

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Business Meeting held on Thursday 12th May 2011 in Wemyss Bay Primary School at 7.30pm

Present: Ron Potter; David Adams; Brian Blacklaw; Telfer Ramage; Liz Roders and Lynne Chambers

Apologies: Hugh Ritchie; Brian McArthur and Harold McPherson

In the Chairman's absence, Treasurer Ron Potter chaired the meeting

In attendance: Cllr Gerry Dorrian; Cllr Innes Nelson; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Anne Clark; PC Barry McNeill; PC Paul Caruana; Tracy McKernan; John McKernan; N. Cupples; Anne Forsyth; Ann Wallace; Cliff Lyons and Margaret Anderson

3. Police Matters

The officers said they had been informed about the meeting at the last minute so had no crime statistics for April 2011 to present to the meeting. The statistics would be forwarded in course and are as follows from the 8th of April-8th May 2011:

Serious Assault – detected 1 - total 1
Assault – undetected 1; detected 1 - total 2
Breach of the Peace – undetected 1 – total 1
Vandalism – undetected 1 - total 1
Theft OLP/OLPWI – undetected 1 – total 1
Theft HB/HBWI – undetected 1; detected 1 – total 2
Theft – detected 1 – total 1
Dangerous Dogs – detected 1 – total 1
Total undetected – 5; total detected 4
Total 9
Detection rate 44%

The officers said they weren't aware of any particular problems in the area – however with summer approaching under age drinking may well become an issue and they would focus on this area like any other. It was felt by some attending it did seem the priority rating for Inverkip and Wemyss Bay had been reduced. The officers asked local residents to alert the police to any problems in the area, but claimed they were aware of what was going on. They also pointed out when the discussion turned to continuity of officers on the local beat and attending meetings regularly that because of shift pattern changes that wasn't going to happen. In fact shifts would not be changed so that officers could attend such meetings. Cllr Dorrian said the altered shift patterns were structured so the majority of policing would be done on Friday,

Saturday and Sunday in the hotspots. Other days are more lightly resourced. There is currently a drive against underage drinking and local licensed premises were inspected to discover if alcohol was being sold to underage persons. All the establishments passed. Ron Potter exhibited a card with photographs of local officers that had been widely distributed in the area in the past, and regretted the connection with community officers had not been maintained. The officers said the current situation and shift patterns had come from the top at Pitt Street in Glasgow and the desired continuity was now not possible. PC Caruana said such information cards would no longer be issued to ensure officer safety. The officers pointed out they couldn't be in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay 24/7 though PC Caruana said whenever possible he drove round the area. There were no excuses – just a fact of life. There was a discussion as to the prioritising of calls by the call centre. Mrs Anne Forsyth said six weeks ago she had people at her door looking for money and her card details. She phoned the police and fifteen minutes later two officers arrived at her house, followed by a phone call. Liz Roders said the police don't turn out now to car accidents if there are no injuries. The police said both parties exchange details. If there is injury, or criminal damage to property other than the cars – e.g. a wall – those details should be reported to the police within 24 hours. Liz Roders said her daughter was involved in an accident at the A78/Inverkip Main Street junction – her car was a write-off. When she called the police they were reluctant to give her an incident number. The constables said if cars can be moved that's fine. If they can't be moved and are in a dangerous position the police will attend. Mrs Roders said the cars had been there for two hours and no officers attended. The officers said – no injuries, no attendance. The bottom line is the availability of officers. Ron Potter observed that the requirements of the area are not going to improve. If there was a serious incident they would be there, the officers said, and not to get the idea they're not in the area. They will come and patrol. David Adams asked the officers what they knew about traffic police saying through buses must not stop at Inverkip on the A78. The officers knew nothing of this. It would appear the traffic police have reported the situation to Transport Scotland as they deem buses stopping on a 60mph road – where no official bus stops or pull ins exist – is dangerous. David Adams said there isn't then a bus stop between Wemyss Bay and IBM. The matter will be taken up by the Councillors with IC's Cllr David Wilson. Cliff Lyons said Strathclyde Police's attitude to this matter is different to the Dumbarton police where buses may stop on a 60mph road. The officers said the public would want them to prevent what might cause an accident. Cliff Lyons said Inverkip Marina is listed as a bus stop on the Ayr bus's timetable.

