

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes for the Business Meeting held on Thursday 2nd of June 2011 in Inverkip Primary School at 7.30pm

Present: Hugh Ritchie; Ron Potter; David Adams; Brian Blacklaw; Brian McArthur; Harold McPherson; Telfer Ramage; Liz Roders and Lynne Chambers

Apologies: Cllr Gerry Dorrian and Cllr Innes Nelson

In attendance: Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Sgt Anderson; Constable Steven; Constable MacPhail; Avril Jones; N. Cupples; Cliff Lyons; A. Anderson; M. Anderson;

3. Police matters:

Hugh Ritchie read out the crime statistics for May that had been received belatedly but are now included in the May Minutes.

There were no officers in attendance. Referring to the officers who attended the May meeting Ron Potter said they appeared to be on the defensive and the impression is that there is a reduction in services in Inverclyde contrary to information senior police officers gave to Inverclyde Council (IC). It was observed on occasion it seemed large numbers of officers attended incidents, though Hugh Ritchie said speaking personally he hardly ever sees a policeman. David Adams said there is only one officer in Largs and no lock-up. Hugh Ritchie proposed the Community Council (CC) should contact the police to arrange a meeting with them – if they can't come to the CC, the CC would go to them. Cllr Rebecchi was asked if officers could be compelled to attend CC meetings and he said they could not. If calls come in they must prioritise and attend elsewhere if needed. It was felt officers were attending the monthly Business Meetings less and less. Cllr Rebecchi said Supt Shepherd was the officer to contact to discuss a meeting.

As the meeting moved on to Matters arising from the May meeting, three police officers arrived – Sgt Steven Anderson who is the community sergeant for Ward 6 and Constables Steven and MacPhail. They apologised for their late arrival but said they had been en route to the meeting when called away at 7.15pm to a gang fight in Greenock.

Sgt Anderson reported the following crimes for May 2011:

There had been a total of 24 crimes – 12 of which had been detected

1 serious assault

4 assaults

5 thefts

2 acts of disorder

3 acts of vandalism

1 punctured tyre and a window smashed at the Wemyss Bay Hotel.

A total of 184 incidents were reported during the month – 8 of which had been serious. While the total sounds high it includes flooding in flats; assisting members of the public; youths lighting fires or causing a nuisance; a broken down car; problems with a pelican crossing; weather damage – all of which had been reported to the police. Sgt Anderson said Inverkip and Wemyss Bay were relatively quiet but he tried to give the area as much attention as possible - however officers were dragged away to other areas. He agreed the figures were up because of more reported incidents. In Dumfrocher Road (where the gang fight had taken place) nobody speaks to the police but in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay people contact the police on important matters, though some of the reported matters should not go to the police. In Inverkip and Wemyss Bay there is an element of anti-social behaviour. Harold McPherson said he had two bins chained together but they were still stolen. The officers said tickets were being issued for drinking in public. Brian McArthur asked if there were problems at the Wemyss Bay caravan park. He was told there were problems there, sometimes folk don't mix very well and there have been domestic incidents. But the park has its own security. It was agreed that the previously suggested meeting with senior officers was now in abeyance, though the officers to contact if thought necessary were Inspector Stevie Boyle and Superintendent Mark Shepherd. But for any other matters Sgt Anderson was the first point of contact.

4. Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 12th May 2011. Matters arising:

Community Payback: following the presentation by Anne Clark of IC the secretary posted details of the scheme on the Inverkip notice board; asked the Community Council's webmaster to post it on the CC site; passed details of the scheme to the Inverkip and Wemyss Bay websites; the Wemyss Bay Newsletter and a notice was sent to be posted in Wemyss Bay Community Centre. The secretary also contacted Cliff Lyons – who had expressed an interest in the scheme – to give him Ms Clark's details should he wish to contact her. Cliff Lyons said he had contacted Ms Clark and it looked as if the project of a ramp for disabled access at the Inverkip Pavilion may go ahead

A78/Inverkip Main Street junction: the meeting provisionally organised for the 2nd of June has had to be deferred.

