

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 3rd June 2010 in Inverkip Primary School

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

Apologies: Cllr Gerry Dorrian

In attendance: Cllr Innes Nelson; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Sgt Allan O'Hare; N. Cupples; M. Anderson; A. Anderson; T. Ramage; A. Forsyth; A. Wallace; G. Anderson; B. McKee; C. Riff; D. Cameron and L. Mitchell

A/Chairman Hugh Ritchie welcomed all present.

3. Police Matters

Sgt O'Hare reported the following crimes for the 3 weeks from 13th May to 3rd June:

3 Thefts by Housebreaking

1 Theft from a Motor Vehicle

3 acts of Vandalism

1 Theft of a pedal cycle

1 Common Assault

1 Theft

1 Breach of the Peace

7 ASBO tickets issued for Drinking in Public

18 crimes – 7 detected – 39% detection rate. Sgt O'Hare said investigations were ongoing and that a better detection rate would probably be shown in the coming weeks.

He was asked where the drinking was taking place and said mostly Harbourside, Ardgowan Estate and Finnockbog Road, all Inverkip. The majority at Harbourside but numbers have dropped since the last purge. In one of the cases of housebreaking it was a flat in Main Street, Inverkip that had several previous tenants and it is thought a previous tenant with keys committed the theft from the flat. There was another housebreaking in Inverkip and one in Wemyss Bay. The officer said there was a known housebreaker out of jail and living in the area. It was a question of catching him. Ron Potter asked about a police helicopter that had circled over Inverkip and Wemyss Bay late in the evening of Wednesday the 2nd, the previous evening. Sgt O'Hare replied that he was just back from holiday that day and had no knowledge of any incident. He was thanked for his attendance.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 13th May 2010 and Matters Arising: Footpath at Hill Farm

At May's Business Meeting it was agreed the Community Council would write to Stewart Milne Homes about the situation. Cllr Rebecchi said he would contact Inverclyde Council's (IC) Head of Planning, Stuart Jamieson, to see if he had a different attitude to the footpath than his predecessor Fraser Williamson. It was agreed the CC would defer writing until Cllr Rebecchi had reported. What Cllr Rebecchi reported to the meeting was that Stuart Jamieson, having undertaken an inquiry into the footpath situation using all appropriate Council staff, would attend the CC's next Business Meeting in August to give details of the inquiry. It was agreed that whatever the outcome of his inquiry it was a positive step.

Accessing Inverclyde Council's website:

At the last meeting, the secretary said she had found it difficult to find details of the Local Review Body agenda on IC's website in the planning section. She contacted IC and received an immediate reply and will forward details to community councillors

Demolition at Power Station Site

David Adams had asked about conditions related to the demolition work. Cllr Rebecchi phoned the secretary to say he had a press release from Scottish Power and there would be an article in the Greenock Telegraph about the work. With information taken from the Telegraph an article was composed and posted on Community Council (CC) noticeboards and the website. Cllr Rebecchi said noisy work could only be undertaken between 0900 and 1600. The secretary also wrote to Scottish Power's Head of Project Development to say that as the local statutory body the CC should be kept informed. The letter was sent on the 18th May and there has been neither acknowledgment nor reply. The letter was copied to IC councillors. There were complaints by some attending of burning smells and yellow dust originating from the demolition site. Cllr Rebecchi said any concerns or complaints should be directed to the Environmental Health department at IC or to himself.

Woodland in Wemyss Bay

At last month's Business Meeting David Adams had reported that following the digging of a flood relief ditch glass had come to the surface of an area of Wemyss Bay woodland. The IC councillors had undertaken to pursue the matter. Cllr Rebecchi said some council workers had been to the area and removed a quantity of glass but some still remained. A solution to the problem is being sought

Brueacre Junction

Cllr Rebecchi said he'd been told there would be no lights on the trunk road and no lights on the slip road – as the latter could prove distracting to drivers on the main road. When asked about replacement of the missing cats' eyes road markings he said that white lining was the preferred option. Ron Potter asked about lighting under the Brueacre Junction bridge. There had been lighting provided by Scottish Power from the Power Station site but no longer. The secretary confirmed it was very dark at night and a gathering place for young people. No solution was offered

