attendance: Councillor Douglas Dodds; Councillor Graham Houston; Councillor AlastairMajury; Councillor Alasdair Tollemache; Councillor Jeremy McDonald; Alexander Stewart MSP; Douglas Neilson (Vice Chair of Friends of Bridge of Allan); Inga Bullen (Resident), Robert Franks (Resident)

Abbreviations – Bridge of Allan (BOA), Community Council (CC), Common Good Fund (CGF), Stirling Council (SC), Annual General Meeting (AGM), Wallace Monument Stakeholder Advisory Group (WMSAG)

B 1988 Welcome, Apologies and Conflict of Interest (MW)

MW chaired this meeting. MW opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed all those in attendance via Zoom. Apologies were recorded as noted above and no conflicts of interested identified.

B 1989 Approval of Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log (MW)

The minutes of the November 2021 CC meeting were approved by VMcD, seconded by LH.

Matters arising

In relation to **Item B 1978** and the impediment for council officers joining CC meetings via Zoom, immediately after the last meeting, both Councillor Tollemache and Councillor McDonald took up with SC the fact that council officers had been unable to attend two successive meetings of the CC because of the council's reservations about Zoom. Councillor Tollemache stressed the need to resolve the problem as a matter of urgency while Councillor McDonald underline the fact that council officers did in fact have access to four tablets for use with Zoom. Subsequently, Councillor Tollemache forwarded a Stirling Council communication confirming that the ban on council officers using Zoom had been rescinded.

Also, immediately after the last meeting in relation to **Item B1981** and Remembrance Sunday, Councillor Houston and Councillor Tollemache forwarded SC confirmation that, unlike last year, the Scottish Government has not provided specific guidance for this year.

Equally fast off the blocks after the last meeting and in relation to **Item B1985** and the Care Home application, Councillor Dodds asked SC if the council officer responsible for Conservation Areas will be submitting a report on the Care Home application and if the CC could have a copy of the updated guidance on Parking Facilities. The Councillor had also set in motion the booking of a meeting room in the Allan Centre to begin to establish his projected Community Resilience Group.

In terms of **Item B 1982** and the erosion of the riverbank, both the resident and Councillor Tollemache have confirmed that a SC officer has visited the site.

B 1990 (Maria Lucey from SC – Bridge of Allan Flood Prevention Scheme)

Presentation shared on screen which focused on:

- Existing defences
- Number of Properties affected by flooding
- Options overview and shortlisting
- Benefit and cost ratio for each option
- Proposed next steps & public engagement

Some discussion on how best to engage the community and aiming to commence formal engagement in January. CC to provide any further feedback/ suggestions on the proposal.

B 1991 Police Report

Between 19th October and 13th November 2021 a total 5 crimes occurred within the Bridge of Allan area (which also covers University of Stirling). The crimes detailed below are those that are of relevance to the local community.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - None to report

DRUG MISUSE

On the 19th of October a male was traced within Lyon Crescent, in possession of a small quantity of herbal cannabis. The male was issued with a Recorded Police Warning in relation to a drugs possession offence.

On 23rd of October with university accommodation at University of Stirling a student was traced in possession of Cocaine. The individual concerned has been issued with a Recorded Police Warning in relation to a drugs possession offence.

VIOLENT CRIME - None to report.

HOUSEBREAKINGS/CRIMES OF DISHONESTY

On the 5th of November two thefts occurred at business premises in Henderson Street, where mobile phones were stolen by a male suspect by use of distraction. The incidents are crimed as theft and attempted theft. Police are currently reviewing a number of similar offences involving a group of males and a pursuing a positive line of enquiry at the time of update. It is anticipated that these offences will be detected.

ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD TRAFFIC RELATED CRIME

On the 19th of October a road traffic collision occurred at Kenilworth Road, Bridge of Allan. A motorist will be subject of a report to the Fiscal in relation to Careless Driving.

MATTERS OF NOTE

Between the 19th of October and 13th November 2021 (inclusive) there was a total of 94 calls to the Bridge of Allan area. Please note this also covers parts of the Cornton, Causewayhead and Stirling University.

A breakdown of some of these calls is as follows, 6 were concern for person type calls, 4 were public nuisance calls, 5 calls were drugs/substance related, 6 calls were noise related, 1 was a disturbance type call, 2 were theft type calls and 17 were road traffic related calls.

Due to staff sickness, annual leave and abstractions relating to COP26 there has been limited community engagement carried out by the community officers.

B 1992 Christmas Lights (AD)

AD confirmed that the Crowdfunder was successful; between pledges from the light sponsors and a community pride grant there is enough to pay for the full refurbishment and contractors have been engaged to begin works. Parts have been ordered and, subject to their availability, the predicted timescale for installation is w/c 29th November.

