

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 3rd September 2009 in Inverkip Primary School at 7.30pm

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

Apologies: Cllr Gerry Dorrian

In attendance: Cllr Innes Nelson; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; PC Jane Perratt; PC Billy Gray; Tom McKenzie and Stephen Skirving

3. Police Matters:

The officers reported:

For July – 24 crimes – 12 had been detected – 50% detection rate

6 Breach of the Peace

4 acts of Vandalism

5 Thefts

1 Misuse of Drugs offence

1 Theft by Housebreaking

3 Assaults

3 Road Traffic Act offences

1 Wilful Fireraising

For August - 11 crimes – 3 had been detected – a 37% detection rate

2 Misuse of Drugs offences

4 Thefts

4 Acts of Vandalism

1 Wilful Fireraising

The officers said it had been a fairly quiet period but that camping on Ardgowan Estate continued to be a problem. They relied on members of the public to alert them to people setting up campsites. The problem is that youngsters may not always be seen going down towards the foreshore, but the officers said they attended the area on most nights. There had been a recent incident where two women dog-walkers had remonstrated with campers because of the mess that had been created by them. They received rude responses and called the police. PC Perratt said had the campsite been neat and tidy she would probably just have advised the campers against rude behaviour. However, she said the site was an absolute disgrace and the campers were made to clear up and move on. PC Gray said they were getting ready for the October school break when trouble could increase. Brian McArthur said he'd seen a works van driver throw a wrapper from his cab, and then light up a cigarette – an offence in a works vehicle. He'd phoned Crimestoppers with the vehicle number, but they

hadn't seemed too interested and said without a second witness they couldn't proceed. The officers confirmed that was so – dog fouling however requires only one witness. Brian McArthur said he probably wouldn't bother in future and the officers – while accepting what the Crimestoppers operative said was true – lamented any member of the public being put off reporting offences by this kind of attitude. The officers said too there was a new manager at Ardgowan, Ian Wilkinson, who was proactive and helpful. The officers will supply crime figures for July, and deliver to the secretary information for distribution to householders and for the CC noticeboard. They confirmed that a person had been charged with Breach of the Peace in connection with an altercation related to the fenced off footpath at Spey Road. PCs Perratt and Gray were thanked for their attendance.

4. Presentation by Tom McKenzie, chairman of Cardwell Bay/Greenock West Community Council and new representative for Inverclyde on the Association of Scottish Community Councils:

Tom McKenzie gave an interesting talk about his recent appointment to the ASCC and what the Association could do for Community Councils – its major aim is to promote the effective working of Community Councils while respecting the autonomous operation of each CC within the approved framework. He stressed that CCs are statutory bodies – not voluntary organisations – and as such have the right to be consulted on local matters. He also said it was important that CCs within an area should not work against other CCs' interests, as sometimes happens. Because a huge stumbling block for CCs to work effectively while contesting major issues is the lack of funds to afford professional legal and technical advice, Tom McKenzie was asked if the ASCC could be of help. Tom McKenzie said there was such help but he was not sure how far it extended. He would find out.

During the discussion following the presentation, Cllr Rebecchi brought up the issue of the implementation of new planning laws. For National and Major developments CCs must be consulted, and there will be a much more extensive pre-application consultation exercise. Cllr Nelson said that for local developments Head of Planning at IC can make decisions and his officials can rubber stamp applications without them going to the Planning Board. Cllr Rebecchi asked what then was the use of a Planning Board! He drew to the Meeting's attention the situation that if 10 people objected to a local application then it would have to go to the Planning Board, but those 10 people did not have to live in separate houses or even be of voting age.

Sounded like bunkum it was observed, but the current requirements will last for a year and then may be reconsidered. Cllr Nelson said that in the case of windfarm applications, if over 50 megawatts the application would be referred to the Scottish Government. He also said that Scottish Planning Policy 6 Renewable Energy (SPP6) now included the requirement that windfarms will not be situated within 2km of settlements, and IC has added the condition to the Inverclyde Local Plan.

Hugh Ritchie thanked Tom McKenzie for attending the meeting.

The secretary said an email had been received from Nicola Welsh, ASCC's National Development Officer, with information about the Scottish Ambulance Service's consultation on its future strategy, CCs to be included in the list of consultees.