Ron Potter declared the Minutes to be accurate, seconded by David Adams

David Adams said he should have brought up the matter of overgrown hedges restricting pavement access while Sgt O'Hare was present. His wife uses a wheelchair and finds it difficult to manoeuvre round neighbours' overgrown hedges

while remaining on the pavement. Cllr Rebecchi said the first thing to do was to ask neighbours to cut back their hedges and if they failed to do so IC's anti-social department should be contacted. Brian Blacklaw said there was currently no height restriction but consultation work is being undertaken for a proposed Bill to be introduced to the Scottish Parliament. David Adams went on to say it would be useful to have an article in the Wemyss Bay newsletter collating advice offered by the police at CC meetings. The secretary said she would ask Sgt O'Hare if he would consider writing something for the newsletter.

A question was put to Cllr Rebecchi asking what disabled people, unable to maintain their gardens, should do. Cllr Rebecchi observed that IC used to cut grass but of course it no longer has houses! He said there was a gardening service, based in Port Glasgow, that undertook work at a lower rate than most gardening companies, and he would pass the name of the company to the secretary. Hugh Ritchie said it would be posted on the noticeboards in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay and on the CC website.

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

Email from Transport Scotland suggesting – still provisionally – Monday 28th June at 4pm in Inverkip for the next A78 road safety meeting. Unfortunately three venues have proved to be unavailable. The search continues for a meeting place should the meeting go ahead

Letter of invitation from Inverclyde Council to the CC Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary to attend the Kirkin' of the Council on Sunday 13th June 2010 – unfortunately no-one is available to attend on this occasion

Letter from Renfrewshire Council to say that further to a Letter of Representation sent by the CC the application for the erection of an anaerobic digester plant south of Glenlora House, Lochwinnoch, has been refused

A letter/poster from Consumer Focus Scotland re common repairs – it was agreed it should be posted on the Inverkip CC noticeboard

Email from Nigel Willis of Save Your Regional Park campaign inviting CC members to sign an online petition to urge the Scottish Government to guarantee a minimum separation distance of two kilometres between wind turbines and any residential property or building, regardless of whether they are single dwellings or part of a settlement – forwarded to CC members, several of whom signed the petition

Email from secretary to Wemyss Bay Newsletter saying the venues for CC meetings alternated between Inverkip and Wemyss Bay, but when meeting in Wemyss Bay the majority of members of the public attending is from Inverkip and also that the CC needs new members from Wemyss Bay

Emails from Tracy McKernan – Inverkip Gala Day – saying she has been able to gather a committee of helpers

Subscription request from Save Your Regional Park campaign – it was agreed the subscription of £15 should be paid

Newsletter from Stuart McMillan MSP

6. Treasurer's Report

Ron Potter reported the CC's account shows a balance of £812.27. He is trying to find information from IC about the submission of financial reports and payment for the current year. He phoned three times and has had no response apart from the suggestion that the meeting between Inverclyde Community Council Forum and IC's Stuart Jamieson which is to take place soon would be the opportunity to bring the

matter up, though as Ron Potter pointed out CC boundaries were on the agenda for the Forum meeting, not finance matters. Hugh Ritchie said the late payment of funds to CCs seemed to be a perennial issue. Ron Potter said the rule used to be that CC treasurers would make their returns to IC, the finance department would have a look at them and if in good order, at least half of the annual sum would be paid out and at the time of final submission the balance would be paid. Ron Potter said it would appear all CC regulations are being passed from Stuart Jamieson to John Arthur to be confirmed. The secretary asked if IC had submitted its bill for the repair of the CC noticeboard uprights. Ron Potter said it had not and when asked by Cllr Rebecchi if he had written to all appropriate departments he confirmed that had been done. However the treasurer said that while the money is still owed it would not be paid until the noticeboard repairs had been rectified. Cllr Rebecchi asked Ron Potter to get in touch with him on this issue. Ron Potter said he was also trying to discover from John Arthur – without success - if IC is still insuring CCs as the Association of Scottish Community Councils offers an insurance it claims is superior to that offered by local authorities. Cllr Rebecchi's advice was to bring up that matter at the forthcoming Forum meeting

