

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 5th April 2007 at the Inverkip Hotel

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

Apologies: Paul Maloney

In attendance: Cllr Eric Forbes; PC Jane Perratt; Cliff Lyons; Graham Scott; Clive Priestman; Derek Gramma (?); Alex McCall (Labour Party); Gerry Dorrian (Labour Party)

3. Election of vice-chairman:

Chairman Innes Nelson told the meeting that as he was standing as an Independent candidate at next month's local authority elections he would relinquish the chair. Vice-chairman and treasurer Ron Potter had indicated he wished to concentrate on being treasurer. Innes Nelson said Hugh Ritchie had agreed to have his name put forward as vice-chairman. His appointment was proposed by Harold McPherson and seconded by Brian McArthur.

Ron Potter pointed out legal advice sought from Inverclyde Council confirmed there was no legal impediment to Innes Nelson continuing in the chair until the 3rd of May, however he felt it was appropriate to step down at this meeting. Hugh Ritchie then took over the chair.

3a. Police Matters: PC Perratt reported recent crimes –

- 2 RTAs
- 6 acts of vandalism
- 1 internet fraud
- 2 thefts
- 1 theft of a vehicle
- 1 break in to a vehicle
- 1 act of fireraising, on board the MV Juno

Graham Scott submitted to the Community Council accounts of recent anti-social behaviour – including noise, drunkenness, vandalism by crowds of youths in March and

early April, and that he had been abused on his own doorstep. He was critical of the police response time but said the reaction from community police officers that week had been encouraging. PC Perratt said the lighter nights and spring had brought more people to Wemyss Bay Caravan Park, though Graham Scott confirmed they also came from Wemyss Bay, Inverkip and Skelmorlie. PC Perratt said she would like to know where the youths were buying alcohol. Graham Scott said he didn't think it was the local off-sales shop. PC Perratt said an action plan was being drawn up.

Hugh Ritchie said there had been a fracas at Kip Village and Ardgowan Estate – including the burning of trees and items being stolen from the building site - youths were seen armed with hammers – and wondered if patrols could be escalated. PC Perratt said that wasn't for her to say. Hugh Ritchie said builders Manor Kingdom had decided to reinstate a security guard. It had been felt with so many occupied houses a guard wouldn't be necessary – however it has proved to be so. Again, a slow police response was reported and Cliff Lyons said the Fire Brigade had been called but not the police.

Cliff Lyons said once again wheelie bins had been stolen from Marine Court, where many of the residents are very elderly. They had had to resort to locked and chained bins and vandal proof paint on their fences.

PC Perratt said community officers were not an automatic response team as they had to attend schools, meetings etc and that calls were prioritised at the call centre. Cllr Forbes said he was surprised if there was a resource in the area that it was not automatically called out. PC Perratt confirmed she may be called on 492600, but would not always be there to answer.

4. Minutes of business meeting held on the 1st of March 2007:

Innes Nelson said Turley Associates, who had made a presentation to the Community Council about the proposed development at the Power Station, have asked that their CD and details should be made available on the Community Council's website. Innes Nelson said the matter was in hand.

Ron Potter asked Cllr Forbes what word there was of the lights at Brueacre Junction as they were still not on. Cllr Forbes said Inverclyde Council's lighting engineer had spoken to Scottish Power and asked them to switch the power back on. Cllr Forbes will follow this up.

Ron Potter also said remedial work was required to the road surface at Brueacre – all the patches had disappeared. Cllr Forbes said he would speak to the Council's roads officers and ask for an inspection. He said the Cloch Road was on the Roads Capital Programme.

Hugh Ritchie brought up again the problem of dog fouling on the bridge over the A78. He said the fouling had decreased since Inverclyde Council had erected notices, but still the problem remained. Brian McArthur said it was a problem across Inverkip and Cllr Forbes replied it was a problem across Inverclyde. Hugh Ritchie said fines should be punitive and Brian McArthur asked if there had been prosecutions. Cllr Forbes said there had been two or three.

Provision of healthcare in Inverkip – Ron Potter reported the Health Board had said funding was not available to open a practice in Inverkip. Cllr Forbes said it was very difficult to open a satellite practice and 1500 patients were required to make it viable.

The Minutes were proposed as accurate by Ron Potter and seconded by Harold McPherson.

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

Inverclyde Council report – audit of best value – passed to Hugh Ritchie

Papers for Inverclyde Council's Policy and Strategy Committee meeting of 3rd April – in particular discussion of the Stewart Milne housing proposal and the bridge. When papers were sent out it was felt documents relating to the proposal should not be made public, but Cllr Forbes said he had pushed for the documents to be put in the public domain, and these were passed to members of the public at the meeting.

A letter from Inverclyde Council on Disability was received by Innes Nelson following a Greenock Telegraph article of 9th of March, making it clear its policy was to support an accessible bridge built for the use of all, and not their objective to oppose the building of the bridge for the development. Innes Nelson replied that the Community Council had no input to the article and confirmed the Council's opposition to a non DDA compliant bridge.

From Ladymoor Wind Factory Action Group a Save Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park petition – to be considered

Letter from the Scottish Executive's Finance and Central Services Department re – What can we do to help Community Councils fulfil their role? The letter said the proposals had been considered and it is planned to set up a short life working group to take the work forward. When the membership is established details will be published on the Scottish Executive website.

Details of Inverclyde Community Health Partnership

An invitation to attend the Scottish Liberal Democrat election campaign launch in Greenock and take part in a question and answer session. Lynne Chambers attended the meeting and asked if it was Scottish Liberal Democrat policy to erode the green belt. A letter, dated the 29th of March from the Community Council to Inverclyde Council Chief Executive John Mundell and hand delivered on the 30th of March, about the non DDA compliant bridge and the implications for Inverclyde Council. It was noted that a letter of 4th December 2006 sent to the Chief Executive had not been replied to. Cllr Forbes said he considered the Chief Executive's behaviour unacceptable and had asked him on three occasions to respond to the correspondence. However he was not answerable for John Mundell's actions.