Members agreed with Hugh Ritchie that with no particular knowledge in this area, nor complaints brought to the CC, no submission would be made

Nicola Welsh also asked for copy from CCs about any interesting projects etc for the next ASCC newsletter, *The Community Councillor*

5. Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 2nd July 2009. Matters arising Footpath access/playpark, Spey Road, Inverkip:

The secretary said she had finally discovered in July how responsibility and maintenance of the playpark has been allocated. Stewart Milne Homes has now handed over responsibility to Hacking and Paterson who factor the new Ardgowan Rise development. Evidently children from there must be expected to use the park too. Ardgowan Rise will be responsible for ¾ of the maintenance and Ardgowan Brae for ¼. Speirs Gumley who factor Ardgowan Brae will be billed for the ¼ by Hacking and Paterson and both will pass on the costs to the residents they represent. The secretary has received several emails from residents living near the footpath asking what progress there was. There is no doubt of the strength of feeling this issue has generated, she said. She has remained in touch with the residents concerned during the summer. One email said there should be another public meeting and Inverclyde Council representatives – elected and officials – could explain their actions or lack of actions. One of the residents attended the meeting and was asked for his views. He too felt matters were taking too long to be resolved, but the secretary said it was a complex issue, involving legal matters, and it was also pointed out that like it or not the builders in putting up the fence were doing what they had planning permission to do. While appreciating the frustration of local residents, unhappily such issues could take some time to resolve, but work was ongoing by the CC. The resident said there was growing animosity towards what he described as the original instigators of the tensions currently being experienced, and it seemed at this time the minority was being catered for but not the majority. He said there was a whole host of people who for the entire summer had been denied access to the footpath. The alternative route, Finnockbog Road, was not a fitting alternative as there was no lighting at the village end of the road, plus the roadway was unsafe as it was a crossing point between the Stewart Milne and Redrow sites. Harold McPherson said if the lights were not working on that stretch of Finnockbog Road it was a surely a Health and Safety issue. With the dark nights approaching the resident felt vandalism of the fence would increase and people would turn a blind eye to it. Also, residents jumping out with cameras to take pictures of youngsters scaling the fence wasn't appreciated by other residents. Cllr Rebecchi said it seems residents would prefer the playpark to be resited and that a meeting should be arranged by the CC with IC's Head of Planning. The secretary said a letter had now been prepared to send to ScotWays with supporting documents. It is hoped that information and support from Scotways will strengthen the CC's hand in continuing to bring the matter to IC's attention.

Regional Parks Bill:

A response was sent by the CC to Kenneth Gibson MSP's consultation survey in advance of his presentation to the Scottish Parliament of his Regional Parks Bill.

CC Action Plan:

Ron Potter had reported the CC had to draw up an Action Plan outlining ambitions and aspirations for the coming year. A basic outline has been sketched out, but the elements have to be costed, the secretary reported. To be continued.

CC Insurance:

Cllr Rebecchi phoned the secretary with information re questions at July's meeting: the CC insurance is continuing and ongoing – when the £50 premium is deducted a receipt will be sent

CC Payments from IC:

Cllr Rebecchi had reported to the secretary that when considering the head-count for Community Council payments, it's not just the electorate but other bodies that have to be included in the numbers. It's being worked on. Harold McPherson wondered for how much longer, and Ron Potter said he hoped to receive an additional payment within a week or so. Cllr Rebecchi said he agreed it should have been done sooner

Inverkip Community Enterprise payment:

Cllr Rebecchi discovered that the £5,000 paid to ICE (and to other community centres) is to pay for summer playschemes – it seems to meet with the auditor's approval

Useful Numbers:

Cllr Rebecchi passed some useful numbers to the CC and they've been posted on the Inverkip notice-board and the website

Big Lottery Fund:

The secretary said she had now heard from the Big Lottery Fund and has the information re applying for grants

With one amendment the Minutes were proposed as accurate by Ron Potter and seconded by Hugh Ritchie.

6. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

From IC – Audit Scotland: Asset Management in Local Government – Report by Corporate Director Regeneration and Resources

Save Your Regional Park Newsletter August 2009 - requesting objections for the Millour Hill 2 windfarm application*

Notice from Inverclyde Forum of Community Councils of their AGM in August and a copy of the Forum's constitution

A letter sent to Inverclyde Community Council Forum saying IWBCC nominated Ron Potter to take a place on the IC Community Council Working Group

From the Inverclyde Alliance – note of a visit by Jim Mather MSP in August – CC on holiday

Invitation from the Inverclyde Community Care Forum to attend their AGM – also August – CC on holiday

Newsletter – Health News – from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

From IC – notice of committees and boards Cllr Nelson appointed to

From IC – Review of Admissions and Placing Requests Policy of Inverclyde Council – Independent Consultant's Report and IC's Draft Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools. Cllr Rebecchi urged the CC to study the document, as he is concerned that pupils in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay might be disadvantaged as they move to secondary school. Cllr Rebecchi is concerned about the issue of placement requests in the Draft Policy. He believes that if accepted into a primary school pupils should go with the rest of their class to the designated secondary school - unless parents wish otherwise - without a placement request being required. Inverkip and Wemyss Bay do not have denominational primary schools. -

Cllr Nelson said if there are concerns about knowing the numbers wishing to go on to

denominational or non-denominational secondary schools surely it would be a simple matter to ask parents at the time of entry to primary school and perhaps at primaries 3 and 5 what would be their secondary school of choice

From IC – Agenda for Regeneration Committee meeting 3rd Sept – details of Inverclyde Community Engagement Strategy

Letter(s) from IC – Inverclyde Community Safety Partnership Information Day – this was the same day as the ASCC seminar in Paisley and the secretary phoned with apologies and invited Louise McVey, the Team Leader, to come to this meeting. However, the day has been rescheduled – now to be held on the 26th September. The secretary asked if any of the members would be able to attend. As no one is available on the 26th the secretary has been asked to invite Ms McVey to October's Business Meeting.

