

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 1st April 2010 in the Inverkip Hotel

Present: Hugh Ritchie; Ron Potter; Brian McArthur; Liz Roders; Brian Blacklaw; David Adams and Lynne Chambers

Apologies: Harold McPherson and Cllr Gerry Dorrian

In attendance: Cllr Innes Nelson; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; PCs Billy Gray, Caroline Logie and Joe Peebles; Alex Anderson; Andy Lynch; Anne Forsyth; Cliff Lyons; Ann Wallace; Allan Marsh and Michael Lynch

3. Police Matters

PC Gray first of all told the meeting that his community police colleague PC Jane Perratt, who had been working in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay, has moved on to another job.

Council members wished her well in her new job

PC Gray then reported as follows – from the 4th of March until the 1st of April 2010:

14 crimes had been reported and 9 detected – a clear-up rate of 66%.

3 Breach of the Peace – detected

4 Thefts – 1 detected and 3 not

4 Road Traffic Offences

1 Road Traffic Accident

1 Housebreaking with Intent – not detected

1 Breach of the Telecommunication Act – detected

1 Drunk and Incapable

PC Gray said the caravan park in Wemyss Bay had just reopened, so there may be an increase in offences locally. What is helpful he said are tickets that can be issued by officers with on the spot £40 fines for various offences – not unfortunately for littering or dog fouling.

A known housebreaker who lives in the area has been apprehended.

Brian McArthur said he'd phoned the police a couple of weeks ago about an invasion of Dalriada at the back of Inverkip. PC Gray said two tickets had been handed out and that young people had established a camp in the Square Wood. The police had received several calls and found around 30-40 young people and a tree that had been set on fire. He said the youngsters came from as far afield as Kilmacolm and Port Glasgow. A 12 year old girl was drunk. The young people had made a great deal of noise coming down through Inverkip around 11pm. He said it was difficult and time-consuming to disperse 40 people, some on trains – though trains couldn't be loaded with potential troublemakers - buses and calling parents. Cliff Lyons said some people were afraid to call the police –

they didn't want officers at their door. However it was pointed out officers do not have to attend the homes of those who have called. PC Gray also said the team now wasn't covering just Inverkip and Wemyss Bay but Larkfield, Braeside and Branchton as well. And it's the hot spots that will receive most of their attention. Hugh Ritchie said it was hard to know sometimes what to do – he can see youths from his window heading for the foreshore and with the history of offences committed there – does he call the police? But they might just be youngsters out for a walk. PC Gray said if there are numbers of young people carrying off-licence bags that could be the time to call. And there is a fine line – apprehending young offenders and having their parents complain of a police state. Police presence in the area will be doubled this weekend (Easter) targeting Larkfield but officers will be available in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay if required. The officers were thanked for their attendance.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 4th of March 2010 and matters arising:

Community Council notice board, Inverkip: Ron Potter reported the notice board had been repaired but not to his satisfaction. There are ragged holes – the contractor has stuck bolts over them but two remain without a cover and could prove a health and safety issue. The contractor has agreed to have another look. Ron Potter said the notice board was actually falling apart and he has been in touch with Inverclyde Council to see if the roof of the notice board can be repaired. Lynne Chambers said it was difficult to open and close the door of the notice board and that she required assistance to close and lock it as the door has become swollen and should perhaps be planed back into shape.

Planning Appeal: on her return the secretary found in correspondence a letter from IC dated 19th February 2010 re the first meeting of the Local Review Body on the 3rd of March. There was no indication the green waste appeal was to be heard though it did say the agenda for the meeting would be available via the Council's website

Hill Farm: it was noted Hill Farm was shown as 'Home' Farm in the Minutes. The secretary said she would amend the references. Hugh Ritchie thanked Brian McArthur and Brian Blacklaw for taking the minutes in the secretary's absence.

The minutes were proposed as accurate by Liz Roders and seconded by Brian McArthur.

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

An email from Harold McPherson in Bulgaria forwarded to the CC website re an A78 update meeting.

