

## INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Business Meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2011 in the Inverkip Hotel at 7.30pm

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

**Apologies:** Cllr Gerry Dorian; Brian Blacklaw and Telfer Ramage

**In attendance:** Cllr Innes Nelson; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Stuart Jamieson, Inverclyde Council's Head of Planning and Regeneration; PCs Andrew Fleming and Steven Gray; Liz Way; John McKernan; Anne Forsyth; Anne Wallace; Neil Barlow; Allan Marsh; Alison Nugent; Avril Jones; Margaret Anderson; Andy Lynch; Morag Lynch; Matt Yates; Cliff Lyons; Caroline Ruff

Before the meeting got underway Alison Nugent said it was unconstitutional as notice of the meeting had not been posted 7 days before the date of the meeting. She was reminded the Community Council's (CC) Constitution said notice would *normally* be posted at least 7 days before the meeting rather than 6 days in this case. She also said the meeting should not be held as the venue did not have disabled access – the delay in posting the Agenda was occasioned by an email from Cllr Rebecchi asking if another meeting place could be found. Consideration was given to the request but as the date had already been changed it was felt the date and venue should go ahead. Hugh Ritchie said he understood the suggested alternatives – the Pavilion and the church – did not have disabled access. Alison Nugent said there was a back entrance to the Pavilion. The meeting started.

#### 3. Police Matters:

The officers attending reported the following crime and incident information for the period 10<sup>th</sup> July-10<sup>th</sup> August 2011:

Robbery	0
Attempted Housebreaking	0
Theft	5
Serious Assault	0
Assault	1
Vandalism	4
Breach of the Peace	5
Road Traffic	0
Misuse of Drugs Act	2
Communications Act	1
Environmental Services Act	1
Total Crimes	19
Detected	7
Undetected	12
Detection rate	36.8%
Incidents	146
Complaints	33
Disturbances	7

Cliff Lyons asked if vandalism at the Pavilion was included in the statistics. He said windows had been smashed but refitted by Inverclyde Council (IC) within days.

Children had been playing on the roof of the Pavilion – accessed by the branches of a large tree on church ground. The branches are to be lopped.

Alison Nugent said she lived in Station Avenue in Inverkip and because of work going on at the station with restricted parking there, lots of cars were parking on Station Avenue and blocking driveways. The officers said if there were no markings on the road they could not enforce a parking ban. However Mrs Nugent said as the school was due to re-open the following week school buses would go up the hill to turn and parked vehicles would make it very difficult. The officers said if vehicles were proving to be an obstruction they would be removed. The issue of traffic calming measures at Hill Farm – see Agenda item 9 – and speeding on Finnockbog Road/Spay Road, Inverkip were brought up. Caroline

Ruff said she lives in Main Street, Inverkip and complained about speeding vehicles, particularly buses and lorries. Her husband's car, parked outside their house, had been damaged by vehicles not giving way on the narrow road. She says she's surprised no one has been killed and stands outside her door waving at vehicles to slow down.

The secretary said she had written 3 times to Sgt Anderson of Strathclyde Police requesting statistics on accidents and incidents at the A78 junction but as yet has received no acknowledgement or reply. The officers said they would pass the comment on to Sgt Anderson.

They also said speeding issues would be passed to the traffic sergeants and would try to arrange for officers with speed guns to be on site at commuting times on Finnockbog Road/Spey Road.

**Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2011. Matters arising:**

**A78/Inverkip Junction Meeting:** at June's Business Meeting it was noted the meeting planned to be held before the Business Meeting had been deferred and the secretary agreed to undertake the rescheduling of the meeting. After extended correspondence with Transport Scotland and MSPs Stuart McMillan and Duncan McNeil a meeting, with Transport Minister Keith Brown in attendance, was arranged for Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July at Inverkip Primary School at 10am – however the venue was changed to Wemyss Bay Primary School because of asbestos work being undertaken in the Inverkip school. The Minister requested that only MSPs, Inverclyde councillors, Community Councillors, Amey representatives, an officer of Inverclyde Council and a police officer should attend and that members of the public would not be included in the meeting. Amey had been asked by Transport Scotland to conduct investigations into the junction and as a result changes were made. However local residents and motorists believe the changes have worsened the situation rather than improve it. Following a presentation by Amey, CC chairman Hugh Ritchie said its findings did not correspond with the experiences of local residents. Community Councillors emphasised the problem was more serious than Amey's findings suggested. Highlighted by the CC was the concern expressed by members of the community about the 'Give Way' signs on the slip road and the great deal of uncertainty experienced by drivers turning right into Main Street from the A78 as to whether drivers on the slip road would indeed obey the road signs. Hugh Ritchie said what he thought was most telling was MSP Duncan McNeil's question to Amey – if the junction was being built today would it be constructed as it currently is. The Amey response was that with current knowledge there would be some changes. The Transport Minister has asked Transport Scotland and Amey to undertake further investigations, to be reported to a further meeting. .