The officers were thanked for their attendance.

4. Presentation by Anne Clark, Assistant Service Manager, Criminal Justice, Inverclyde Council (IC) on Community Payback - the Community Payback Order Act requires local authorities to consult annually with local communities on the nature of unpaid work to be carried out.

Anne Clark said Henry McLeish had conducted a review of prison sentencing in Scotland where there is a higher prison population per capita than the rest of the UK. 74% of those receiving short prison sentences re-offended within 2 years. Only 43% re-offended when given community based disposals. A 3 month prison sentence cost the taxpayer £11,000. Community disposal costs £2,200.

She explained that the Scottish Government has changed the law on community based sentences to make them tougher and more effective. The community payback order will replace community service orders, probation orders and supervised attendance orders. It will enable the courts to impose one or more of a range of requirements on the offender. These requirements are:

- Unpaid work or other activity requirement (replaces Community Service and Supervised Attendance)
- Offender supervision requirement (replaces Probation)
- Compensation requirement
- Programme requirement
- Mental Health treatment requirement
- Alcohol treatment requirement
- Residence requirement-
- Conduct requirement

Ms Clark outlined the key features of the scheme, and emphasised it was not a soft option. If it were Sheriffs would not be inclined to use it. There are time limits on when work – ranging from 20 to 300 hours – must be completed. Ms Clark said Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council (IWbcc) was the first community council to invite her to make a presentation and she attended the meeting to discover if there were local projects suitable for inclusion in the Payback programme. Cllr Rebecchi said in Wemyss Bay there was an area where residents had lovely front gardens but were adjoined by a wild, uncut area of grass. Could that be a project he wondered. Ms Clark said if it was close to private property they wouldn't touch it. However, it is intended the scheme appears to be fair and covers all of Inverclyde. If suggestions were made she would say which were appropriate and which were not. Brian Blacklaw asked how many people were in her department and how many offenders. Ms Clark replied that last year there were 138 Community Service orders and 50 Supervised attendance orders as an alternative to a fine. Ron Potter said under the old Orders it appeared no sooner was there a tea break, then a lunch break, another tea break and then it was time to leave. Ms Clark said that was not the way of things these days and there was concentrated work, painting, decorating and gardening. There is a joinery workshop adjacent to her office and the people working there were lucky to get a tea break. Cliff Lyons said he was a member of a voluntary group at Inverkip Pavilion where there is no disabled access. A retired member of IC planning department has drawn up a plan for a ramp to be constructed from concrete slabs. Would that be a suitable job for Payback. Ms Clark thought it would be and said that Cliff Lyons should contact her. The secretary said she would put a notice on the noticeboard in Inverkip, on the website and contact the Wemyss Bay newsletter asking for suggestions to go to Ms Clark. The secretary observed that 'Payback' was a fairly emotive word in this context but supposed it was meant to be. Cllr Dorrian said he was a prison visitor – prisoners could sit in their cells if they wanted to but the Payback scheme was contributing more to the community he said. Ms Clark was thanked for her attendance and opted to remain for the rest of the meeting.

5. Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 7th of April 2011 – Matters arising: Letter to Inverclyde Council's Chief Executive

At the April 2011 meeting it was agreed by councillors that the relationship with IC *vis-à-vis* financial and administrative matters was unsatisfactory. The secretary was

asked to write to IC Chief Executive John Mundell outlining these concerns, the correspondence to be copied to Cllrs Dorrian; Nelson and Rebecchi. The email referred to financial matters – to whom the Community Council's (CC) accounts should be sent and when payment of grants would be made; the fact no response was received to an email requesting information as to whom at IC administrative matters may be referred and ended by saying there was almost a feeling of abandonment by IC of the CC and that without a dedicated liaison officer it was difficult to communicate with IC as the CC is obliged to do.

