

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 10th May 2007 7.30pm – Inverkip Hotel

Present: Innes Nelson; Hugh Ritchie; Ron Potter; Harold McPherson; Brian McArthur and Lynne Chambers

Apologies: Paul Maloney

In Attendance: Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Cllr Ken Ferguson; Cllr Gerry Dorrian; PC Billy Gray; SC Gordon Sunter; Cliff Lyons and Donald Brown

Chairman Innes Nelson congratulated Councillors Rebecchi, Ferguson and Dorrian on their election to Inverclyde Council and welcomed them to the meeting

3. Police Matters

PC Gray introduced members of the Community Council to Special Constable Gordon Sunter. PC Gray reported there had been 15 crimes in March in the area, four of which had been detected. In April there had been 21 crimes reported and 8 had been detected, with inquiries ongoing.

PC Gray said there had been concern about the number of road traffic accidents, particularly around the Bankfoot Roundabout area. He said most accidents had been caused by driver error. PC Gray said he had observed drivers approaching the roundabout and that speed was a factor. He had followed and spoken to drivers about their approach to the roundabout. Ron Potter said that cars were driven at speed at the Brueacre off ramp and that recently a car travelling from the Wemyss Bay direction had driven straight across the power station road and collided with the recycling bins. Community Council members were able to tell PC Gray they had learned from former Councillor Eric Forbes that remedial work was planned at Bankfoot Roundabout.

4. Minutes of the Business Meeting held on the 5th of April 2007

Hugh Ritchie said that while the problem of dog fouling had been discussed at the last Business Meeting the problem is not improving and surely something better could be done. Cllr Rebecchi said if owners were seen allowing their dog to foul the area and if known to the observer, they should be reported to the police and the environmental health department. There was also a problem of people driving into the area and allowing their dogs to foul. Cllr Rebecchi said one could take a mobile phone photograph of the dog and the registration number of the car and submit those details to the appropriate authorities.

Cliff Lyons reported, further to April's Business Meeting, that following a fire on the Ardgowan Estate the suspected firerisers had been deterred from setting the bins at

Marine Court on fire by the anti-vandal paint on their fence.

Approval of the Minutes was proposed by Innes Nelson and seconded by Ron Potter.

Cllr Rebecchi said a new Licensing Act is being introduced and it is important consideration is given to the way the Act will be implemented. He said some of the areas of the Act didn't meet with his approval but would have to be worked with, and thought it would be interesting for a member of the Community Council to be part of a group working with or objecting to the new proposals. Anyone interested should contact Cllr Rebecchi.

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence

A letter from Planning Aid Scotland enclosing a questionnaire about membership of Friends of Planning Aid Scotland. The Secretary has completed the questionnaire

A letter from Planning Aid Scotland outlining several changes to the scheme and inviting the Community Council to renew its subscription. It was agreed to renew the subscription

A letter from the SNP saying some of their policies had been informed by responses from Community Councils across Scotland

An election pack from the SNP

An email from Inverclyde Community Care Forum asking the Community Council to take part in an online survey. It was agreed the Secretary should complete the survey

A letter from Inverclyde Alcohol Services' Community & Culture Change Worker wondering if she may attend a Business Meeting to learn more about problems in the area. The Secretary will ask her to attend June's Business Meeting

A letter from Inverclyde Community Care Forum offering information about voice training

A Community Care Newsletter

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health News

Email to Cllr Tom Fyfe thanking him for his detailed response to the Community Council's letter addressed to Inverclyde Council Chief Executive John Mundell – and copied to all Councillors - in advance of the Council's April Policy and Strategy Committee. The email spelled out the Community Council's position regarding the proposed Stewart Milne development

A letter to each of the incoming Councillors representing the new Ward 6, congratulating them on their election and inviting them to attend the Business Meeting

6. Treasurer's Report

Ron Potter reported he had made the Community Council's annual return of accounts to Inverclyde Council. He detailed outgoings and said the balance of the Community Council's account is £202.39

7. Planning Matters

Inverkip – Inverhouse Gardens – construction of two dwellinghouses and amendment to five dwellinghouses to incorporate decking

Wemyss Bay – 6 Etive Road – erection of rear conservatory

Inverkip – 4 Millburn Court – alterations to enlarge existing window opening

Inverkip – 14 Daff Avenue – erection of 2 storey extension to dwellinghouse

Wemyss Bay – Wemyss Bay Holiday Park – extension to planning permission for the change of use of land to develop a caravan site and golf course

Hugh Ritchie said surely such a development would have an impact on the local roads.

Ron Potter said it was a very large development and Innes Nelson thought it appropriate for the Community Council to take a look at the planning application

8. Ward 6 – new elected members

Innes Nelson welcomed the new councillors and said it should be considered how we all should work together in the new Ward 6 as three councillors will be covering the area.