Caroline Ruff responded to Hugh Ritchie's account of an incident at the A78 junction captured by the Amey camera located at the junction and said she had been the driver of the car. She had been waiting to turn out from the Inverkip on to the A78 and a bus, slowing as it approached the turn-off on her right, flashed. She pulled forward to make the turn and just then a car approached and she had to slam on her brakes. The secretary observed that at least two people attending the meeting said they no longer used the junction as it was considered too dangerous.

Hugh Ritchie said Transport Scotland had been very opposed to any reduction of the speed limit on the A78 bypassing Inverkip from 60mph to 40mph. Cllr Rebecchi said he supports a reduction in the speed limit. Cllr Nelson said the way Transport Scotland views the speed limit is, for example, the total travelling time from Greenock to Irvine. Hugh Ritchie said a reduced speed limit would add perhaps 25 seconds to journey time. He confirmed Keith Brown had asked Amey to report and that another meeting would be convened. He said the CC now feels this ongoing problem has been brought clearly to the Minister's attention and is hopeful real progress may be made on the improvement of the junction.

Cliff Lyons said he had taken photographs and it is true most cars don't exceed 45mph. Avril Jones who lives at the cottages at Brueacre, Inverkip, said she lies in bed at night with her fingers crossed hoping not to be visited by a speeding car or motorcycle. She added this year hadn't been too bad but over the past two years there had been twenty-two incidents at her cottage. She also said there were cyclists on the footpath and if you forget to look as you step out, whoosh – there goes a cyclist.

Margaret Anderson said she lives in Main Street, Inverkip and that her garden wall, which faces the A78, had been knocked down twice so she would support a speed limit reduction.

Allan Marsh asked if the CC might think about setting up a sub-committee to concentrate on road and transport issues and Hugh Ritchie said it was a matter that could be considered. Matt Yates said he would sign up to such a committee. Allan Marsh asked Cliff Lyons if he would join the sub-committee if established as he had so much information, but he answered that he preferred to paddle his own

canoe. The chairman urged everyone to keep up the pressure on the matter of improving the junction by writing letters to Transport Scotland.

Neil Barlow said the crossing at Bridgend, Inverkip, was very dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Ron Potter said at the Transport Scotland meeting it was revealed there are moves afoot to improve Bankfoot roundabout but the improvements weren't specified. Hugh Ritchie said the camber and drainage were not good. Matt Yates asked if an anti-skid surface would be laid. Cliff Lyons said he'd observed Amey replacing manhole covers on the A78.

**Through buses not stopping on the A78 at Inverkip:**

At June's meeting Avril Jones made an impassioned plea for the reinstatement of buses that would stop at Bankfoot, Bridgend and the Cottages, Inverkip. The CC said it would make inquiries into the situation. Brian Blacklaw drafted a letter to Gordon MacLennan, chief executive of the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport. The secretary forwarded the draft letter along with Miss Jones' statement to Cllr David Wilson of Inverclyde Council as its member on the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT). He replied he would investigate at an upcoming SPT meeting and phoned to say he was very aware of the problem. The letter to Gordon MacLennan was held in abeyance as Cllr Wilson was pursuing the matter. Cllr Rebecchi also wrote to the SPT and received a response saying the Director, Bus Operations would investigate.

