

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Business Meeting held on Thursday 5th April 2012 at The Chartroom, Kip Marina at 7pm

Present: Hugh Ritchie; Ron Potter; David Adams; Tracy Bunton; Telfer Ramage; Gordon Roders and Lynne Chambers

Apologies: Jean Anderson and Eileen Virtue

In attendance: Cllr Gerry Dorrian; Cllr Innes Nelson; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Sgt Paul Johnston and five members of the public

3. Police Matters

Sgt Johnston reported the following crimes and incidents for the period 5th March-5th April 2012: 18 crimes in total, 10 of which have been detected with the other reported crimes still under investigation. A percentage detection rate of 56%

Vandalism – 2

Breach of the Peace – 2

Licensing offence – 1

Theft – 5

Road Traffic Offences – 6

Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 Section 57 – 1

Common Assault – 1

Number of incidents recorded over the same period – 85 (to include all calls to police)

A resident asked the officer what news there was the boy who had been knocked down by a bus in Inverkip, but was told there was nothing further to report at this time. There followed a lengthy discussion about safety issues surrounding buses bringing pupils to Inverkip primary school. A resident who said he was a member of the school's PTA told the meeting the issue was top of the list at every meeting. And it was felt that despite the current organisation of school buses, generally agreed to be as good as it could be, the narrow nature of Main Street and Station Road made maintaining safety very difficult. All agreed something should be done, but it was hard to see what in particular that should be. The dangers of children walking to school down Swallow Brae and Langhouse Road were also reported. Sgt Johnston confirmed the 20mph signs painted on roads in Hill Farm were only advisory. Cllr Dorrian said he had asked one of the community police officers to monitor Kip Avenue but to date no problems had been identified. The secretary said it had been reported at a previous meeting that a repeater 30mph sign would be installed at the bottom of Finnockbog Road but that hadn't happened. Cllr Dorrian said he would pursue the matter

Buses to take Wemyss Bay youngsters to Inverclyde secondary schools blocking access to Wemyss Bay primary school were drawn to the attention of the meeting. Sgt Johnston said an officer would look at the situation. However, a Wemyss Bay resident said the road was only blocked for a few minutes on school mornings.

Sgt Johnston was told Sgt Steven Anderson had said at a previous meeting there was a plan for the redeployment of officers. Sgt Johnston replied there is a change process, possible changes are afoot but are still in discussion.

Sgt Johnston was thanked for his attendance

4. Minutes of the Business Meeting held on Thursday 1st of March 2012. Matters arising:

Daff Glen, Inverkip: Hugh Ritchie reported Cllr Rebecchi had introduced him to Inverclyde Council's (IC) Charlie Cairns to talk about improvement work at Daff Glen. Funding is said to be

available – probably through Lower Clyde Greenspace – and it was agreed a meeting should be arranged to include interested parties in Inverkip. To that end invitations have gone out to Ardgowan Estate, the Scouts and Inverkip primary school. It is hoped the meeting will be held in the evening of Tuesday the 17th of April in Inverkip as the timescale for applying for funds is fairly short. Hugh Ritchie said he would be delighted if all the councillors could attend. A resident said fallen trees behind Bridgend were an eyesore. Hugh Ritchie said he and Cllr Nelson had spoken to Ardgowan Estate about this matter. It is intended that deciduous trees be planted but the ground had to remain fallow for a certain time. Hugh Ritchie said the issue would be raised at the meeting.

Flooding in Inverkip: Telfer Ramage said he had little to report. Three or four weeks ago three residents had a meeting with IC's Corporate Director, Regeneration and Environment and reckoned they'd had a fair hearing. Telfer Ramage expected to hear from the residents when there was a response. Cllr Nelson explained the Director had put questions to the Council's Legal Department and was awaiting a response. When that happens another meeting with residents will be arranged. Telfer Ramage said that while potholes on Everton Road in Inverkip at the railway bridge had been patched the grating had not been cleared. Cllr Dorrian said he would speak to Council officers about the problem

A78 – Inverkip Junction: The letter from Scottish Minister for Transport Keith Brown, noted at March's meeting, was raised again. In the letter the Minister said Transport Scotland had concluded that of the seven alternative options against the existing layout at the junction, no individual option would be appropriate for the location and all alternatives to the existing layout have significant disadvantages and no significant advantage, regardless of the cost implication of the individual options. Cllr Rebecchi said he'd written to Transport Scotland regarding the road safety aspect of the A78 from Bankfoot roundabout to Inverkip village, saying he feels that a Traffic Regulation Order should be brought into effect reducing the speed limit. The request has been passed to the Strategic Road Safety Branch of Transport Scotland.