Cllr Rebecchi said if the Community Council communicated with one councillor the other two will know. Ron Potter said fears had been expressed at the Community Council Forum about a person going to one councillor, not getting the answer they wanted and moving on to the next councillor. The CCF thought protocols should be put in place. Councillor Rebecchi said they would not be playing party politics and would all work together. Ron Potter said Inverclyde Council committees would be led by Labour councillors and asked how they proposed to proceed if working with Labour members on committees. Lynne Chambers wondered if there might be a problem, given that Inverkip and Wemyss Bay for a long time have returned a Liberal Democrat councillor, that Cllr Rebecchi would be approached by residents in the Community Council area. Cllr Dorrian represented the party with most councillors – would locals approach him as most likely to get something done. And Cllr Ferguson as a Scottish National Party councillor was politically, if not personally, more of an unknown quantity. However, all councillors stressed they would work together for the good of Inverclyde. Ron Potter said the Community Council had had problems in the past where answers and backing were not provided by the former councillor and he wondered how the newly elected members felt about us as a Community Council. Cllr Rebecchi said all answers would be given apart from those it was prohibited to make public. Cllr Dorrian said the Community Council should lay before the new councillors all outstanding issues and they would consider them.

Ron Potter drew the attention of those attending to a document from the Association of Community Councils which pulled together the best practices of different Councils and how they work with Community Councils. The document also considers how Councils view Community Councils – statutory bodies or just consultative bodies. He said it was clear Community Councils were statutory bodies and should therefore be listened to. Ron Potter said the document went into a lot of detail and would be interesting for all concerned to read and issued the webpage address.

9. Community Facilities

It was noted Wemyss Bay had a good community hall, but Harold McPherson said it was overused. Innes Nelson said Inverkip had had a Community Hall which became licensed premises and then was taken back by Ardgowan Estate. The building was demolished for a lease to be made available for the construction of the Londis store and other businesses. The current small pavilion is certainly not up to scratch. He said the Community Council was discussing new facilities with Inverkip Community Enterprise. Innes Nelson stressed the absolute shortage of land in Inverkip but said there was one area of ground – perfect for a Community Hall – available in Inverkip. The land is the Church of Scotland Glebe and is for sale at £1.8million. Innes Nelson asked the councillors if Inverclyde Council would be prepared to buy the land for the village. Cllr Rebecchi pointed out if the Stewart Milne development went ahead £600,000 would come to the community as planning gain. Ron Potter said - re the Stewart Milne development - the talk of a 'land swap' was not accurate. As the developer owned both the land intended for return to Inverclyde Council and the greenbelt fields, there was to be no land swap but a basic gift (£1 transfer amount) in return for planning permission. Innes Nelson pointed out the Community Council and many residents of Inverkip didn't want the development, but as builders were already looking at the Church of Scotland land it was now a matter of some urgency. The councillors suggested Inverclyde Leisure could be brought into the equation and were told informal talks had already taken place. Cllr Rebecchi asked if it would be helpful if the three councillors spoke to Joe Phillips of Inverclyde Leisure and it was agreed that it would be. The Community Council will be in touch with ICE and plan to write to Inverclyde Council Chief Executive John Mundell.

10. Proposed bridge at Inverkip Station

It was felt this matter would be dealt with in the submission of outstanding matters to be sent to the new councillors. However Cliff Lyons, when invited to comment, said he had to smile about talk of a lift at the proposed bridge at Inverkip Station. Not only would such a lift be huge – and one bridge design had been discounted because of its size – but he felt it was merely window dressing so Inverclyde Council and the developers could turn round and say – *well, we did our best but ...!* Innes Nelson added HM Railway Inspectorate doesn't permit lifts at unmanned stations

11. Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 7th of June 2007.

12. Any other business

Ron Potter said he'd been contacted by Turley Associates acting on behalf of Scottish Power inviting Community Councillors to a presentation of the plans for the proposed development at the Inverkip Power Station site on Monday evening, the 14th of May. Turley Associates had already made a presentation to the Community Council but they wished to meet Councillors one more time before going public with their consultations. Ron Potter announced details of public consultation meetings being held in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Brian McArthur said the Community Council had learned at the last

presentation that Scottish Power says it needs the money raised by the sale of the land to a developer to fund the demolition of the power station and the return of the land to a suitable condition for development use. Innes Nelson said there was a proposal to build 400-600 houses. In the Local Plan it stated the site should be for mixed use. He said what Inverclyde needed was jobs and the provision of small industrial units and waterfront offices at the Power Station site could contribute to that. In addition people working at the site would be travelling in the opposite direction to the bulk of the traffic at peak times.

The question of access by members of the public to the Roman Bridge – listed as an historic building – near Old Millhouse Cottage was raised. Innes Nelson felt the Community Council should speak to Lady Lucinda Shaw-Stewart at Ardgowan Estate and Charles Woodward at Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park about the question. He noted the Community Council supported the public being able to access historic sites.

Harold McPherson reported street lights on the A78 were lit day and night and the lights in Wemyss Bay at the shops were all out.

Hugh Ritchie said he wanted to comment on the facilities in Greenock town centre, particularly the lack of seats in the Oak Mall. He also thought the public toilets should be better signposted.

Donald Brown said bus services for the elderly in Inverkip were atrocious. The problem was they had difficulty boarding buses with steep steps and although low access buses ran on the route they didn't know when they would be running.

Harold McPherson reported the surface of the Cloch Road from Bankfoot Roundabout was in a disgraceful condition.

Chairman Innes Nelson closed the meeting at 9.25pm.