Cllr Rebecchi emailed the secretary to say he had received a reply from the SPT along with information on MY BUS that he will pass on at the August meeting. The letter was only passed on after the meeting had ended. However, Miss Jones contacted the secretary to say she'd applied to the SPT for a My Bus pass but had been refused. Cllr Wilson emailed to say he'd had a long conversation with Gordon MacLennan of the SPT but the situation is complex. The SPT is still looking into matters and he will raise the issue again at the next board meeting. A further inquiry to Cllr Wilson prompted his opinion that if the police get a complaint then in his view they will act. He believes that significant main road changes will not occur until the Inverkip Power Station site is developed and planning gain is extracted from Scottish Power in order to install a roundabout etc. The problem was also brought up at the meeting on the A78/Main Street Inverkip junction attended by the Transport Minister and an IC officer, Robert Graham agreed to investigate the matter and report back. Avril Jones questioned Cllr Wilson's description of the situation as 'complex'. Why she asked. Andy Lynch said the government is trying to get us to go green and use public transport. Avril Jones read from a prepared statement. She has recently had 22 medical appointments and has had to cancel 3 and then wait 7 weeks for another appointment. She only goes out to appointments, nowhere else. She cited the example of an 1130 appointment – to get to the hospital she leaves home with a neighbour at 0820 and has to sit about the hospital. She wished to visit the Tall Ships event – trains every 15 minutes and 20+ buses passed her door. She had no transport and felt totally abandoned. She applied to My Bus but because she isn't over 80, isn't blind and has no war pension she isn't eligible for a My Bus pass. Why can't Hail and Ride be reinstated she asked. She also said she claimed no benefits. Cllr Rebecchi suggested she contact the Social Work department to discover what benefits she may be eligible to receive and that he would contact the SPT to find out why she was refused a pass. Miss Jones will liaise with the Inverclyde councillors.

**Inverclyde Local Development Plan: Main Issues Report:** at the June meeting Hugh Ritchie and Brian Blacklaw agreed to compose a response from the CC. The response was composed and sent off in good time

Harold McPherson proposed the June Minutes as accurate, seconded by David Adams.

At this point Alison Nugent interjected to say that David Adams, as a co-opted member, did not have voting rights and couldn't second the proposal. Mrs Nugent then said that Minutes since April 2010 – with the exception of September 2010 – had been wrongly proposed or seconded by co-opted members. Hugh Ritchie said it was a technicality. The secretary said she would investigate the matter and report. Ron Potter seconded the Minutes.

Margaret Anderson said members of the public should be able to see draft Minutes before the meeting, even half an hour before the meeting. The secretary said draft Minutes were sent in advance to Community Councillors and Inverclyde Councillors.

Cllr Rebecchi belatedly drew to the secretary's attention that in the June Minutes under Any Other Business where it said schools buses were only provided when a walk to primary school of two miles and to secondary school of three miles is exceeded, should have had the addition that IC provides buses at a walk of over one mile to primary schools and two miles to secondary schools.

### **5. Secretary's report and correspondence:**

From Inverclyde Council (IC) – from Head of Regeneration and Planning Stuart Jamieson - details of and an invitation to attend a Public Consultation Event – Inverclyde, the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority – Strategic Development Plan: Proposed Plan (June 2011) to be held on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2011 at 6pm in the IC Business Store, Greenock - the chairman, secretary and treasurer attended the presentation

From IC – Minutes of IC meeting recording the resolve of the Council to adopt the final draft amended Scheme of Administration for Community Councils in Inverclyde

From IC – details of the Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016

From IC – details of Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016: Consultation

From IC – a letter from Drew Hall, Service Manager, Community Safety and Wellbeing, to say the original proposed timescale for the elections of the new CCs has been postponed until late September/early October at the earliest. However, a specific timetable on procedures would have to be confirmed by early August.

Letter from Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority – with information about consultation on the Strategic Development Plan Proposed Plan and Supplementary Environmental Report and the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Forestry and Woodland Strategy and Related Environmental Report – comments should be submitted by the 26<sup>th</sup> of August

From Reform Scotland – a letter saying they are conducting a survey into Community Councils

From the Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society – request for subscription renewal - £20 - approved

From Cllr Rebecchi – details of temporary closure of Millhouse Road

Correspondence with the Scottish Health Council Greater Glasgow and Clyde re a local officer addressing the CC Business Meeting in October

From the Association of Scottish Community Councils – details of a training programme – Scottish Politics Explained - on the workings of the new Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government and local government. The ASSCC says it has been asked to inform CCs of the event but with its budget cut it can't fund anyone to attend. It suggests any CC with £500 + VAT spare could fund a councillor to attend and then cascade the information to those who can't afford to attend!