Hugh Ritchie said surely there was some mechanism within Inverclyde Council if not to reply immediately to a letter at least to acknowledge it. Standard business procedure. Cliff Lyons said it was a black mark against the Council and smacked of unaccountability. It was reported Jim McIntosh of the Kyles Residents' Association had been invited to a meeting with the Chief Executive on Wednesday 11th April following his letter dated the 29th/30th March to John Mundell.

The Secretary had sent emails to all Inverclyde Councillors attaching the letter to the Chief Executive and urging Councillors to consider the implications for Inverclyde Council and the council taxpayers of the area of a non DDA compliant bridge. She also sent a copy of the letter to Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission.

A reply was received from Audit Scotland to say they could not intervene at this stage. A comprehensive response from Cllr Tom Fyfe re the all councillors email. To be replied to.

Inverclyde Elderly Forum newsletter

From Inverclyde Council a note of grants to voluntary organisations 2007/2008. Although the secretary had trouble reading the table, Cllr Forbes was able to confirm £5,000 is being paid to Inverkip Bowling Club. The payment met with the approval and pleasure of the Community Council.

Graham Scott made his apologies to the meeting and left.

6. Treasurer's Report:

Ron Potter said he had not as yet received a bank statement at the end of March, but reported income of £2916.75, expenditure of £2375.83, leaving a balance of £540.92. He said the expenditure did not include gratuities of £50 to chairman Innes Nelson for unclaimed costs and to secretary Lynne Chambers for extraneous expenditure. The treasurer proposed the purchase of a laptop for the secretary to use to take minutes at meetings and to tie up with the recently purchased projector. The purchase was approved by Community Council members. Three quotes would be sought. Ron Potter said when he had the bank statement and had settled petty cash he would present the Community Council's accounts to Inverclyde Council for audit.

7. Planning Matters:

Letter from Inverclyde Council saying the Main Street, Inverkip radio base station etc application will be heard on 4th April

Letter from Inverclyde Council informing the Community Council the application for the installation of a radio base station, including ancillary equipment at Main Street, Inverkip – the Community Council had lodged an objection to the application - is being appealed to Scottish Ministers following Inverclyde Council's non determination.

Wemyss Bay – 15 Linnhe Road – extension to dwellinghouse

Inverkip – Machanhill, Finnockbog Road – erection of extension to dwellinghouse

Wemyss Bay – Kelly Mains Farm – erection of new farmhouse

Wemyss Bay – Dunloe, Wemyss Bay Road – extension and subdivision to form four dwellings; erection of dwellinghouse within garden

Inverkip – 6 Willow Place – alterations and extension to dwellinghouse

Inverkip – 14 Swallow Brae – erection of sun room

Wemyss Bay – 11 Burns Drive – alterations and extension to dwellinghouse

Inverkip – Spey Road/Findhorn Road – construction of a play area (Stewart Milne Holdings)

Wemyss Bay – 61 Lomond Road – extension to dwellinghouse

Inverkip – 4 Hebrides Grove – formation of three ground floor windows

Inverkip – Millhouse Cottage, Millhouse Road – erection of a 1 ½ storey dwellinghouse within garden ground – recommended planning be refused

Wemyss Bay – 14 Kishorn Road – alterations and extension to dwellinghouse – recommended planning be refused

Letter from the Scottish Executive Development Department, Planning Division, thanking the Community Council for responding to its consultation paper on Draft Scottish Planning Policy 6: Renewable Energy, and attaching a copy of the main findings. On receipt of this information a further letter of objection to the Leapmoor Windfarm application was sent to Inverclyde Council.

Ron Potter asked Cllr Forbes about the three tall poles erected at the entrance to the Hill Farm development. The poles had carried an advertisement for the Stewart Milne development, and Cllr Forbes had arranged for it to be taken down. However the poles remain. Cllr Forbes will ask whether the poles should also be taken down.

Once again the question of ownership of the said area of land at the entrance to Hill Farm was discussed. Cllr Forbes will endeavour to find out once and for all.

The consideration of the proposed bridge at Inverkip Station was discussed at length following Inverclyde Council's Policy and Strategy Committee meeting of 3rd April. Cllr Forbes said you can't build a bridge to suit everyone and there were still processes to go through. Clive Priestman said he walked his 8 year old to school with another child in a

pram. He wanted to know if the proposed bridge would land on the platform. He was told yes. He wondered how he could get across a stairs only bridge with a pram and was not at all happy about the prospect of his daughter crossing a bridge that landed on a station platform, especially as travel to school times could coincide with train arrivals. Cllr Forbes said Inverclyde Council's education department would determine a safe route to school.

Ron Potter said to build a non DDA compliant bridge was to go against the Disability Equality Scheme Inverclyde Council had signed up to. Cllr Forbes said if dispensation is given to the bridge it will go ahead – otherwise it will not.

8. Date and time of next meeting:

It was agreed as the date of the next meeting would be the same day as the Scottish elections, the next business meeting would be held on **Thursday 10th of May.**

9. Any other business:

Ron Potter raised the issue of parking on pavements. Cll Forbes said there was no legislation to say parking on pavements is an offence. The problem arises when the vehicle poses an obstruction and there's a danger to pedestrians who may have to walk on the road to pass the parked vehicle. The advice is to phone the police there and then. Cllr Forbes added there was a danger in going public with the information that footpath parking isn't an offence. Don't want to advertise it's not an offence. So what to do?

Vice chairman Hugh Ritchie closed the meeting at 9.45pm