

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 3rd April 2008 in the Inverkip Hotel at 7.30pm

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

Apologies: Innes Nelson and Cllr Ken Ferguson

In Attendance: Cllrs Dorrian and Rebecchi; PC Jane Perratt; PC Billy Gray; Mrs I Hunter; Billy Garigan; N. Cupples; Alan Marsh; Bruce Middleton; Frank Campbell; Telfer Ramage; D. Cramman; B. Blacklaw

In Innes Nelson's absence vice chairman Hugh Ritchie chaired the meeting and welcomed all attending

3. Police Matters

15 crimes were reported with a 40% detection rate – 4 crimes from the caravan parks

1 fraud

6 acts of vandalism – 4 detected

1 Misuse of Drugs Act offence

1 theft by housebreaking

1 Breach of the Peace

2 Section 3 road traffic offences – dangerous driving

2 thefts

1 theft by opening a lockfast place

PC Perratt reported that she and PC Gray had been on location in Spey Road with the speed gun where a 30mph limit is in place and discovered every speeding motorist they stopped was a local resident, not anyone unfamiliar with the area.

The officers reported that soon they would be out about in the district on their bikes again.

Lynne Chambers said she'd received a complaint from a resident of Willow Place about youths in the lane behind the houses. The officers said the complaint had been dealt with and they trust the problem solved.

The officers went on to talk about the benefits of restorative justice in working with youths. If an offender is under 16 a report is sent to the Children's Panel but no punishment can be issued. Restorative Justice works if the young person, when confronted with the effects of a crime, can be shamed and say sorry. If they don't say sorry, a report is then made to the Children's Panel. Often when parents are made aware of their children's behaviour they find it hard to believe. Sometimes, in the case of acts of vandalism, the parents say they will pay for the damage and recover it from their child's pocket money.

Councillor Dorrian wanted to encourage everyone to report what they see to police.

Harold McPherson said there was nothing for the young people to do, but PC Perratt, Cllr Rebecchi and Brian McArthur didn't agree with him. There were many out of

school activities and youth organisations they said. PC Perratt said she and PC Gray had some funding for young people to spend in Inverkip but there was little or no parental support and parents weren't prepared to take their children to youth organisations and events. Harold McPherson said it was 8 miles up the road to Greenock for facilities for young people from Wemyss Bay, and if the youngsters were dropped off in the evening there were no return buses. PC Perratt said when wishing to speak to parents about their 16-18 years old hanging about, they would call around 5pm when they usually found the adults at home. When they spoke to the parents about youth clubs, they were told they didn't have the time to help.

Reference was made to John Muir's attendance at last month's Business Meeting. Mr Muir's son Damian died as the result of a knife attack. The Community Council had given an undertaking they would write to Amazon.com protesting about the machetes they had for sale on their site. However the chairman has discovered several other sites showing not only machetes but other offensive weapons. Innes Nelson has asked the secretary to say he felt the problem was greater than one Community Council writing to Amazon and that Mr Muir should take his case to David Cairns MP. It was agreed the secretary should write to Mr Muir enclosing the examples the chairman had found online and making the suggestion he contact the MP. It was also agreed the address of a website where a petition may be signed calling for mandatory sentencing for knife-carriers – Damian's Law – should be posted on the Community Council's website.

4. Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 6th of March 2008 – matters arising:

All weather pitch in Wemyss Bay: Cllr Dorrian has not managed – despite efforts – to get an answer from Inverclyde Council and will persevere

Drainage problems, Primrose Avenue, Inverkip: Brian McArthur has not yet contacted Iverclyde Council as there have been no appropriate conditions. He will continue to monitor the situation

Wemyss Bay shops parking: Cllr Dorrian said there had been no request from the owners of the car park for it to be adopted by Inverclyde Council. In any event, he said, he wouldn't support the adoption of the car park as it has not been constructed to the standards contained in the Council's development guidelines. If it had been the intention of the owners to have it adopted then the work required to get it to an adoptable standard would have cost them considerably more than the work the Council was asked to carry out

Harold McPherson proposed the Minutes be adopted as accurate, seconded by Brian McArthur

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde public consultation document – changes to Inpatient Disability Services in Clyde. Passed to Hugh Ritchie

Via the website, emails from Stephen Skirving inquiring about the slow posting of Minutes on the website. The secretary explained she'd been on holiday but he felt stand-ins should be able to keep matters up to date. She replied in an ideal world that was no doubt true, but that Community Councillors had their own areas of responsibility and it was a bit much to load them with other tasks. She also said the Community Council was always looking for new community councillors but trusted

things would return to an even keel soon. He also asked about his earlier suggestion that Community Council noticeboards be placed in the new developments in Inverkip. The matter had been considered but seemed rather difficult – acquisition of land, planning permission and the cost of constructing new noticeboards seemed a project too far at the moment.