Email from Stuart McMillan's office forwarding a letter received from Transport Scotland about the Cumberland Road traffic lights. Brian McArthur reported he had written to Stuart McMillan about the Cumberland Road lights being out of phase. The MSP had contacted Transport Scotland who had responded saying an issue had been identified with the Cumberland Road signals around poor lane discipline by drivers which triggers detectors causing unnecessary sequences on the signals. Amey is continuing to work with the specialist supplier to resolve this and improve the operation of the junction. From Joyce Macfarlane, Greenspace Project Assistant at IC re the proposal the Wemyss Bay Woodland becomes a Local Nature Reserve. Ms Macfarlane was looking for comments from the CC by the 29th of March. An extension was requested but was not possible. Having read the report the secretary replied the CC would support the views of the WB residents who had been consulted in a survey conducted by IC. The secretary was

able to confirm when the matter was first raised, the then two councillors who lived in Wemyss Bay had not recorded opposition to the proposal. Ms Macfarlane asked if a biodiversity gala at the woodland on Saturday 22nd of May could be brought to the CC's attention. Another email has been received from Ms Macfarlane with details of the gala and looking for suggestions for other activities on the day. The correspondence was passed to Liz Roders and David Adams

Emails received from Nigel Willis and Archie Simpson of Save Your Regional Park, alerting the CC to an application for an 85m turbine to be located at Glenlora House, in Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. As the date for objections was short – the 31st of March – drawing on their attached objection documents the secretary composed an objection in line with CC policy

Letter from the Scottish Government re the windfarm appeal at Baidland Hill, Dalry. Arrangements for the public local inquiry have been cancelled – the council and appellants are currently negotiating the terms of a Section 75 Agreement associated with a similar proposal, which when concluded will result in the grant of planning permission for the development!

A letter from IC Community Work Team Leader re march and rally against the cuts – passed to Cllr Rebecchi

Invitation from Larkfield Housing Association to attend an art exhibition on 31st March – the secretary sent apologies

Invitation to attend Ward 6 Community Safety Partnership – meeting on 23rd March. Secretary sent apologies

An invitation to attend an Inverclyde Alliance 'Improving Inverclyde Together' event on 27th March – the secretary sent apologies

Email from Tracy McKernan to say that after a 6 month hunt she now has 3 people plus herself interested in running a Gala Day for Inverkip. Considering late August/early September. She requested an amended poster be placed on the CC notice board

Scottish Parliament newsletter from Duncan McNeil MSP

Newsletter from Stuart McMillan MSP

Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society Spring newsletter

Inverclyde Elderly Forum Spring newsletter

Save Your Regional Park March newsletter

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde newsletter

6. Treasurer's Report:

Ron Potter said he had drawn up the accounts for presentation to IC at end of year. The projected cash balance at year end was £1,015.51. However this sum did not take account of the bill for £430 approximately for the notice board repair. It was also reported a new printer had been bought for the secretary's use as the existing machine no longer functioned. Cllr Rebecchi said when looking for such equipment it might be worth contacting IC's Head of IT Gordon McLauchlan as equipment was constantly being replaced. Ron Potter said an approach had been made and a laptop had been given to the Community Council Forum but no other equipment had been forthcoming

7. Community Facilities meeting

Community Councillor Brian McArthur, representing the CC, had attended a meeting of interested parties – such as scouts, guides, Inverkip Community Enterprise and councillors chaired by IC's Aubrey Fawcett. It was a useful discussion, he said. The

Inverkip Community Enterprise representative said it had done work on using the football field, not just for a community centre but for sports facilities too. It's a matter that would need to be looked in to further but Aubrey Fawcett said there may be problems getting additional funding if the land doesn't belong to the group seeking to set up a community facility. Brian McArthur said he had undertaken to send to Aubrey Fawcett the raw data and conclusions of a survey carried out in Inverkip by the CC as to what residents most wanted. He said he would attend the next meeting of the group

8. Hill Farm Footpath:

Ron Potter reported the matter was still ongoing with correspondence being exchanged by IC's Planning Department and the Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society. From the information exchanged it would appear the footpath meets three out of the 4 criteria required to meet the designation of Right of Way. The 4th requirement, that the path has been used for 20 years, is a bit of a problem. Another problem would be if Stewart Milne Homes agreed to open a section of the pathway a new planning application would need to be submitted, and there are cost implications. Who would pay for that? Also, who pays for security such as fencing off the playpark from the footpath and the installation of a child proof gate at the Everton Road end. Cllr Rebecchi said the former Head of Planning who had been participating in this correspondence has replied to the Society and has left information for his successor. The secretary said she would contact the Society to discover the state of play. Cllr Nelson said if Scotways (the Society) considers the footpath to be a Right of Way it may – as has been done in the past – take the local authority to court and if it was proved the footpath was a Right of Way IC would have to reinstate the Right of Way

