

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 5th July 2007 7.30pm – Inverkip Hotel

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

Apologies: Paul Maloney; Liz Roders; Ken Ferguson and Gerry Dorrian

In Attendance: Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; PC Jane Perratt; PC Billy Gray; Robin Holder and Elaine Troup (Turley Associates); David Moir (Atkins Ltd); John Connor and Ross Henderson (Scottish Power); Allan Marsh; N. Cupples; B. Gaviga; B. Blacklaw; Jim McIntosh; Mrs I Hunter; Graham Scott; Donald Brown; N. W. Barbor; I. Henderson; M Henderson; Rona Wallace

3. Police Matters

Crime Report – there had been 12 crimes (quite a reduction) and 5 had been detected. The crimes were as follows:

- 2 Road Traffic Incidents
- 1 Misuse of drugs
- 3 acts of Vandalism
- 1 Lewd and Libidinous Act
- 2 Thefts
- 2 Drinking in public
- 1 Theft from a motor vehicle

Ron Potter said the Community Council had asked for a breakdown of the crimes. After discussion it was decided the Community Council would prefer to continue receiving monthly reports and the officers agreed.

Donald Brown raised the problem of cars parking on pavements in Inverkip. PC Perratt said she understood it was difficult because of parked cars, buses and the narrowness of the roads. Rona Wallace said her mother was partially blind and had to move onto the road because of parked cars blocking the pavement. The police officers confirmed lots of cars had been moved on. There was then discussion of parking on the zigzags on Main Street near the Post Office. PC Perratt reported the people parking there were all local residents and were annoyed when taken from their queue in the Post Office to move their cars. Why, it was asked, wasn't the area blitzed a couple of times a month. It is, PC Perratt said. They are issuing tickets and warnings. PC Perratt said it was about educating motorists. But it is a problem they're aware of and dealing with.

Stewart Milne Site Access

PC Perratt then went on to explain even if your car is parked legally outside your own front door on a two-way public highway you can be asked to move the vehicle if it is obstructing the road and preventing the passage of a vehicle. Rona Wallace said the previous day guests at her Foresters Guest House in Station Road, Inverkip, had been asked at 0800 to get up out of bed, get dressed and move their car because Milne contractors wished to take a low loader up to the site. The police said that had been done on their advice. They had advised the contractors to park their heavy loads at

the Londis parking and to check Station Road before embarking on driving up the road.

The discussion moved to an incident on Friday the 29th of June when Station Road at the school and Foresters Guest House was blocked for two hours by a wide load heading to the Milne site. The police were asked whether the contractor had permission to travel up Station Road towards the site and replied it was not their concern. The officers were told at the Meeting the contractors did not have planning permission – entrance to the site was to be via Spey Road. The police had spoken to site workers and understand they're starting work on building a road. They had arrived on the 29th to prevent a breach of the peace and to clear the road. It appears the contractors gave no advance notice. PCs Perratt and Gray said community officers don't necessarily know of these movements. Ron Potter said he'd spoken to police traffic management and they didn't know. Photographs taken at the incident were circulated.

Innes Nelson said 50 houses were cut off because of the contractors' low loader blocking the road and that in an emergency, vehicles would not have been able to access the area. He had tried to talk to the officers to tell them the contractors did not have permission to use this route to the site, that they were acting illegally, but PCs Perratt and Gray said they had to sort out the situation and walked away.

Innes Nelson observed there had been a total lack of communication.

Ian Henderson said if the builders were generating traffic they were obliged to undertake a safety plan for the site. The plan requires a method statement for every operation. Each operation had also to be risk assessed before they started work. Mr Henderson had written to Head of Planning Services at Inverclyde Council outlining his concerns and awaits a reply.

PC Gray said there had been a meeting that afternoon between Inverclyde Council and Stewart Milne representatives and that no more articulated lorries of that size would be going to the site by the Station Avenue to Finnockbog Road route.

Innes Nelson said the afternoon meeting had been held because of last Friday's incident and that whatever the officers had understood or had been told by the contractors, Milne did not have permission to access the site by that route.