Information from Inverclyde Council that Community Council elections will not take place until later this year

A newsletter from Stuart McMillan MSP

A newsletter from Ladymoor Wind Factory Action Group

A letter from Inverclyde Council – re Local Community Safety Partnership – Ward 6 which was delivered too late for action. It was agreed the secretary should contact Community Safety for further information

Newsletter from Postwatch Scotland

Emails from Tam Nugent, Inverkip, re Inverkip Community Enterprise dated 19th January and 27th March 2008. The first was received while the secretary was on holiday and not replied to at that time, but on the secretary's return the correspondence was dealt with. Tam Nugent expressed surprise the Community Council's December 2007 Minutes reported it was to take the lead role in setting up an autonomous group to take forward the establishment of a community facility in Inverkip. He made several observations including the question – why did the Community Council want to form a new group when such a group already exists – Inverkip Community Enterprise – and why the group didn't have the support of the Community Council. The secretary replied that perhaps Mr Nugent would pass his observations and questions to the Secretary of Inverkip Community Enterprise with a request his points be assessed by members of the group and any that may be considered relevant could be put directly to the Community Council. Mr Nugent emailed to say he was not pleased by this suggestion. The secretary responded at some length on the 2nd of April, expressing the Community Council's position on these matters. She pointed out that Willie Wilson, Inverclyde Council's Community Services Manager, had made the statement about the Community Council taking the lead role in establishing the autonomous body and would have a role and be a partner in the group. His statement followed meetings with Inverkip Community Enterprise and the Community Council.

The secretary said it was not true the Community Council had unilaterally decided the terms of the foundation of the new group. Mr Nugent said he had the support of Inverkip Community Enterprise members so the secretary asked him why he thought the group considered itself uniquely qualified to progress a new community centre. The Community Council would act as a catalyst to bring together an organisation representative of all residents of Inverkip. Inverkip Community Enterprise may have been founded two years ago but the Community Council in conjunction with Inverclyde Council has been working towards the establishment of a new community centre since July 2005.

The secretary pointed out that over the years groups had come and gone in Inverkip but the Community Council had a long track record of serving and battling for the community, credibility and proven organisational abilities. She drew his attention to Kilmacolm's efforts to establish a community centre and suggested he access their website to see for himself the make-up of their autonomous group. The secretary stressed the Community Council considers it important that all groups in Inverkip

who wish to contribute to the establishment of the new community centre will be included in the autonomous group. Nowhere had it been suggested Inverkip Community Enterprise will be excluded from the new organisation – quite the opposite is true. In order to achieve the best outcomes for the village it is important that all parties work constructively together in a win-win partnership.

Hugh Ritchie said members of Inverkip Community Enterprise would be welcomed as part of the autonomous group, but it was important to represent everyone in the village and the Community Council is well placed to bring that grouping together.

Ron Potter added the Community Council was the statutory body. Brian McArthur said there was no point in one sector of the community putting forward its views – a representative group was needed. He told of the work the Community Council had done in trying to promote the facility, and said that Innes Nelson had done a lot of work in the background. The Council had made a request via Inverclyde Council for Stewart Milne builders to provide land and build a centre for villagers.

That was not accepted but planning gain funds are in place. Following a public meeting held by the Community Council which determined a community centre was top priority for villagers, a questionnaire seeking information about preferred facilities was delivered to all homes in Inverkip. Meetings with funding bodies and an intensive search for land in the village were undertaken, and meetings with representatives of various organisations. Correspondence was exchanged with other villages across Scotland that either had new community facilities or were in the process of setting them up. Cllr Rebecchi said he didn't care what had happened in the past – it was the future that now had to be addressed. All agreed the future should be addressed.

Letter from the Scottish Government re planning system modernisation – passed to Hugh Ritchie

Inverclyde Elderly Forum newsletter

Letter from Inverclyde Council – small business bonus scheme application – passed to Ron Potter

Inverclyde Community Care Forum newsletter

Letter from Inverclyde Council re review of community councils. A meeting scheduled for the 1st of April was cancelled but will be reconvened. The secretary observed she had been keen to contribute to a discussion on ward boundary changes and repeated the Community Council's desire to return to the old parish boundaries. Cllr Dorrian said there was no argument from the neighbouring Larkfield/Braeside/Branchton Community Council, or from Gourock Community Council Ron Potter was able to add. The councillors agreed they knew the wishes of the Community Council and Cllr Rebecchi said he would ask Willie Wilson to send maps to the Community Council

Copy of an email correspondence between Tam Nugent of Inverkip and Cllr Dorrian re a hole that has recently appeared in the football field between Bridgend and Inverkip. He noted it was unfenced and quite deep. Cllr Dorrian replied the land is owned by Ardgowan Estates and leased to Rico Giovanacci and it was their responsibility but Willie Rennie, a council officer of Inverclyde Council, is checking it out from a public safety point of view

6. Treasurer's Report:

Ron Potter reported that at his instigation Willie Wilson of Inverclyde Council had consulted the Inverclyde Alliance on the matter of gratuities to community councillors. It was agreed by the Alliance that if each council did not exceed £200 it was not a problem. It was noted that Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community councillors did not normally charge expenses, and that 3 or 4 councillors could be eligible for a gratuity. It was suggested the chairman, the treasurer and the secretary and any other member who did a lot of running around should receive the gratuity in recognition of their unclaimed expenses. Hugh Ritchie declared the issue should be transparent. He had no wish to receive a gratuity, but proposed the sum of £50 should be paid to the chairman, the secretary and the treasurer. Brian McArthur seconded the proposal.

