

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Business Meeting held on Thursday 7th August 2008 at the Inverkip Hotel at 7.30pm

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

Apologies: Liz Roders; Cllr Ken Ferguson

In attendance: Cllr Gerry Dorrian; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Inspector Paul; Sgt Allan O'Hare; B. Blacklaw; N. Cupples and Cliff Lyons

Innes Nelson welcomed all attending

3. Police Matters

Crimes reported –

Inverkip – 16 – 8 detected, 8 undetected

Thefts – 8 (including 5 thefts; 1 theft of a motor vehicle and one housebreaking)

Road Traffic Accidents – 4

Wilful fireraising – 2

Vandalism – 1

Fraud - 1

Wemyss Bay – 15 crimes – 5 detected, 10 undetected

Vandalism – 5

Disorder – 4 (3 Breach of the Peace, 1 Offensive Weapon)

Theft – 4 (including 3 thefts, 1 housebreaking)

Road Traffic Accident – 1

Breach of Bail – 1

Incidents of note:

High value theft (£31000 approx) – housebreaking in Leapmoor Drive, Wemyss Bay

Wilful fireraising to motor vehicle in Inverkip – 2 persons charged

Theft from motor vehicle in Langhouse Road, Inverkip – 2 persons charged.

Insp Paul asked if the community councillors would fill in a Key Information Network questionnaire offering feedback about perceptions of levels of crime and safety. The councillors did so.

Inspector Paul said they were continuing to monitor Inverkip Station for any gangs of youths. Lynne Chambers said it would be interesting to see – now the pedestrian section of Finnockbog Road has been reopened - whether youths would gather behind the hedges and throw missiles at houses now the new houses were built.

Inspector Paul reported the community officers had been about with the speed gun and had issued cautions and four tickets. They will return to the area.

The new Chief Constable is keen to increase numbers of community officers, and

Inspector Paul said there would be around forty officers in Inverclyde before too long.

Cliff Lyons reported what he described as arson at Marine Court in Inverkip where two bins had been set on fire in a brand new shelter. The fire brigade had to be called, and Cliff Lyons had asked police officers to have a look at the CCTV camera at the bus stop adjacent to Marine Court. The officers attending the meeting said they would contact the fire service. Cliff Lyons also told the officers of trouble with youths at the Pavilion in Inverkip. One youth of around 13 was on the roof speaking on a mobile phone. Shortly thereafter a can followed by a stone came rolling down from the roof.

The officers were thanked for their attendance

4. Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 5th of June 2008 – matters arising.

Reprieve of the Maternity Unit at Inverclyde Royal Hospital: Cllr Rebecchi urged local residents not to be persuaded to go to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley as it would detract from the figures for the IRH. In addition the Southern General Hospital appears not to be being offered as an alternative

Dangerous tree in Ardgowan Road, Wemyss Bay: the problem has been dealt with Issues forwarded to councillors from June's meeting:

Polystyrene blocks obstructing stream beside Everton Road, Inverkip:

No update on this

Dip in Finnockbog Road, Inverkip: Dealt with but beginning to form a dip again. Cllr Rebecchi will follow up

Condition of road under bridge beside Beatoch Place, Inverkip: Cllr Rebecchi will pursue

Condition of play park in Inverkip: councillors will follow up

Emptying of recycling bins at Sainsbury's Inverkip: Cllr Dorrian explained the prices paid for glass for recycling were going down. The issue is being investigated and the whole area of recycling is creating budget pressures for Inverclyde Council. Cllr Dorrian will seek information about the situation at Sainsbury's

Speeding in Swallow Brae area, Inverkip: Cllr Dorrian reported proposals had recently been submitted to Inverclyde Council's roads department for road calming measures by Persimmon Homes for approval, which has now been granted. The roads department is awaiting confirmation when the work will start and are holding Persimmon's bond until such time as the work is completed

Pedestrian section of Finnockbog Road, Inverkip: the secretary was asked to contact Inverclyde Council to discover when the pedestrian section would be re-opened. Alan Swinton of Inverclyde Council confirmed the road would be restored by the 23rd of July, including the link to Jacob's Ladder. He believes Everton Road will remain as a privately maintained road useable by the public. If he discovers details to the contrary he would be in touch with the Community Council.