\*See agenda item 8

Forwarded by Cllrs Nelson and Rebecchi, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's Tactical Assessments for May and June 2011

Forwarded by Cllr Nelson details of IC's Grants to Voluntary Organisations – June 2011

Forwarded by Cllr Nelson details of Green Grants for local communities – CSV Action Earth 2011

Forwarded by Cllr Dorrian – from Royal Bank of Scotland – Community Force – offering three community projects the chance to win awards of £6,000 each

An invitation from Your Voice Inverclyde Community Care Forum to its AGM on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011

From Charles Bell at Sasanbell – to say consultations are now concluded and the Outline Business Case for the new Inverkip Community Centre is now being finalised. Thanks were extended to everyone for their contribution. A copy of the feedback from the Community Consultation meeting was attached.

From Community Councillor Brian McArthur to the secretary, details of a dangerous large drain on the Dalriada access road reported to him by a local resident who believed the property belonged to Ardgowan Estate. The secretary phoned an Estate representative who said in fact the drain belonged to Scottish Water or Scottish Power but he would give them another call to urge them to install a replacement drain cover

Letter from the Royal Horticultural Society. The letter gives details of the UK's largest community-driven environmental campaign

Copies of the Scottish Health Council's Connect magazine – Summer 2011 edition

Copies of Inverclyde Community Care Forum newsletter Your Voice

Copies of Inverclyde Elderly Forum newsletter

Copy of the Firth of Clyde Forum Newsletter – Clyde Breakers

Save Your Regional Park newsletter

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde newspaper – Health News

Leaflet from the Scottish Health Council with details of its activities

Email to the CC website from Mrs Alison Nugent who described herself as a 'Concerned Villager' attaching a copy of a letter of complaint she had submitted to IC regarding Minutes posted on the CC Website for the April Business Meeting. In the letter Mrs Nugent said she wrote in the strongest terms to express her disgust at the above Minutes and other matters

There followed an extended and on Mrs Nugent's part an acrimonious correspondence until chairman Hugh Ritchie wrote to her to say that until a response was received from Inverclyde Council there would be no further correspondence. The CC took advice and has decided no further action is necessary and the matter is now closed

#### **6. Treasurer's Report:**

Ron Potter said the CC's account had an opening balance of £328.36 and the first grant from IC of £700 had been received making a total of £1028.36. Expenditure totalled £110.93 leaving a balance of £917.43. He said the second part of the IC funds were due but he wasn't sure whether those funds would be paid before the CC elections

#### **7. Planning**

Letter from the Scottish Government saying the appeal re the Old Police House, Main Street, Inverkip has been dismissed by the reporter and planning permission has been refused

Email from Damian Glancy to the local councillors and the CC saying on behalf of his neighbourhood group that he'd like to thank each and every one for advice and unstinting support throughout the opposition to the above planning application. The group, he said, is unanimous in saying it undoubtedly helped them to preserve the Inverkip Main Street neighbourhood and that they couldn't have done it without the councillors and CC's guidance and integrity. He finished by saying – keep up the good work.

From IC – details of the Local Review Body meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August – IC's website was checked and no local applications are being considered

Inverkip – 1 Findhorn Place – proposed extension and provision of replacement boundary fence – granted

Inverkip – Hill Farm – substitution of house types (Stewart Milne Homes)

Inverkip – Hill Farm – substitution of house types (Redrow Homes Scotland) – granted subject to conditions

Wemyss Bay – Dunloe House, Wemyss Bay Road – stone cleaning to front elevation – granted

Inverkip – Hill Farm – construction of 6 dwellinghouses – granted subject to conditions

Wemyss Bay – Wemyss Bay Station, Shore Road – renewal of public announcement systems – granted subject to conditions

Inverkip – The Bell House, Langhouse Road – micro hydropower scheme

Wemyss Bay – 18 Tummel Road – proposed out building to rear garden

Inverkip – Ivy Cottage, Main Street – change of use of first floor flat to a dental surgery

Inverkip – 12 Beatock Place – extensions to dwelling house and erection of detached garage – granted

Inverkip – 4 Sandend Place – erection of single storey side extensions, front balcony and rear garden deck – granted subject to conditions

From the Planning Board of 1<sup>st</sup> of June – the application for the erection of 28 dwellings at Bridgend, Inverkip has been withdrawn from the agenda

#### **8. Association of Scottish Community Councils' closure**

Ron Potter said word had been received from the Association that represents CCs across Scotland that because of a 40% deduction in its annual grant paid by the government it could no longer afford to operate. It would continue for another year until the policies of those CCs insured by the ASCC expired.