Hugh Ritchie said he thought people were coming round to the prospect of speed reduction but Cllr Nelson said the problem was people pulling out of the junction when they couldn't see. It seems, said Hugh Ritchie, Transport Scotland is happy to wait for the road improvements required when construction begins at the Power Station. A resident said there were interesting letters on the online Inverclyde Now regarding the junction and another resident said the ambiguity of the so-called improvements had made the junction worse not better. Unhappily, Hugh Ritchie said, the Inverkip junction didn't have a high priority as Transport Scotland has first to address junctions where fatalities occur.

Keith Brown said in his letter he appreciated there are still concerns in the local community about the safety of the junction. For this reason he has agreed that Transport Scotland will start the design to install Vehicle Activated Warning Signs (VAS) on the A78 to warn approaching traffic of turning traffic. Depending on the completion of the design the signs will be installed as soon as possible. It was observed there was work being undertaken at the junction.

Hugh Ritchie said the Community Council (CC) could take some credit for having persuaded Transport Scotland to resurface the road at Bankfoot roundabout to improve skidding resistance, work that has now been completed. It was observed however the camber was not much improved, nor the kerb design travelling from the Greenock direction into the roundabout, and that water still collects at the entrance to the roundabout from Cloch Road.

It was agreed a letter should be sent to the Minister expressing dissatisfaction at the result of the inquiries, and asking that consideration be given to the introduction of a speed limit of 40/50mph from Bankfoot roundabout to Bridgend, and 30mph from Bridgend to the south side of Inverkip.

Auditor: the chairman said he had been a little hasty in asking Cliff Lyons to be auditor of the Community Council's accounts and asked if he could backtrack on the request as he needed to have further discussions with the treasurer. Cliff Lyons agreed

The Minutes were proposed as accurate by David Adams and seconded by Gordon Roders.

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

From IC – Agenda for the Policy and Resources Committee, 7th February 2012

From IC – Inverclyde Licensing Board, February 2012 – Review of Premises Licence, Wemyss Bay Hotel

From IC – Minutes of Meetings of the Inverclyde Council, Sub-Committees and Boards to be submitted to the Meeting of The Inverclyde Council of Thursday 23rd February 2012 and the Agenda for the Meeting

From IC – Agenda for the meeting of the Audit Committee on 28th February 2012

From IC – Agenda for the Meeting of the Inverclyde Community Health & Care Partnership Sub-Committee

From IC – Agenda for Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 27th March 2012

From IC – Agenda for a meeting of the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee on 13th March 2012

From IC – Inverclyde Licensing Board – application for variation of premises licence at The Kellybank Inn, Kellybank Holiday Park, Wemyss Bay

From IC – Inverclyde Licensing Board – application for variation of premises licence at Mearns T McCaskie, Seaview, 1A Shore Road, Wemyss Bay

From IC – notice of a proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on the A770 Cloch Road – 30mph and 50mph Speed Limits – a new TRO is proposed which would extend the 30mph speed limit on the A770 Cloch Road to the west of Faulds Park. From this point the speed limit on the A770 to Bankfoot Roundabout would be reduced from the National Speed Limit to 50mph.

From IC – Proposed Traffic Regulation Order, Station Road, Inverkip – the proposed TRO will introduce No Waiting and No Loading restrictions on Station Road from 8.00 to 9.30am and from 2.30 – 3.30pm, Monday to Friday only

Correspondence re the introduction of advisory signs at Hill Farm, Inverkip

Email from Tracy McKernan, chairperson of the Inverkip Gala Day Committee to Hugh Ritchie regarding the Gala. She notes with regret that despite wide advertising in newspapers, an online newspaper and social media for volunteers to help with the organisation of the Gala and the running of the event on the day, that apart from three ladies who helped last year no other person has come forward. And in these circumstances with regret this year's Gala has had to be cancelled. She says the Gala committee decided to donate equipment and revenues from last year to various groups within Inverkip and Inverclyde that directly or indirectly made the Gala Day possible. Mrs McKernan asks that once all the donations have been made a list will be issued to the Community Council who would perhaps minute the details as an official record of the disbursements. Mrs McKernan thanked the Community Council for its support.

From NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board – January/February edition of Health News

Email newsletter from Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park (CMRP)

From CMRP – details of the next Park Authority Consultative Forum meeting

Newsletter from Stuart McMillan MSP

From Your Voice – Inverclyde Community Care Forum – copies of Spring newsletter

From the Association of Scottish Community Councils (ASCC) – notice of conference to be held in

Dunblane on Wednesday 18th April 2012 – Learning from the Past – Preparing for the Future

Two further Online March 2012 Bulletins from the ASCC

From The Scottish Government – Planning and Building News

From Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society – Spring newsletter and a request for renewal of the annual subscription (£20) – agreed by the CC

Email from an Inverkip resident concerned about the level – or lack of – cleanliness in the area. The resident says the areas around Bridgend and Sainsbury's look terrible with rubbish and debris on the grass verges. The approach roads from Greenock, Gourock and Wemyss Bay are all disgusting the email claims. Those attending the meeting had sympathy with the resident's view. Cllr Rebecchi said twice a year IC undertook (on behalf of Amey) verge cutting and clearance. It was suggested residents should engage with the leaseholder at Kip Park about the condition of the area, but it was observed Sainsbury's staff swept up outside the store each morning. Cllr Rebecchi said consideration should be given to how the rubbish ended up on the verges and asked how that could be stopped.

Email from TGC Renewables to inform the Community Council of a proposal - currently at pre-application stage – for a single 100kW wind turbine, 47 metres to tip, on land at Finnockbog Farm, Inverkip

Email from an Inverkip resident attaching photographs of domestic/garden waste dumped at Dalriada by a neighbour – Cllr Nelson is dealing with the matter

Email from IC – offering dates for the Inverkip Community Facilities Group to meet – it was agreed Telfer Ramage and the secretary would attend the meeting if agreeable dates could be found

From the Save Your Regional Park campaign – an email detailing plans for a protest march and demonstration in Edinburgh on Wednesday 25th April 2012 being organised by the Communities Against Turbines Scotland (CATS). It is intended the demonstration will coincide with the Inquiry into the Scottish Government's Renewable Energy Targets taking place at Holyrood that day

The secretary received a copy of IWBC's Constitution signed by an appropriate IC councillor

6. Treasurer's Report

Ron Potter said he was awaiting a reply from IC officials as to whether the CC's accounting year follows IC's – until the 4th of April – or whether it is up until the AGM in May.

He said the balance of the CC's account is £847.32. Ron Potter said he would forward to community councillors the response he had received from an IC official.

He also said he had received a letter from IC outlining accounting procedures and how the CC could spend its funds. The Community Council may approve any expenditure without reference being made to IC as in the past. However, honoraria are excluded from IC's list of applicable expenses. Members of the Community Council will remember three years ago Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council with IC drew up a detailed members' expenses policy. This does not agree with IC's current proposal. Ron Potter said he intends to arrange a meeting with IC officials because the proposed new policy says on one hand spend what you like and on the other there are limited parameters for what the spend can be.

In the past the secretary and treasurer each received an honorarium in lieu of expenses. Executive members of the CC were awarded agreed amounts for non-quantifiable expenses – transport, phone, use of own equipment etc. Now a receipt must be produced for every expense. Hugh Ritchie said it had always been clear who had received what, and it was voted on. It was observed it would be very difficult to produce receipts for every expenditure of that type.

The Treasurer reported he'd received from IC a copy of the CC's insurance policy and although dated 2010 he assumed the information was still valid. Ron Potter had queried with IC what was covered and whether the CC should look at the ASCC's policy. He has been assured this policy with Zurich has been thoroughly discussed by the ASCC and IC

7. Planning:

Inverkip: 33 Cullen Crescent – erection of rear extension

Inverkip: Hill Farm: to be considered at the Planning Board meeting on the 4th of April 2012 – Amendment to Woodland Management Plan. An integral part of the planning permission in 2007 was a Woodland Management Plan for the Berfern Plantation, to replace the existing commercial plantation with a mix of species to create a community woodland. It has become clear, the report to the Planning Board says, the Plan is no longer tenable. The reasons include remaining trees are of poor quality and the depth of soil is only a few inches in some places before bedrock is encountered. The developer proposes an amendment to remove the remaining trees and carry out full replanting of the site within the next planting season and a fresh look will be taken at the site with a more designed approach. It is recommended the amendment to the Woodland Management Plan be accepted

Wemyss Bay: Kelly Bank Caravan Park, Kelly Road – alterations and extension to The Kellybank Inn – granted subject to conditions

Inverkip: 11, 12 and 13 Bargane View – construction of two pairs of semi-detached and one detached dwelling (Springfield Properties) – granted subject to conditions

Inverkip: Kip Marina, The Chartroom – installation of decking, exterior canopy and alterations to patio doors - granted

Wemyss Bay: Ferry Terminal – proposed joinery works, steelwork repairs and replacement and repainting