The Minutes were proposed as accurate by Hugh Ritchie, seconded by Ron Potter

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

Letter from Greenock Arts Guild asking for the Community Council's assistance in the development of the project, in particular what the local community would like to see take place in the theatre. They were seeking to make a presentation to a meeting of the Community Council. The secretary replied that perhaps a date could be

arranged that would allow the Community Council to advertise via noticeboards and their website to alert locals to the request. A reply from Greenock Arts Guild is awaited

Documents and emails received from the Post Office re proposed closures. It is noted the Post Office in Inverkip is to be retained

Letter from the Firth of Clyde Forum re consultation on the Scottish Marine Bill

Letter from Inverclyde Licensing Board – there were no objections by members of the Community Council

Letter from the Scottish Health Council re consultation on proposed service changes to mental health services across Clyde. Cllr Rebecchi urged the Council to contact the health board stressing the need to keep mental health services located locally

Letter from Inverclyde Council detailing parking bays for disabled drivers

Email from the Community Council to Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS on the future of maternity services in the Clyde area, supporting the retention of a birthing unit at Inverclyde Royal Hospital. An acknowledgement was received saying the

Community Council's response would be submitted to the NHS Board

Letter from Stuart McMillan MSP enclosing his submission on the above subject

From Inverclyde Council, details of school refurbishments and projected school rolls.

It is recommended that Inverkip Primary School and Wemyss Bay Primary School (Astroturf pitch only) will be refurbished and extended where appropriate. It is anticipated the sports pitch at Wemyss Bay Primary will be started in June 2009 and completed by September that year. At Inverkip Primary work should begin in June 2011 to be completed by March 2012.

Inverkip Primary School –

Most of Inverkip PS is new or recently refurbished and only the 1960's extension requires full refurbishment. The rising roll means a further extension is required in the medium term. The total cost of the project is £805,000. Consideration was given to reducing the scope of the project by redrawing catchment areas to reduce the pressure on the school by redistributing to Wemyss Bay which has spare capacity. However the introduction of a nursery class in 2008 adds to the pressure and means the new classroom extension is required fairly soon (2012) and seems unavoidable even with a revised catchment area.

Wemyss Bay Primary School –

Wemyss Bay PS is currently being fully refurbished and extended. The only proposed future work is to upgrade the existing grass pitch to Astroturf. For most schools pitch upgrading has been omitted. However, because of the lack of other facilities in the area Wemyss Bay is considered a high priority and has been included. The total cost of the project is £351,000

From Inverclyde Council – the new Inverclyde Alliance Community Plan – passed to Innes Nelson. Concern was expressed about the number of cancelled meetings and apparent lack of progress by Inverclyde Alliance.

Email from Willie Wilson of Inverclyde Council looking for year end accounts – by the time the email arrived the accounts had been lodged

From Willie Wilson – guidance for Community Councils on the Data Protection Act

From Willie Wilson – 2 emails containing information which he says may be of assistance when the Community Council is considering its responses to the Scottish Executive Consultation on the new Scheme of Delegation and Code of Conduct for community councils

From Willie Wilson – information on Community Council and Scottish Government Consultation on the School Closure process

From Inverclyde Council – grants to voluntary organisations

Included –

Wemyss Bay Community Association received £500

Inverkip Youth Projects - £2,000

Inverkip Community Enterprise - £1,000

Newsletter from Save Your Regional Park campaign

An email to the Community Council website from Glen Thomson expressing concern about the state of the football field in Inverkip and inquiring as to its ownership. The secretary responded with the information the pitch is owned by Ardgowan Estate and leased to Rico Giovanacchi.

Letter from Inverclyde Forum of Community Councils re Fairer Funding Scotland

From Inverclyde Council – Inverclyde Core Paths Plan – consultation document

From Inverclyde Council – report advising members of the key issues arising from the consultation currently being undertaken by the Scottish Government on the proposed introduction of a Local Income Tax – passed to Harold McPherson.

Newsletter – Inverclyde Elderly Forum

From Inverclyde Council – Community Report on Alcohol – to which the Community Council contributed

From Inverclyde Council – unaudited accounts 2007-2008 – passed to Hugh Ritchie

From NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – 60th anniversary of the NHS souvenir edition of the newsletter

From NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – an invitation to the Annual Review of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Invitation from Inverkip Community Enterprise for representation from the Community Council at their June meeting. The secretary replied that community councillors didn't regularly attend the meetings of other groups in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. She said the Council's business meetings were open to the public and provide a forum for the discussion of issues relating to the local community

Inquiry to the Community Council website from a David Squires re research he is doing on mountain indicators and seeking information about 'Everton Park'. The inquiry was passed to Innes Nelson who responded with some information and will make further enquiries

Email from Ron Potter forwarded to fellow community councillors re Inverclyde Single Outcome Agreement Workshops in August

Also forwarded by Ron Potter to fellow councillors – a report by Inverclyde Forum of Community Councils to Inverclyde Alliance Board

6. Treasurer's Report:

Ron Potter reported the balance of the Community Council account is £129.84 He reported that funding for the Community Council this year looks much as it was last year