Cllr Rebecchi, having pursued this issue, brought with him an email from Alan Swinton of Inverclyde Council which contained the following information from that afternoon's meeting. Innes Nelson read out the following details:

As of Monday 9th July eight items of heavy earthmoving plant will be delivered to the site via Spey Road

For the next 2-4 weeks the only delivery to the site from the Finnockbog Road end will be tankers of lime, averaging two per day

There will be a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to close the pedestrianised section of Finnockbog Road for a 6 month period from Monday 23rd of July.

Pedestrians will be diverted round the back of the Hill Farm estate onto Everton Road which is being brought up to an appropriate standard by Milne.

From the 23rd work can start on the construction of the carriageway into the site which will become the focal point for all deliveries. Once the lime deliveries can be accepted from Spey Road access to the compound off Finnockbog Road will be closed. This should occur in August before schools return. This will be reinforced by Inverclyde

Council's Road Construction Consent which will contain a condition allowing site access from Spey Road only.

Milne will erect signage directing site traffic to Spey Road. They have also undertaken to write to all their suppliers in this respect.

Jim McIntosh said in the permission given to Milne by Inverclyde Council's Planning Committee in December 2006 one of the conditions was that a detailed public access plan had to be submitted to Fraser Williamson for approval. Had this been done or was this a breach of planning conditions, he wondered? Lynne Chambers said she would write to Fraser Williamson to discover if the report had been presented and approved.

It was decided a question about site working hours should be included in the letter being sent by the Secretary to Fraser Williamson as Rona Wallace had said heavy plant was on the move from 0600.

Ron Potter remarked that the developers were pushing the boundaries and had already caused untold aggravation in Inverkip.

This was a very heated discussion – the community officers appeared on the defensive. The officers said they had been dismayed by what they perceived as a lack of local support and information at the incident when the low loader blocked Station Avenue. It was explained the majority of people in Inverkip had been fighting the developer for years, opposing plans to build houses on the greenbelt, and it appeared to them the builders were moving into the village, riding roughshod over villagers, rules and regulations - and the police looked as if they were helping them.

PCs Perratt and Gray said they would speak to Traffic Management and seek advice from their Inspector as to where they stand legally

Ron Potter said he was concerned there was a Health and Safety question surrounding the delivery of lime to the site. Cllr Rebecchi said Inverclyde Council's Environmental Health officers should be copied in on this situation. He said they were strict in the matter of the movement of chemicals.

PC Perratt advised any villager wishing to visit the site and speak to the contractors' staff that they should go accompanied in case corroboration of any exchange was required. There had been outbursts and swearing by villagers directed at site staff she claimed, and there was the potential for breach of the peace charges.

4. Update on the Power Station site by representatives of Turley Associates and Scottish Power

Elaine Troup of Turley Associates introduced herself and Robin Holder of Turley's; David Moir of Atkins Ltd (in charge of demolition) and John Connor and Ross Henderson of Scottish Power. They presented feedback from their three-day public consultation event in May. They estimated 229 people had visited their presentation and of those around 74% had completed a questionnaire. Their findings are as follows:

They had updated their list of local facilities from information in the questionnaire. To the question about additional facilities in the area people would like to see the response included family friendly restaurants, a marina, leisure facilities, health and dental care facilities, a youth centre, small business space, children's play park and a visitor attraction

When asked if local people would be in favour of a transport link between the site and Wemyss Bay and Inverkip, 73% were in favour. Transport consultants are investigating a bus route, but should that not be possible a pedestrian link would be pursued.

Three emerging masterplan ideas are indicative of how a variety of elements might be integrated on the site. A Harbour Village was supported by 87% of those who filled in questionnaires, with a boatyard perhaps, a restaurant and residential housing.

A local convenience store was preferred to a supermarket.

As to employment, there was some support for small business units.

Community facilities – a community centre was strongly supported and medical and dental facilities.

Following consultation with Inverclyde Council it was felt local primary schools could accommodate additional pupils and no school was required on the site.

There was a desire for open space and a coastal walk. Consideration is being given to opening the culvert, landscaping round the Brueacre Burn and play areas.

As to the design of houses – two to three storey houses around a market square met with most support. Self-build plots and low energy houses were not popular. Neither was water edge housing – it was felt all should be able to access the coastline. High density flats and 6 storey flats were not popular either.