Flooding in Beatoch Place, Inverkip – Cllr Rebecchi said the officer at IC who looks after flooding issues will contact Telfer Ramage

Doors Open Day Inverclyde: From IC – carried forward from the May meeting - information about the Doors Open Day Inverclyde on the 10th and 11th September 2011. Community Councillors and those attending were asked if they had any suggestions about local buildings that could be included in the Doors Open Day Inverclyde Project. Cllr Rebecchi observed that Inverkip Church is the oldest in Inverclyde

The Minutes were proposed as accurate by Ron Potter, seconded by Brian Blacklaw

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

From the Association of Scottish Community Councils (ASCC), its online bulletin – forwarded to Community Councillors

From the ASCC – notice of membership renewal. It was agreed the CC's membership should be renewed for the sum of £15.00

A phone call from Bill Allan, former chairman of Inverkip Community Council, was received by the current chairman Hugh Ritchie with some inquiries about Inverkip. Hugh Ritchie will reply with his findings.

From IC – a letter inviting the chairman, secretary and treasurer of the CC to attend the Kirkin' of the Inverclyde Council in Wellpark Mid Kirk on Sunday 12th June 2011. Because of other commitments the CC officers are unable to attend. The secretary will send apologies to IC

A letter from the Scottish Health Council outlining its role to improve how the NHS in Scotland involves people in decisions about health services. Local officers working in the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Board would like to meet the CC to discover how best the NHS could work and build links with the CC and the people it represents. The secretary was asked to invite the Local Officers to the next monthly Business Meeting

From IC – papers for the special meeting of the Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee held on Tuesday 24th May 2011 re the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy
From bus operators McGill's information about new timetables for Glasgow to Largs services

Forwarded from the website – a message from Inverkip Cat Rescue re two missing cats in Wemyss Bay. The secretary read out details of the missing cats

Save Your Regional Park newsletter

From IC – Inverclyde Local Development Plan: Main Issue Report – representations and comments to be received between 27th May and 22nd July 2011. Hugh Ritchie and Brian Blacklaw have agreed to work on the CC's response.

An email from Tracy McKernan, chairperson of Inverkip Gala Day, looking ahead to the gala on the 4th of June and thanking the CC for its interest and support

6. Treasurer's Report:

Ron Potter reported he had received a letter from the Bank of Scotland regarding changes to services. He said £700.00 had been received from IC, the first basic payment for the CC, bringing the total of funds held to £1028.36

7. Planning Matters:

From IC – papers for the Planning Board meeting on the 1st of June re the renewal of planning permission for erection of 28 dwellings at Bridgend, Inverkip

From IC – a letter acknowledging the CC's letter of objection re the above

From IC – notification of the planning appeal re the proposed change of use from police house/station to restaurant at the Old Police House, Main Street, Inverkip. Cllr Rebecchi said IC awaited the written decision from the Reporter on this appeal. It was agreed the appeal sent to Scottish Ministers had changes to the application presented to IC.

Wemyss Bay – 49 Brueacre Drive – certificate of Lawful Development in respect of the erection of a conservatory and associated works – granted

8. A78/Inverkip Junction

It was noted the meeting planned to be held before the monthly Business Meeting had been deferred. Stewart Leggett, Transport Scotland's Network Manager had said if the CC secretary could seek another date he would be obliged, but if that wasn't convenient he would try to rearrange. It was agreed the secretary would try to reschedule the meeting. Cllr Rebecchi said when dealing with MSPs and councillors a 3 week lead in time to an appointment is helpful. It was also thought it would be helpful if the police could supply statistics relating to accidents and incidents at the Inverkip A78 junction and at Bankfoot roundabout. The secretary was asked to contact the police for these statistics. The secretary, while trying to arrange the June 2nd meeting, had spoken to MSP Duncan McNeil. He said he hadn't received an invitation from Stewart Leggett to attend the meeting but was pretty sure commitments at Holyrood would prevent him from attending. He said he had written to Keith Brown the Transport Secretary to invite him to meet with the Inverkip community so concerns and suggested solutions could be put directly to him. After discussion it was agreed to try to reschedule the meeting with Transport Scotland as the option to meet with the Transport Secretary still remains.

Through buses not stopping on the A78 at Inverkip

A member of the public attending the meeting, Avril Jones, brought the problem of buses not stopping on the A78 to the attention of the CC. The issue was raised under Police Matters at the May meeting and the councillors attending said they would take up the matter with Cllr David Wilson but no feedback has been received. Miss Jones made an impassioned plea for the restoration of the service. She lives in one of the cottages close to the Power Station in Inverkip, but said residents at Bankfoot and Bridgend were also affected by the withdrawal of service. Miss Jones said buses had always stopped at these three sites – why are the buses not stopping she asked. Who complained about them stopping. Who was selfish enough, she said, not to give consideration to small communities in need of a bus service. It is understood transport police declared buses stopping on the A78 to be dangerous. Miss Jones said there had been no warning, discussion or any intimation there was even a problem. She said she could understand there may be a problem with buses stopping outside Simsbury's because of its proximity to the Inverkip Main Street junction. She claimed buses only stop for a few seconds – bin lorries stop for much longer, gas and oil lorries stop for much longer and the septic tank lorry can be stopped for up to an hour and a half. The three community areas have been termed 'Hail & Ride' as they are in a rural area. The cottages are more than half a mile from North Lodge and the first bus stop in the village. This then comes under the 'Hail & Ride' system she said. Bankfoot – with even further distances to a bus stop in either direction – and Bridgend are in the same situation. Villagers from all three areas use the buses regularly – they are a lifeline for those who don't own cars. Miss Jones says she has severe health issues and can't walk for 20 minutes to either bus-stop. She has always striven to remain independent but has now been rendered housebound. There was much discussion on this issue. It was observed that Stagecoach buses and McGill's have different attitudes to stopping. The pressure is on McGill's and drivers have been warned of fines and points on their driving licences. Miss Jones said to the best of her knowledge there had never been an accident on this stretch of road because a bus stopped, but there have been several car accidents. Brian Blacklaw offered to take on an investigation of the situation. It was agreed Cllr David Wilson, IC's representative

on the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport should be contacted and the chief executive of SPT itself and MSPs in an effort to clarify the position.

9. Community Council and Inverclyde Council financial and administrative matters:

Ron Potter said financial returns had been submitted for the past financial year. After the May meeting he had contacted IC's Maggie Paterson with a list of outstanding issues. Ms Paterson emailed to say the CC was requested to continue sending paperwork to West Stewart Street where it will be picked up and monitored. Any queries should be directed to her and she will do her best to get an answer. Ron Potter then received an email from Drew Hall at IC saying the Old Administration Scheme was replaced by the New Scheme for Administration of Community Councils in April 2011. Funding for CCs will still be based on a basic grant and an enhanced grant based on population (previously based on the size of the electorate) though the actual figures have yet to be determined. To prevent any financial problems for CCs in the interim the basic grant has already been awarded. Drew Hall has arranged for a review of the population data sources in order to determine the most accurate way of assessing this. Assuming the basic grant remains the same along with the CC overall budget, then the enhanced grant for guide purposes for Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council (IWbcc) is likely to be £675 which is a £145 increase on previous awards. There are still a few issues IC has to resolve and determine about funding for CCs. However to provide some certainty for the remainder of this transitional year Drew Hall proposed the basic grant is £700 and the population figures presented in the approved report to the Council be used for the enhanced grant calculation as above. The grant funding detail for future years should be provided to the new CCs by the end of this calendar year.

10. Date and time of next meeting:

It was decided there would be no meeting in July. The next Business Meeting is due to be held on Thursday 4th of August in Inverkip at a venue to follow.

11. Any other business:

Margaret Anderson, having asked for a copy of the May Minutes once approved, declared herself unhappy with the reporting of the aftermath of the Cliff Lyons incident at the April meeting. Hugh Ritchie confirmed his belief that Cliff Lyons had been out of order at the April meeting. He had been shocked that Cliff Lyons would speak so rudely to a lady, particularly one who was putting a great deal of effort into creating an event for the community in Inverkip. Hugh Ritchie said he now wanted to draw a line under the whole unfortunate episode.

Telfer Ramage said he'd had a phone call from Mike Lynch of Ardgowan View to say he'd discovered Jacob's Ladder in Inverkip had not reopened on the 27th of May as expected. Efforts will be made to find out why it's still closed

Telfer Ramage also declared his concern about the condition of the moss-covered lane that connects to Beatock Place that schoolchildren must walk to get to school. Cllr Rebecchi said he would pursue the matter. It was also observed school buses would only be provided when a walk to primary school of 2 miles and to secondary school of 3 miles is exceeded.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.45pm approximately.