DN advised that the Friends Christmas tree is expected to be delivered and installed w/c 3rd December. No appetite expressed to date to hold a ceremony or similar due to pandemic, AD will engage with community groups and schools etc to confirm.

B 1993 Airthrey Kerse & Park of Kier (MW)

Airthrey Kerse appeal process continues & additional information from Grahams has been published for consultation. BOA CC will provide a joint response along with Causewayhead CC in due course.

Park of Kier appeal process is now complete with final responses having been submitted by BOA CC, RAGE and Dunblane CC. It was noted that the waters have been muddied somewhat by recent national press articles by Judy Murray and this has been presented to the Scottish Government for a decision on whether this is considered an interference with the proper process.

B 1994 Visit Bridge of Allan (JMB)

The most recent meeting of the steering group was effective in identifying priorities for the group; the immediate ones being to finalise the incorporation of the initiative as a Community Interest Corporation and establishing proper governance. Euan Bain has been formally appointed as Chair; Douglas Ross as Vice Chair; Janie as Secretary; Sarah Cameron as (interim) Treasurer and Bob McGowan will hold a non-exec position on the Board. Key focus areas are:

- Developing a Visit BOA website
- Working with other community groups to avoid duplication of effort
- Maintaining an emphasis on driving tourism for the commercial benefit of the village with an eye towards any associated community enhancements
- Engaging with local schools to seek the input of younger generations

B 1995 Darn Walk Crossing (GD)

GD confirmed that work has started on replacing the bridge, the far side pathway has been completed and a temporary barrier erected. Scottish Power have advised that they have experienced delays due to the availability of the steel required as it could not be sourced in the UK and once arrived from overseas it required galvanising before installation to keep maintenance costs to a minimum. Once works started, problems were identified with the foundations resulting in the need to re-design and various issues with rebar and the weather have also caused delays. Scottish Power has assured GD that works will be completed prior to Christmas.

With regards to the comments and photographs about the mess recently published in the Observer, AD advised that these were not related directly to the bridge site; these were taken at the access route through the Drumdrills property. It is acknowledged that disturbances to soil etc are inevitable due to the nature of the works and accessibility of the location however the community benefit is expected to outweigh any inconveniences and restoration works will be undertaken upon completion.

Inga Bullen highlighted that the bridge itself was not washed away, it was only the approach which was altered and expressed concerns that the currents works were not properly assessed at the outset and were unnecessary as well as poorly consulted. GD conceded that the surrounds were more damaged by the flooding than the bridge itself but taken in context with how dangerous the area became it was deemed more appropriate to upgrade both the bridge and the pathways to improve safety, accessibility and longevity – the new bridge being galvanised steel is expected to provide safe passage for 100+ years. GD assured that consultation was extensive back in 2014 when the decision was originally taken.

B 1996 Tennis Courts (BF)

BF indicated that discussions regarding funding are ongoing, in particular with BOA Tennis Club and Kirsty Humphries of Tennis Scotland who indicated that there may be a renovation fund which can be applied to. An Expression of Interest is being submitted however ownership of the site by SC may prove problematic in terms of eligibility. Meetings with SC are ongoing to discuss maintenance and possible revenue generation options to fund that. Quotes are still being obtained, although contractors seem to be few and far between and some have been delayed in providing figures e.g. SportEx. MW expressed an expectation that maintenance should be easily absorbed by SC the proposed upgrades should mean those costs are minimal.

B 1997 Chair's report (MW)

MW confirmed that the CC now has another vacancy as IM has stepped down from his role as Planning Officer and suggested a recruitment drive to get the membership numbers back to where they should be.

B 1998 Secretary's report (LH)

Councillors' Communications

Councillor Tollemache forwarded an update from SC explaining why technical difficulties have delayed the completion of the Darn Walk Cocksburn bridge until late in December. Save Blairforkie Greenspace also forwarded this to the CC. In addition, Councillor Tollemache sent a copy of his communication with SC expressing concern about the signage and the alternative diversion route.

Councillor Tollemache also forwarded a copy of a SC document confirming that an Environmental Impact Assessment will not be required from the Blairforkie Drive developers.

After he had raised the matter with the council, Councillor Dodds forwarded a response from SC providing clarification of its position on someone apparently misrepresenting themselves as a CC member.

Councillor Dodds also informed the CC that SC had rejected the Care Home application. In addition, he has forwarded from SC details of an imminent consultative survey on Park and Ride options for the Stirling area.

Residents' Communications

A resident wrote to draw attention to the apparent tree planting taking place on Graham's Dairy land.

A resident who works for Keep Scotland beautiful sent details of the organisation's Community Climate Action Plan programme.

A regular correspondent has written to express his disappointment that the Co-op development is going ahead since he feels the present store is ideal.

A resident has written to ask about progress with the Community management parking plan and has expressed a wish for zoned resident parking permits to be established in Fountain Road in view of the Co-op development. I have replied to the resident and passed on her concerns to Councillor Dodds.