See below the main contents of the response from IC's Drew Hall – it evidently is intended to answer both the above email and the following email with one message.

Scheme of Administration for Community Councils:

Further to discussions on the above scheme at the April meeting, notice was received of a special meeting of IC to discuss the Scheme, held on the 14th of April 2011.

Treasurer Ron Potter asked the secretary to contact the 3 Councillors to ask if they would raise the following issues at the above meeting:

- Is it now IC policy not to acknowledge or reply to submissions and correspondence?
- Why establish a CC Working Group to contribute to the Review of the Scheme of Administration when no meeting has been held for an extended period and no cognisance taken of its contribution?
- Is it becoming IC policy not to minute meetings that might be contentious?
- Why are Community Councillors, representing a group that is a Body by Statute, asked to leave the Chamber as if they are members of the general public when members of the Fire Service and the Police, similarly representing a Body by Statute, are permitted to remain in the Chamber?
- When will the payment of grants to Community Councils be made available for the coming financial year? Protracted delays were experienced last year

A reply was received from Drew Hall of IC, saying Cllr Dorrian had asked him to respond to the points made in the email:

- *With respect to submissions and correspondence, all post and emails addressed to John Arthur at West Stewart Street are picked up and responded to where appropriate (it must be assumed the secretary's email of 1st April was not deemed 'appropriate' as there still has been neither acknowledgment nor reply)*
- *Unfortunately, I am not in a position to provide any further information about this group, as it has not met since responsibility for Community Councils was transferred to Safer and Inclusive Communities*
- *The question about minuting meetings was unanswered*
- *Attendance at Committee meetings is governed by statute, as outlined below. 'In circumstances where agenda items contain information which is considered to be "exempt information" in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, these items will be considered in private and the committee, sub-committee or board will agree a resolution excluding the public and press from the meeting. The Convener or Chair will ask the public and press to leave the meeting as this stage.'*
- *As Ms Paterson explained to Mr Potter, the delay last year was associated with the transfer of responsibilities and will not recur. He was advised to submit your accounts addressed to John Arthur at West Stewart Street. They*

will then be processed as quickly as possible. A letter regarding funding arrangements for Community Councils for 2011/12 will be sent to all Community Councils shortly.

The secretary sent an email to Drew Hall saying his responses would be passed to members of the CC and she would return to him with their comments. Ron Potter said IC had commissioned a working group consisting of CC members through the Forum of Community Councils to look at the boundaries proposed under the new Scheme. The meetings had not been minuted. The group was never contacted again to discuss any proposals/matters raised by different CCs. Cllr Rebecchi said a request for comments on proposed boundary changes had been sent to all CCs. Ron Potter said that request had been received. At the first meeting held in the Chamber after the proposals had been sent out, a decision was made to accept the proposals as printed but to be put out for further consultation. At the next meeting it was announced that decisions about the boundaries had been made at the first meeting. Objections were made but to no avail. And nothing at all came back to the working group. IWBC made a submission when requested to do so but it was neither acknowledged nor replied to. Cllrs Dorrian and Rebecchi will check out the situation. Cllr Rebecchi said because some officers had been suspended everybody was doing other people's jobs. Cllr Dorrian said the CC should not have written to the Chief Executive with these matters. But it was pointed out with correspondence and submissions being neither acknowledged nor responded to and no CC liaison officer identified it had little option but to write to the Chief Executive.