To a question on demolition David Moir replied it was their aim to demolish safely with no interruption to roads or damage to the environment.

Market analysis had proved, said Elaine Troup, family housing was most preferred; community facilities would be discussed further and there was only a limited demand for business sites.

Their next move was the presentation of their environmental assessment and master plan, ongoing consultation with the Community Council and Inverclyde Council leading to the submission of their outline planning application in September 2007.

Cllr Rebecchi offered some advice for consideration by Turley Associates' representatives. Roads should be broad enough to accommodate buses and off-road parking should be provided. There should be open and play areas and given the west of Scotland weather astro turf should be considered for play pitches.

Robin Holder said people living on the roads where a potential bus service might run were not supportive. In principle they support linking places by bus, but private operators have also to be considered. Cllr Rebecchi continued that he would like to see all new builds having sprinkler systems and low energy requirements. Robin Holder said new building regulations included improved fire safety and houses would be built to appropriate standards.

Ron Potter asked if there would parking spaces. Robin Holder referred to the impact on the road network and said there was always tension between attracting people to an area and the subsequent increase in traffic.

Ron Potter observed that bus access was all well and good, but the existing roads are congested and narrow. How does that affect traffic impact, he asked. Elaine Troup said transport consultants and Transport Scotland would have a look at the residential roads. If buses can't be used, she repeated they would pursue a pedestrian link between the local communities.

Allan Marsh asked what the plans were for the jetty, and was consideration being given to a high-speed maritime link. David Moir replied there were no plans and it

was intended the jetty be demolished. Allan Marsh thought it crazy when the roads were so congested not to use the river.

Jim McIntosh asked how influenced the developer was to maximise profits. Scottish Power had said they needed the money for the demolition and clearance of the site. Robin Holder replied that 99% of development is profit driven. Jim McIntosh said the consultation exercise appeared to show little appetite for business premises. Did Turley Associates share that opinion. They confirmed their business consultants had also found little demand.

Ron Potter said Housing Associations in Inverclyde had learned that what people want is their own front and back doors. Elaine Troup said they had learned people were not keen on flats – primarily family housing was preferred. Brian McArthur said there had been disastrous flatted developments locally. Elaine Troup said lower flatted buildings can be well integrated. Robin Holder said it was not the intention to concentrate on flats – he believed flats would make up significantly less than 20% of the development. Most popular he said, were 3 to 4 bedroomed family homes which would recognise the character of the area.

Ron Potter asked if a developer had been chosen for the site. Robin Holder said no, the planning application was being Scottish Power led. Ross Henderson said it was Scottish Power's intention first to establish the design principles and master plan and then the developer. David Moir said pre-qualification questionnaires had been sent to various demolition contractors and on receipt of the questionnaires they planned to put the job to tender in early August. Ms Troup and Messrs Holder; Moir; Connor and Henderson were thanked for their attendance.

5. Minutes of Business Meeting held on the 7th of June 2007. Matters arising.

Ron Potter said that on page 3 of the Minutes it was recorded Jim McIntosh had asked Neil Graham of Inverclyde Council if he could have access to the figures relating to the maintenance of the proposed railway bridge at Inverkip Station. Jim McIntosh said he had emailed Neil Graham to say he found the situation completely unsatisfactory. He thought probably there were confidential elements in the agreement and he had received no answer.

Ron Potter then referred to another item on page 3 of the Minutes where it was reported Inverclyde Council Standing Orders permitted the bringing back of previously made decisions for further consideration. Jim McIntosh said evidently when Council officers are given carte blanche to sign agreements they cannot be brought back to the Council for scrutiny. However Council leader Stephen McCabe had asked Chief Executive John Mundell to bring a report to the Council.

Ron Potter then moved to page 4 of the Minutes and referred to the windfarm application on the Cowal peninsula. He asked whether a letter of objection had been sent or the proposed leaflet drop in both villages had been accomplished. Innes Nelson said they had not, but a contribution to the Wemyss Bay newsletter on this issue had been submitted by the Community Council. He said there was time for these actions to be undertaken.

Hugh Ritchie proposed the Minutes be approved as accurate, seconded by Innes Nelson.

6. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

Lynne Chambers read sections of a letter from the Community Council and emailed to Inverclyde Council Chief Executive John Mundell outlining what appeared to be breaches by Milne's contractors and asking that all work should stop while issues were considered and investigated. The letter was copied to all three Ward 6 Councillors and Head of Planning Services Fraser Williamson. Fraser Williamson had replied saying he would investigate and get back to the Community Council

Letter from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – a quarterly update bulletin of Inverclyde Community Health Partnership

Letter from Strathclyde Police outlining changes to community policing in Inverclyde

Inverclyde Council Audit Committee

Letter from David Cairns MP attaching his letter to the Minister for Railways re the proposed footbridge at Inverkip Station

Folder from Planning Aid Scotland (including leaflets and information) and their receipt for the Community Council's annual subscription

Postwatch Scotland newsletter

Cheque from Inverclyde Council to the Community Council for £1230.00 which had been passed to the Treasurer

Letter from Scottish Water – a further copy giving details of the Capital Investment Improvement in the Daff Impounding Reservoir

Card from Riverside Inverclyde saying their offices have moved to Custom House Way

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – Health News newspaper

An email from Mareike Awolin of Inverclyde Council's Alcohol Services Unit thanking the Community Council for their contribution to her researches when she attended June's Business Meeting

Email from Inverclyde Council's Willie Wilson saying he'll give consideration to the matter of more Community Council noticeboards

Innes Nelson said he had received a copy of letter sent by Ian Henderson to Fraser Williamson – see 3. above.

7. Treasurer's Report:

Ron Potter confirmed receipt of the Community Council's cheque from Inverclyde Council. He said he had queried no deduction of £50 for the Community Council's insurance premium and said Willie Wilson of Inverclyde Council was happy to let the Community Council have the full amount and Inverclyde Council would pay the premium. Ron Potter said our grant was based on the electorate as it was in 2002. He said that figure was out of date and while the basic may remain an enhancement should be considered. Ron Potter reported the current balance as £1436.04

8. Planning Matters

Wemyss Bay – 11 Burns Drive – a variation to conditions of planning permission detailing a privacy screen

Wemyss Bay – 15 Leven Road – erection of extension to dwellinghouse

Inverkip – Kip Park, Main Street - siting of a temporary shop

Wemyss Bay – Dunloe, Wemyss Bay Road – extension and subdivision to form four dwellings – detailed and listed building consent being sought

Inverkip – Millburn Court – construction of timber deck and French doors
Inverkip – High Finnock Plantation, off Finnockbog Road – erection of 30 metre telecommunications lattice tower and associated equipment
Inverkip – 19 Cullen Crescent – extensions to dwellinghouse and construction of decking
Inverkip – Finnockbog Road/Spey Road – display of two free-standing sign boards by Stewart Milne Homes
Wemyss Bay – Forbes Place - St Joseph's and St Patrick's Church – extension to church
Inverkip – 15 Daff Avenue – formation of driveway and hardstanding

9. Access to Hill Farm site – dealt with at 3. above

10. Community Council Boundaries – to be dealt with at another meeting as it involves two other Community Councils

11. Date and time of next meeting – Thursday 2nd of August 2007

12. Any other business:

Innes Nelson said Etta Scott had reported glass at the playpark near the pavilion in Inverkip. The secretary will email councillors

Innes Nelson also said a Mrs Jones had contacted him to say low level buses through Inverkip had been removed from service. At an earlier Business Meeting the Community Council had heard elderly residents didn't know in advance which services would be run with low level access buses. The secretary will write to the operators to find out more.

Ron Potter inquired whether all members had a copy of the Inverclyde Forum of Community Councils' new constitution. The answer was no. He will print off a copy to file

Ron Potter reported the Association of Scottish Community Councils had been digging in their heels against the Scottish Executive on the issue of what powers Community Councils should have. The Councils were originally constituted under an Act of Parliament before the Scottish Executive was created. The Executive has now taken the Act of Parliament as read, he said, so all Community Councils are statutory bodies and have more powers than in the past.

Jim McIntosh said – re the proposed bridge at Inverkip Station – he'd had a reply from the Office of Rail Regulators who issue guidance. There are regulations dated 2006 and three sets of codes of practice covering the construction of lifts at stations

The Meeting was closed at 10pm.