A resident has written to stress that the resurfacing of a stretch of Pendreich Road has resulted in a reduction in the number of adequate passing places, a serious issue given the increased number of vehicles, particularly large vehicles, using the road. The resident has written to SC and has had no reply; I have forwarded his email to our elected representatives, in addition to replying to the resident. Councillor Tollemache has already contacted SC.

A resident asked if, on our website, we could indicate that Nextdoor is a legitimate app.

Stirling Council Communications

The fully revised Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils was received.

General Communications

The CC received details of the 2022 Dementia Conference to be held online in March 2022 and the current issue of the Scottish Community Councils newsletter

A BBC researcher contacted us about the volunteer dog fouling team and JMB volunteered to take this forward.

B 1999 Treasurer's report (AT)

AT expressed thanks to AD for successful fundraising efforts meaning that the CC can now afford to restore the Christmas lights as account balance stands at £16,376.10 with expectation of some outstanding sponsorship funds to follow.

Councillor Dodds queried the Larder funds not being included in the report; AT confirmed this is listed as COVID fund and will be re-named to Larder.

B 2000 Residents Voice

Robert Franks raised concerns over the recently reduced speed limit from 40 to 30 when approaching the village towards the train station; despite efforts to blank out the 40 sign on the road, vehicles with technology to indicate the speed limit in real time may still be showing that the limit is 40mph.

GD requested that plans for traffic calming measures on Henderson Street be published on the CC website and indicated that some measures installed on Cornton Road are causing difficulties, querying whether the 'nibs' could be removed. AD will publish the Henderson St plans and Councillor Dodds will raise the query over nibs with SC. GD also highlighted that SC has launched a community lottery and has various beneficiaries with the notable exception of any from BOA; suggesting that this is something the CC should consider being involved with in light of ongoing funding requirements inc. tennis courts and Christmas lights. Councillor Tollemache will investigate options for the CC.

Inga Bullen has reviewed a recent planning application for a new house on Pendreich road in the garden grounds of the Red House and expressed concerns that the design statement indicates a shift in the settlement line into the Mine Woods. MW indicated that the CC would investigate this.

Councillor Tollemache indicated that residents have raised concerns to him directly over bus services in the village – the 54 service has failed to turn up on numerous occasions with no communication leaving people stranded. Communication from First Bus indicates that this service will become hourly instead of ½ hourly in the New Year due to driver shortages; this is of considerable concern given the number of residents who rely on the service and don't drive. MW agreed that the CC will correspond directly with First Bus.

B 2001 AOCB

Councillor Dodds advised that two new benches have been proudly donated by Teas Company and will be installed with the help of Friends of BOA, outside by the surgery outside the Allan Centre; the existing bin will be repositioned, and signage removed.

MW noticed a sign when visiting the Allan Centre indicating that it has changed name and meetings are being held with SC to determine its future role; Councillor Dodds confirmed that he is now a trustee of the BOA Activities Group within SC and it has been established that the Centre has not been compliant with Health & Safety requirements since 2016 e.g. equipment has not be PAT tested etc. Responsibility for what happens within the Centre is with the Activities Group and SC retains responsibility for the structure/building. Nothing is expected to change in practice, responsibilities have been clarified so that the proper actions can be taken going forwards including replacement of outdated equipment, PAT testing and installation of a swipe machine for payments. MW queried plans for extending usage as some figures show only 25% of take-up is within the BOA community; Councillor Dodds advised that Active Stirling are being engaged for support to promote the Activities Group and a website is planned.

JMB noted that some progress has been made following the accessibility walkaround including a disabled space and dropped curbs by the primary school although overgrown hedgerows continue to be an issue for visually impaired residents. The elected representatives indicated that this is an enforcement issue and residents may be compelled to keep hedges trimmed where they encroach into public spaces or Land Services may perform the works and bill the resident. JMB will raise this on the CC social media pages.

JMB indicated that several residents have asked for information on what BOA is doing to address the Climate Emergency in the wake of COP 26. The CC doesn't have an active agenda item in this respect although the local schools do have active eco-groups – members agree that this should be more prominent, and Councillor Tollemache will support to ensure alignment with SC strategy. Cllr McDonald described some community-led activities that have been successful including provision of a water refill station in Callander and SC actions to reduce plastic waste within schools. JMB also queried progress on Stirling's City of Culture bid which is to be submitted by 26th January 2022. Councillor Tollemache took an action to put the team in touch with the CC directly.

MW requested follow-up on the cleaning of the cenotaph following Remembrance activities and indicated that the recent response from the Well House means that a decision can now be made, requesting members to revisit their scoring sheets for the Common Good Fund application.

Date of next meeting confirmed to be 18 January 2022 via Zoom.