Newsletter – Inverclyde Elderly Forum

Newsletter – Larkfield Housing Association

Newsletter - Stuart McMillan MSP

Inverclyde Licensing Board – application for variation of premises licence – Café Bongio, Main Street, Inverkip. Having considered the variation, it was agreed by members that no objection would be made

Letter from Skelmorlie CC re A78 – the secretary said this fairly lengthy letter had been received that day. It will be scanned and distributed to members. The letter refers to the ‘utter chaos’ caused by a burst water main in July outside Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church and the four day road closure plus the huge diversion involved. Skelmorlie CC is seeking support and representation for their efforts to convene a meeting so that these extended closures can become a thing of the past. The CC agreed its support at this initial stage.

7. Treasurer’s Report:

The treasurer, Ron Potter, reported the CC was solvent

8. Power Station site proposed development:

The secretary said a letter of objection had been sent to IC, and its receipt acknowledged. The objections related to over-capacity on the A78(T); that far from attracting people to Inverclyde by granting permission for large housing developments in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay the Council is presiding over a westward movement in Inverclyde leading to further depopulation of Port Glasgow and east Greenock and the proposed 780 houses constitute gross over-development

MSP Stuart McMillan has distributed a survey to residents in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay responding to concerns that had been raised with him. To date he has received around 650 responses.

Duncan McNeil MSP copied to the CC a letter he sent to Scottish Power outlining his concerns about the proposed Brueacre Village. His concerns closely match those expressed by the CC. A note of thanks was sent to the MSP

9. Planning Matters:

*An email was received from Nigel Willis, chairman of Save Your Regional Park, about a new application for a windfarm on Millour Hill – known as Millour Hill 2. He was seeking the help of the CC. As the Millour Hill 2 site falls within Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park it meets with the CC's policy on objections to windfarms. In agreement with members an objection was sent

Acknowledgement from Argyll and Bute Council of the CC's letter of objection re the Strone Saul application

The secretary received a phone call from Robert Aldam of Kilmun CC. He thanked IWBCC for its comprehensive objection to the Strone Saul application.

Inverkip – Power Station – mixed use 'Urban Village' development including residential, business and community use and small retail!

Inverkip – Burnside House, Main Street – alterations to form patio doors and Juliet balcony at rear, together with the installation of an external flue

Wemyss Bay – 9 Shore Road – erection of general storage building

Inverkip – 3 Swallow Brae – alterations and extension to dwelling house

Inverkip – 16 Millburn Court – installation of French doors, side screens and balustrade

Inverkip – 2 Daff Avenue – replacement windows

Inverkip – Former Water Treatment Works, Langhill – change of use of water storage tanks to green waste treatment station – Hugh Ritchie will follow up on this application

Inverkip – 14 Ardoch Drive - in January 2009 an application (in retrospect) for planning permission was refused for the construction of decking in the rear garden. The decision was the subject of an appeal to Scottish Ministers. The appeal was dismissed. The Reporter observed on hearing that no neighbours had objected – 'neighbours can change and the decking is long lasting'

Wemyss Bay – 38 Leapmoor Drive – in September 2008 permission was refused for the erection of a dwellinghouse at land to the south of the above address. The decision was the subject of an appeal to the Scottish Ministers. However, the Reporter found the proposal unacceptable with reference to residential amenity and visual impact. The appeal was dismissed

10. Venues for Community Council meetings:

The secretary has written to IC's lets department about free lets in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay primaries. They have asked that dates be supplied and consideration will be given to the request. Cllr Nelson had contacted the Friends of Wemyss Bay Station who would be happy to accommodate meetings – however parking is a problem that has to be addressed. In the meantime it was agreed the next meeting should be held at the Inverkip Hotel

11. Date and time of next meeting (Thursday 1st of October at the Inverkip Hotel)

12. Any other business

Following a local resident contacting the CC to say the rusting goalposts on the football pitch at the entry to Inverkip looked scruffy and gave a bad impression, the

secretary spoke to Rico Gionvanacci who leases the ground from the Ardgowan Estate. He said Inverclyde Council cut the grass so perhaps it was responsible for the goal posts too. The secretary had contacted the ward councillors and Cllr Rebecchi told the Business Meeting that while Inverclyde Council did indeed cut the grass it was not responsible for the goalposts and would not be painting them. Harold McPherson said water was once again running down the road outside the Wemyss Bay Hotel, coming from the wall by the railway line. He will contact Scotrail.

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