Ron Potter reported the balance of the Council's account at 20th March 2008 was £214.17 and that he would now submit the accounts to Inverclyde Council for audit. He also reported that a cheque for £200 has been received from Inverclyde Council's Improvement and Performance section of Finance Services.

7. Planning Matters

Inverkip – Langhouse Road – construction of 26 houses and roundabout
Hugh Ritchie wondered if the Community Council should object to the proposal because of the additional vehicles that would access the A78. Cllr Dorrian said he was Inverclyde Council's representative on the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). He said he had written to RoSPA about the road situation in Inverkip and there is a suggestion Main Street might become one-way with a roundabout at one end of the village

Wemyss Bay – 3 Morar Road – provision of decking

Wemyss Bay – 7 Etive Road – erection of rear extension

Inverkip – Finnockbog Road – formation of access road to woodland (Berfern Plantation) Ron Potter explained this was a short access road from behind the Stewart Milne sales office to the new access road at Ardgowan Rise

Wemyss Bay – 16 Burns Drive – alterations and extension to provide self contained accommodation within existing dwelling house

Wemyss Bay – 3 Station Cottages, Shore Road – erection of rear extension and alterations to form bathroom at first floor level together with the installation of heating flue

Inverkip – Gruids, Main Street – erection of a replacement garage

Wemyss Bay – 71 Lomond Road – erection of extension to side of dwellinghouse

Wemyss Bay – 6 Hazel Walk – erection of rear extension

Inverkip – Ardgowan House, Ardgowan Estate – installation of self-contained wood fuel boiler

8. Scottish Water report

It had been hoped that Dawn McDermott, Scottish Water's Regional Community Manager, would attend the business meeting but the day before the meeting she emailed to say – with apologies - she would be unable to attend and attached replies to questions sent to her by the Community Council. Copies of the questions and answers were passed around those attending. In brief:

Q. Flooding in Main Street, Inverkip and the flooding in and around the railway bridge on Finnockbog Road

A. A temporary solution to prevent internal flooding at The Anchorage and South Lodge was installed in 2005. A permanent solution was originally scoped in 06/07 but the project was placed on hold due to the high cost (£160K per property). The project is currently being reviewed to get a firm cost so a decision can be made

Q. Flooding in houses in Beatock Place, Inverkip, which originates from the Stewart Milne construction site to the south

A. Having checked records there are no internal flooding incidents. Can residents be asked to report all incidents of flooding to Scottish Water's 24 hour helpline – 0845 601 8855. It was agreed this number should be posted on the community council noticeboard. Cllr Dorrian said Bruce Middleton had contacted Railtrack regarding erosion issues under the railway line behind Beatock Place but said they were not interested.

Q. It would be useful to have a copy of the plan of how run-off is dealt with during construction which we believe is a requirement of the 'Water for Scotland' documentation

A. Scottish Water is not funded to upgrade their water and sewer network to allow growth. This is completely the responsibility of the developer. Where there is an existing problem – i.e. flooding – the developer must carry out a development impact assessment and must ensure they provide an appropriate solution to ensure their development does not make the current situation any worse before connection to Scottish Water's infrastructure. It was wondered if the developer had carried out a development impact assessment. The question would be posed to both Dawn McDermott and Inverclyde Council planning officer David Ashman. It was decided Ms McDermott should be invited to the next business meeting for amplification of some answers.

9. Wemyss Bay: Update on leisure facilities and dangerous tree in Ardgowan Road

The issue of a 5-a-side football pitch was raised. Cllr Dorrian said when the school estate was established it would then be considered whether they facility will happen. The secretary said she would check back copies of Minutes to find references to the football pitch.

Cllr Dorrian said that despite his best efforts – he had even written to the director of the department responsible - there had been nothing done to attend to the dangerous tree. Harold McPherson said the tree was hanging right over the road and in the next high winds he predicted it would come down. He said the tree was on Inverclyde Council land.

10. Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 1st of May 2008

11. Any other business:

It was noted that travelling down Finnockbog Road on the left hand side by the sub-station in the recent heavy rain, water was flooding out on to the road. Ron Potter said water was also flooding from the main sub station. Cllr Dorrian said concerned residents should send in a question or report the situation to Inverclyde Council's website.

Allan Marsh, chairman of Ardgowan View Residents' Association, said, further to a meeting, it was realised the group had run out of time to cancel the Ardgowan View factor's contract. The factor will be asked to ensure grass cutting is done to specification so that in 12 months time it will meet Inverclyde Council's standard for adoption

The meeting closed at 9.30pm