Disturbance at April's Business Meeting

The secretary reported that following Cliff Lyons' outburst at the meeting chairman Hugh Ritchie had conversations with Stuart Jamieson, IC's Head of Regeneration and Planning. It was confirmed the chairman or his deputy has the right to ask any disruptive person or persons to leave the meeting and if they do not do so the police may be called to remove the offender/s. The secretary moved to the A78 report but was stopped by Mrs Anne Forsyth who asked that the account of the disturbance be repeated. The secretary did so. Mrs Forsyth wanted to know if it was not thought Mrs Tracy McKernan had aggravated Cliff Lyons and further, she asked, could not the presence of Mrs McKernan's husband at this meeting be seen as a threat. Mrs McKernan explained that what she had said at the April meeting was she didn't believe Cliff Lyons would have spoken to her so rudely had her husband been present. Mrs Forsyth's observations were dismissed and Ron Potter said if she had anything further to say she should come and speak to him. Then Mrs Margaret Anderson asked if this matter had arisen during CC business. She was told it had arisen under Any Other Business. Mrs Anderson said she was not comfortable about the Inverkip Gala Day being discussed at a CC meeting. Why was it being talked about at all she asked. Mrs McKernan said she had come to the meeting to give an update on the Gala – after all, she said, the Gala was for the community so it was entirely appropriate it be discussed at the CC meeting. She had been exceptionally upset by Cliff Lyons' outburst. Mrs Anderson continued that such matters should have been dealt with in private conversations and in her opinion not brought up in 'open court'.

A78

Having heard nothing from Transport Scotland's Network Manager who had written to the CC to say a follow up conflict study at the A78/Inverkip junction was due to report in April, and that he would be happy to meet with the CC and interested parties, the secretary wrote to Stewart Leggett to invite him to attend the CC's June monthly Business Meeting. Contacting him again was prompted by learning Community Councillor Liz Roders' daughter had been involved in a collision at the junction. A reply was received from Transport Scotland's Stewart Leggett to say the analysis was delayed but he expects to be able to report the findings to stakeholders this week. He will keep the 2nd of June date free for now.

The Treasurer pointed out the balance of funds remaining as shown in the April Minutes should be £328.36 rather than £388.36. Liz Roders said her apologies had not been noted in the April Minutes. The secretary said she had received no apologies but it was agreed the secretary's new email address had probably not been noted. With these amendments the Minutes were proposed as accurate by Brian Blacklaw and seconded by Telfer Ramage.

6. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

Email to the Association of Scottish Community Councils requesting advice and guidance on how the chairman may deal with members of the public attending meetings who cause a disturbance. An automated reply was received and after four weeks when no response had been received from the ASCC the secretary emailed again. Thereafter an immediate reply was received from the ASCC National Vice President. His advice was much in line with that offered by an officer of Inverclyde Council

An invitation was received from IC to two Community Councillors to attend Gourock Highland Games – Liz Roders and her husband will make use of the tickets

Phone call from Steve Farrar of Touchstone Heritage, Edinburgh, representing a company hired by IC to provide heritage information along the route of a waterfront walk from Wemyss Bay to Finlaystone. In a further phone call the secretary told him the Scots chemist James 'Paraffin' Young and his wife were buried in Inverkip graveyard. Steve Farrar said the Wemyss Bay Woodland was of interest to him and that he'd contacted Ardgowan Estate. Any further ideas to steve@steve-farrar.com

From IC – Audit Committee report for meeting on the 26th April 2011

From IC – a report to the Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee meeting on the 3rd May 2011 – Inverclyde Local Development Plan: Main Issues Report. In Chapter 5, Main Issue 10 – Inverkip Conservation Area ; Chapter 6, Main Issue 15 – Undeveloped Housing Sites on the Settlement Edge

From IC – a report to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee to be held on the 10th May 2011 about the Provision of Nursery Accommodation at Inverkip Primary School. Potentially the library may be moved from the school to the proposed Community Facility and the library accommodation used for expanding nursery classes.