7. Planning Matters

Wemyss Bay – Footerhose, Cliff Terrace Road – erection of extension to rear of dwelling house with the provision of dormer windows to both front and rear – recommended the application be approved

Wemyss Bay – 6 Castle Wemyss Place - application for change of use of Open Space to garden ground and erection of a 1.5 metre fence around boundary

Inverkip – Burnside, 54 Main Street – formation of patio doors and installation of external flue

Inverkip – 2 Daff Avenue – formation of hardstanding and gates; installation of storm doors in porch

Wemyss Bay – Wallace Road – erection of a dwelling house

Inverkip – 5 Langhouse Place – erection of telescopic mast to support amateur radio antennae

From Inverclyde Council – a report advising members of the proposed changes to the system of processing planning appeals in Scotland

It was reported to the meeting by members of the Kyles Residents' Association that the application for the erection of a lift at Inverkip Station was passed at the Planning Board meeting on Wednesday 6th of August. The Community Council had sent a letter to the Head of Planning and Transportation, copied to all Inverclyde councillors, asking that the provision of a footbridge at Inverkip Station be dropped altogether, thus removing any need for a lift. The money saved by the builder could go towards increasing planning gain. Fraser Williamson replied that the decision had already been taken by the Council that the footbridge is required as part of the residential development. As that element does not form part of the current planning application which relates solely to the provision of a lift, the letter could not form part of the consideration by the Planning Board. Community Council members suggested they could contact the Stewart Milne Group directly and put the suggestion to them. Cliff Lyons submitted a copy of his objection to the Planning Board.

8. Update on flooding in Main Street, Inverkip:

The secretary reported that following the incidence of flooding in Main Street, Inverkip in July she had contacted Dawn McDermott, Regional Community Manager for Scottish Water. The secretary has been in fairly regular correspondence with Ms McDermott who has had to call off at short notice on two occasions planned visits to Community Council Business Meetings to address local water issues. In her latest reply Ms McDermott said while she understood how distressing the flooding must be for local residents, to resolve this external flooding issue would cost millions of pounds and that unfortunately in this investment period there is no allocation for the removal of external flooding. Internal flooding to properties is a priority. Further to a conversation between the secretary and Ms McDermott she has given an undertaking that she will attend the next Business Meeting on Thursday 4th September.

A local resident spoke of his experience when his house was flooded a couple of years ago. He said he moved to Inverkip 24 years ago and since then the population has more or less doubled but the infrastructure has not progressed to match the increased population. Following the latest downpour on the 1st of August, heavy rain forced up a manhole cover on Main Street and sewage and sanitary items spilled out onto the road. The resident said no parent would want their children to discover such items as

they walked along the road. Inverkip was being turned into a Third World area. He said he'd contacted Scottish Water, MPs and MSPs. Cliff Lyons had contacted the Greenock Telegraph following the latest burst resulting in a feature highlighting the problem, and had also called in Scottish Water and SEPA. In addition sand was also found in Main Street. Cliff Lyons is of the opinion that great quantities of surface water are running off the Stewart Milne site and it could be the developer is not meeting the requirements detailed in the planning application. There was a great deal of discussion on this issue, and it was agreed there should be a concerted community effort launched to find a solution to the problem

9. First Bus Service 901 along Lomond Road, Wemyss Bay

The secretary said there had been a complaint passed to her from Robert Shedden of Wemyss Bay which had been sent to the Community Council website. He expressed concern about the growing number of buses going along Lomond Road. He is particularly concerned about the First Bus 901 Largs/Glasgow service, with double deckers travelling along every 15 minutes. Mr Shedden is supported in his concerns by community councillor Harold McPherson. The buses travel in excess of the 20mph speed limit, said Mr Shedden, along a narrow road with cars parked on both sides; the buses are noisy and the house shakes when they pass. Mr Shedden added that the buses have trouble turning at the mini-roundabout and when the school term resumes he sees potential for accidents. The secretary has contacted First Bus and Inverclyde Council for their response to the Mr Shedden's concerns and awaits a reply. It was pointed out the service may be very beneficial for Wemyss Bay residents, outweighing the inconvenience. It was however agreed that if the speed limit is not being observed by the buses, the police should be contacted.

10. Date and time of next meeting – Thursday 4th September 2008

11. Any other business:

Ron Potter said there is to be a meeting of Inverclyde Community Council Forum on Saturday and wondered if councillors had any points he could pass on
Ron Potter thought all community councillors in Inverclyde had received lists of councillors throughout the area. They had not. He checked details for the Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council and will amend any errors.
He also reported a review of the Freedom of Information Act

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.30pm.