The secretary reported that on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August a communication was received from the ASCC launching a new service – on-line training and a new legal advice service. Ron Potter said he imagined it was providing services of a sort until its funds ran out

#### **9. Excessive speed and suggested traffic calming measures on Spey Road/Cullen Crescent, Hill Farm Inverkip:**

The secretary said she had been approached by the Ardgowan View Residents' Association with concerns expressed by residents about speeding on Finnockbog Road/Spey Road, Inverkip – the road leading from the Brueacre junction to the Hill Farm developments - and speeding on Cullen Crescent in Ardgowan View. See Agenda item 3 where the police officers said they would

try to organise officers with speed guns on Finnockbog Road. Residents had reported not seeing the 30mph signs under the railway bridge at the turn left onto Finnockbog Road as they were looking right for oncoming traffic, and several residents said they believed there were no speed restrictions on the road. In an effort to get the speed restriction message across it was suggested the 30mph signs could be moved a little further up the hill and that repeated painted road markings could repeat the 30mph limit. Also Matt Yates asked if traffic calming measures could be introduced on Cullen Crescent as he feared excessive speed could cause an accident. Cllrs Rebecchi and Nelson said they would contact IC's Roads Department to investigate the matter and the secretary undertook to write to each councillor with the details and suggestions.

**10. Date and time of next meeting: (Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> of September – Inverkip Primary School)**

**11. Any other business:**

Ardgowan View Residents' Association had undertaken a review of the lack of a bus service to Hill Farm. Cllr Nelson said that on behalf of another resident he had written to McGills about the reintroduction of a service but the Operations Manager had reported it was not a financially viable service as the development was full of two and three car households. Allan Marsh, chairman of the Association, said that despite the negative answer the Association would pursue the matter.

Harold McPherson, David Adams and Liz Roders told the meeting that much of Wemyss Bay had been without water from the previous Friday until Monday morning. They thought the matter had been handled badly. The secretary said if they'd send her details she would contact Scottish Water to discover the circumstances of the water being cut off for such a period.

David Adams said he'd been speaking to Joyce Macfarlane of Lower Clyde Greenspace and it was agreed it would be interesting to hear a talk from Ms Macfarlane. The secretary was asked to invite her to speak at the September meeting.

Cliff Lyons asked webmaster Harold McPherson what the problem was with a link on the CC's website. Harold McPherson replied he'd had a message from the ISP to say he was over the limit when he'd tried to save files but was in fact nowhere near the upper capacity limit. The fault has been reported and when he has time he will address the issue. Mr McPherson pointed out there was no requirement for the CC to have a website and it was a courtesy extended to the community.

Alison Nugent wondered if the CC would consider issuing a newsletter with news of what the CC was doing. The secretary thought the Minutes did that. She also said she had heard consideration was being given to the reintroduction of an Inverkip newsletter. David Adams said Wemyss Bay had its own newsletter.

Ron Potter pointed out the complaints procedure required comments and correspondence should be sent to the secretary and not via the website.

Liz Roders asked why it was youths were still climbing over the fence into Wemyss Bay primary school to play football on the pitch as the gates are locked. Cllr Rebecchi said he understood a gate was open but David Adams and Liz Roders said it took them to the playground not the pitch. Cllr Rebecchi said he would investigate the matter. Cllr Nelson said if the youngsters wanted to play on the Astro Turf they would have to book it. Margaret Anderson said she had been in Kilmacolm and watched with dismay parents teaching their children to ride bikes on a special surface. Each time bikes fell over their handlebars dug into the surface. Stuart Jamieson said he was able to report that access had been stopped at Birkmyre Park

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10pm approx.