7. Planning

Following some confusion at a Business Meeting of two months ago about the Planning Department's Scheme of Delegation in the matter of objections to planning applications, it was stated in IC's current protocol the public interest threshold is letters of representation from 10 or more individuals and/or two community groups (including community councils) which are formally constituted and comprise at least ten members. IWbcc has eight members and other Inverclyde CCs don't meet the 10-member requirement. Ron Potter said he would take up the matter with IC. He was able to report he'd contacted Stuart Jamieson who said IC would accept any objection to the Planning Board from a CC and he will recommend the Scheme of Delegation be amended to exclude the ten-member requirement. Cllr Rebecchi said procedures were in place for the first year of the amended planning rules but would be refined as time went on. A member of the public asked about the rule for letters of representation from ten or more individuals and was told all ten could live in the same house; a new born baby would count as an individual and there is no requirement for objectors to live in Inverclyde.

Ron Potter asked if we needed planning permission for the repair of the rotting roof of the CC's Inverkip noticeboard! Cllr Rebecchi repeated he will try to investigate the situation. Hugh Ritchie said he would have a copy made of the noticeboard key so that three members of the CC are keyholders.

Inverkip – Kip Marina, Main Road – alterations to car park access (in retrospect) – granted subject to conditions

Inverkip – 22 Findhorn Road – new conservatory – granted subject to conditions

Inverkip – Hill Farm – erection of temporary sales cabin, associated parking and landscaping (in retrospect) Redrow Homes

8. Co-option of new member:

Following a discussion with members and further to an approach by the secretary, Telfer Ramage had written to say he was interested in becoming a member of the CC. The secretary said Telfer Ramage regularly attended CC meetings and had a wide interest in the community. He is also a committee member of Ardgowan View

Residents' Association. Hugh Ritchie asked elected members for a show of hands – excluding co-opted members who may not vote on this matter – in favour of the co-option and there was unanimous support. Hugh Ritchie therefore welcomed Telfer Ramage to the Community Council and Ron Potter said he was sure he would make an excellent contribution to its work

9. Report on Inverkip Community Facilities meeting:

Brian McArthur, the CC's representative on the Community Facilities Working Group, said he had attended the last meeting of the Group on the 22nd of April. The meeting was chaired by IC's Aubrey Fawcett, attended by IC councillors and representatives of most groups within Inverkip interested in a new facility. Unfortunately Brian McArthur hasn't yet been provided with Minutes of the meeting but said five sites – some owned by IC - have been identified in Inverkip as potential locations for a new centre. Aubrey Fawcett observed that leased land doesn't always attract funding. He has commissioned a feasibility study on the various tracts of land. IC is paying for the study. The next meeting of the Working Group will be in August.

10. Date and time of next meeting: there will be no meeting in July.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 5th August 2010 in the Rogues Room, Inverkip Hotel. However it may be a larger venue is required because of the attendance by IC's Stuart Jamieson and discussion about the Hill Farm footpath. It was suggested Wemyss Bay Community Centre might be considered.

The secretary raised the issue of the alternating venues that had been undertaken for a trial period. It was agreed that attendance by Wemyss Bay residents was very poor when meetings were held there and most members of the public attending had come from Inverkip. Should meetings return to being held only in Inverkip, she asked. Brian Blacklaw thought a precedent had been established and it would be inappropriate not to hold meetings in Wemyss Bay. After discussion it was agreed meetings be held on a three-to-one ratio, three in Inverkip to one in Wemyss Bay.

Any other business:

A member of the public asked why the gates at Wemyss Bay playing fields were locked, and the area closed during the school holidays. Liz Roders said the gates were open until 6pm. It was noted it was preferable to keep youngsters off the streets and using the playing fields. Cllr Rebecchi said he would investigate

In attendance at the Business Meeting were members of the Inverkip Gala Day group who'd come along to introduce themselves to the CC. A date has been set – Saturday 11th September at Ardgowan Estate. The group is pursuing all sources of funding but other plans appear to be progressing well. The CC repeated its support for the project and admiration was expressed for Wemyss Bay's Gala Day and the organisational support it receives.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

Additional meeting:

Immediately after the Business Meeting, Hugh Ritchie, Cllr Nelson, Ron Potter and Lynne Chambers met in the road outside the school. Cllr Nelson suggested a local man he thought would make a good repair of the roof of the CC noticeboard for a fair price. The man named was known to Ron Potter who will make an approach to him.