Inverkip: 4 Kip Park, Main Street – display of illuminated sign

Inverkip: 41 Swallow Brae – construction of a sunroom

Inverkip: Ardgowan House – removal of remaining structure and fabric from the roof of the detached chapel to the north of Ardgowan House – granted subject to conditions

Wemyss Bay: Connel House, 14 Cliff Terrace Road – kids' adventure play area to rear of property

Wemyss Bay: Grianan, Wallace Road – formation of self-contained flatted dwelling at lower ground floor level – withdrawn

Wemyss Bay: Kelly Mains, Kelly Road – erection of 34.2 metres high 50kW wind turbine, access road and associated ancillary development – granted

Inverkip: 16 Findhorn Crescent – single storey extension to side of dwellinghouse – granted

Inverkip: 3 Harbour Square – erection of fence (in retrospect)

Inverkip: The Bell House, Langhouse Road – micro hydropower scheme – granted subject to conditions

Wemyss Bay – Seaview Café, Shore Road – alterations and extension of café together with the installation of new shopfront

Wemyss Bay – Kellybank Cottage, Kelly Road – erection of 2 x 24 metre high wind 50kW turbines with associated works

8. Wind Farm policy

The secretary said in Eileen Virtue's absence she would read to the meeting Ms Virtue's opinion – she said she would happily agree to a CC policy of opposing large wind turbine developments within Park land. However she would not support a blanket policy of opposition to all wind turbine applications and would not oppose individual or small wind turbine groupings as she fully supports the use of new energy solutions and local farms/businesses need ways to enhance their incomes.

Gordon Roders said he would oppose applications for turbines visible from the river.

Tracy Bunton said she had appreciated the presentations made at the March Business Meeting.

However, she wouldn't support a blanket ban. There followed a discussion and a resident suggested it would be helpful to consider the CC's existing policy before drawing up another one. Cllr Nelson said – from his days as chairman of the CC – the policy had included the word 'normally' i.e. the CC would 'normally' support or 'normally' oppose applications in various circumstances.

A resident noted alternative power sources placed a significant financial burden on electricity users.

The policy document will be sent to all CC members and the discussion continued to the May Business Meeting. The policy also to be placed on noticeboards and the CC's website. Consideration will be given to current applications when a Policy is approved

9. Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 3rd of May 2012 at Wemyss Bay Primary School. AGM at 6.30pm; Business Meeting at 7pm

9. Any other business

David Adams said he'd been contacted by a resident of Cliff Terrace Road in Wemyss Bay to say a wall opposite her home was bulging, caused by a tree. There followed a discussion about ownership of the ground where the tree grows. IC owns the gardens on the west side of Cliff Terrace Road. Cllr Rebecchi said he would find out who is responsible for that area of woodland

A Wemyss Bay resident referred to a matter discussed at previous Business Meetings – the issue of boys of 7 or 8 climbing over the locked school gate and fence to access the football pitch at Wemyss Bay primary school. The resident said someone was going to be badly hurt. Cllr Rebecchi said he would call Inverclyde Leisure again. It was reported that nursery play furniture had been damaged and that a fence at the school was down

An Inverkip resident said that although Daff Avenue in Inverkip had been resurfaced, because of its contours and dips, in heavy rain a massive puddle half the width of the of avenue is created. Cllr Nelson said he'd taken up the matter with IC's Roads Department

Telfer Ramage spoke of the completion date for the new railway bridge at Inverkip. Work has been going on at night (when power to the overhead lines can be switched off) and is due to continue until the end of April. Completion date for the bridge is approximately the end of May.

Secretary Lynne Chambers informed her colleagues she had tendered a letter of resignation as secretary and a member of the CC to chairman Hugh Ritchie on the 4th of April, effective from June 2012.

She said it had been an honour to serve the communities of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay over several years, for seven of which she had been secretary. Years which had seen some lows – the failure to prevent development of the green belt fields in Inverkip being chief among them - and several highs. And of those highs, after the culmination of many years of endeavour by the Community Council, the forthcoming construction of a community centre in Inverkip must top the list.

Until about a year ago, she said, being secretary gave her pleasure and a sense of fulfilment. But since that time a tiny, orchestrated group of Inverkip residents had chosen to vilify the work of the Community Council and herself in particular. Remember, this is not a voluntary body, though volunteers community councillors are, she pointed out. It is an elected, statutory body. It doesn't expect praise, not even recognition for the work and effort that goes into the job. But the Council shouldn't expect to be reviled.

She wished her colleagues well and thanked them for the support and friendship they have shown her over the years. She realised her resignation will give satisfaction to some, but asked the majority of residents who have no axes to grind or egos to stroke that they offer ongoing support to the Community Council.

As there was no further business the meeting was closed at approximately 9.40pm.