9. Inverkip – Green Waste plant appeal upheld

Hugh Ritchie said this matter was now a lost cause. The only route to pursue the issue would be through the Court of Session. He had checked with Planning Aid Scotland who feel the decision would not be overturned by the Court and the CC would be wasting its money. Hugh Ritchie said he was aghast to find one of our elected members voted against the wishes of the CC. Cllr Dorrian had voted in favour of the appeal being upheld though quite clearly in the CC Minutes for October, November and December 2009 the CC's opposition to the project had been recorded. Hugh Ritchie said he was not against the recycling of green waste but repeated his view the project was not suitable in a village like Inverkip, an opinion shared by some of IC's officers. Originally the refusal was granted on the grounds the project was detrimental to road safety. Cllr Dorrian – in correspondence with Hugh Ritchie – said the main reason he had voted to support the appeal was it made sense to use a redundant facility. At the time of appeal agents for the appellant had provided transport statistics. Had they been checked by the Council Hugh Ritchie asked. Cllr Nelson said statistics don't need to be checked. Brian Blacklaw said the Local Review Body was not allowed to consider new evidence – this evidence was not there at the time of the original application. Cllr Rebecchi said new evidence is completely new evidence. How Cllr Dorrian could say it was a good idea to use a redundant facility and go against the wishes of the CC beggars belief, Hugh Ritchie said. Cllr Rebecchi said if the CC told a ward councillor it was strongly against an application then that councillor could find a substitute for him/her on the Planning Board and make the case for the CC. It was discussed whether it was favourable or not to have all three ward councillors on the Planning Board.

Hugh Ritchie went on to say he didn't know of the meeting of the Local Review Body, and had not been informed as acting Chairman of the CC and an objector.

There was general criticism of the new planning system and Hugh Ritchie said he has written to IC Chief Executive John Mundell to express his disquiet. It was agreed that on this occasion the CC had been outmanoeuvred but lessons had been learned from this first meeting of the Local Review Body. It was discussed when applications were passed to the Local Review Body – how many objectors there should be or Community Councils objecting. The secretary will write to Stuart Jamieson at IC for clarification.

10. Planning matters

Letter from Inverclyde Council to say there will be no meeting of the Planning Board on the 7th of April due to lack of business

Inverkip – Ardgowan House - application for the change of use from Class 9 domestic to Class 7 hotel – **granted**

Inverkip – Kip Marina, The Chartroom – formation of three new windows – **granted**

Wemyss Bay – 7 Innellan Road – installation of chimney flue

Inverkip – Bankhouse, 100 Harbourside – formation of temporary door on front elevation

Wemyss Bay – 53 Castle Wemyss Drive – erection of decking

11. Date and time of next meeting:

The next Business Meeting is due to be held on the 6th of May, potentially the date of the General Election. Therefore the date will be decided when events become clearer

12. Any other business:

Allan Marsh of Hill Farm Residents' Association said he had written to Amey about the improvement of road markings at the Brueacre junction off-ramps and had been told Amey looked after trunk roads only. He had then written to Transport Scotland who had indicated there wasn't enough traffic/accidents at the junction so would take no action. However Amey has undertaken to replace the missing 'cat's eyes' at the run off to the off-ramp from the A78.

It was agreed with the possible future of more multi-member wards the matter would have to be addressed as how best for CCs to operate in that situation and should be considered by IC. Councillor Nelson said the political composition of IC committees was done proportionately. Three councillors could be beneficial. The CC agreed, if the councillors were working on behalf of the CC

Ron Potter asked what was happening about the new boundaries board, and Cllr Rebecchi replied they awaited the convener setting a date for the meeting and suggested the Community Council Forum should write to the convener. Ron Potter said it had, but no meeting date had been set.

It was agreed the Community Council would not meet in July.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 10pm