From IC – a report to the Regeneration Committee meeting on the 12th May 2011 re revised arrangements for Grants to Voluntary Organisations

From IC – email to say the Council was offering five community groups the opportunity to fundraise at Gourock Highland Games on the 8th May 2011. The

secretary forwarded the expression of interest document to the Inverkip Gala Day (IGD) committee and to Inverkip Community Enterprise. A stall was offered to IGD. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health News

From IC – email notice of a public procession along Main Street, Inverkip on Inverkip Gala Day followed by paper copy – no objections were made. The secretary said she would report to IC that no objections had been recorded

From IC – papers for a special meeting of the Grants Sub-committee to be held on 12th May 2011 giving details of applications received for consideration of funding from the commissioned element of the Grants to Voluntary Organisations Fund for 2011/12

From IC – information about Doors Open Day Inverclyde, Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th September 2011. The letter asks for ideas for new venues in Inverclyde

7. Treasurer's Report-

Ron Potter said he had learned from IC's Martin McNab that IWbcc's financial statements were acknowledged as having been handed in. IC's Drew Hall had written about the CC grant fund – the letter had been written before the financial statements were handed in.

8. Planning

Following consultations with the chairman and treasurer and correspondence and conversations with Damian Glancy, representing the Main Street residents who objected to the change of use of the Old Police House, Main Street, Inverkip to a restaurant, a letter of objection and comment was sent by the CC to the Scottish Ministers. This followed an appeal to the Scottish Ministers against the refusal by IC of planning permission

Letter from Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals re planning permission appeal – change of use from Police House/Station to Restaurant, Main Street, Inverkip – acknowledging receipt of the CC's comments and setting out the procedure for the next stages of the process

Inverkip – Bridgend – renewal of planning permission for erection of 28 dwellings
After consultation with the chairman an objection was sent to IC following the renewal of a planning application as above at Bridgend, Inverkip. The CC objected to the application in 2005 and it was felt the objections made then were still valid in 2011.

Wemyss Bay – Wallace Road – erection of dwelling house – withdrawn

Inverkip – 4 Sandend Place – single storey side extensions, front balcony and rear garden deck to detached 2-storey dwellinghouse

Inverkip – Argyll View, Main Street – provision of external steel flue, erection of car port and replacement of driveway surfacing with monoblock – granted

Wemyss Bay – Dunloe House, Wemyss Bay Road – stone cleaning to front elevation (in retrospect) Listed Building Consent

Inverkip – Kip Marina, Main Road – formation of bund from marina bay soil – granted subject to conditions

Inverkip, Hill Farm – application by Redrow – substantiation of house types on Plots 63, 65, 66, 47 and 80.

Inverkip, Hill Farm – substitution of house types on 6 house plots – withdrawn

Inverkip – Area 6 & 7 Hill Farm – from Redrow Homes – construction of 6 dwellinghouses (amendment to planning permission 10/0114/C – substitution of house types on plots 39, 49, 64, 67, 71 and 72)

Inverkip – Ashrowan Cottage, Everton Road – erection of sunroom to rear of dwelling

Inverkip – Woodside, Main Street – removal and rebuilding of gable chimney – listed building consent - granted

9. Flooding at Finnockbog Road, Inverkip

Telfer Ramage reported that a resident of Finnockbog Road, Inverkip had told him that on the 6th of April 2011 heavy rain had caused flooding on the road at Beatock Place and pedestrians were unable to pass through the flood water. Photographs were shown to the Community Councillors. The water was running off the building site at Ardgowan Rise. The resident, Mr Ian Henderson, has been in touch with Scottish Water and is waiting to hear from them. He has also been in touch with IC officers and is waiting to hear what they intend to do. Some work had been undertaken on the day of the Business Meeting. Cllr Rebecchi will follow up if Telfer Ramage will pass the information to him

10. Date and time of next meeting (Thursday 2nd of June 2011 at Inverkip Primary School at 7.30pm)

11. Any other business:

Brian Blacklaw reported he'd learned from Network Rail that Jacob's Ladder is due to be reopened on Friday 27th May 2011.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm