

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 5th August 2010 in Wemyss Bay Community Centre

Present: A/Chairman Hugh Ritchie; Treasurer Ron Potter; Harold McPherson; Brian McArthur; Brian Blacklaw; David Adams; Telfer Ramage and Secretary Lynne Chambers

Apologies – Liz Roders

In attendance: Cllr Gerry Dorrian; Cllr Innes Nelson; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi; Inverclyde Council's (IC) Head of Regeneration and Planning Stuart Jamieson; N. Cupples; Stephen Skirving; Eleanor Tunney; E. Stewart; A. Taggart; Cliff Lyons; Eric Forbes; Ronnie Gill and Gail Baxter

3. Police Matters: no officers in attendance

4. Report by Stuart Jamieson – Footpath, Hill Farm, Inverkip

At June's Business Meeting, Cllr Rebecchi reported IC's Head of Regeneration and Planning Stuart Jamieson had given an undertaking to come to IWBC's August Business Meeting to report on his own investigations into the issue of the closed footpath.

Stuart Jamieson prefaced his remarks by saying that as Head of Planning what he said was without prejudice and should be perceived as general advice. He was of the opinion there is no merit in trying to establish a Right of Way – it is his and IC's position there is no Right of Way and there is no right of access currently at the playpark in Spey Road. The first consideration is the safety of children and the safety of the public. While IC has no locus in pursuing a Right of Way there is nothing to stop the community pursuing an informal path.

The path could run on one side of the playpark, fenced off for the safety of children, with a self-closing gate at each end.

If the community does wish to pursue such a project the owner of the land, developers Stewart Milne, would have to be approached for access and a planning application lodged. Any concerns about anti-social behaviour would be considered as part of the planning application. The community would have to fund the path – fencing, gates and surfacing. During his consultation, which included correspondence with The Scottish Rights of Way Society (Scotways), he received conflicting advice as to whether a Right of Way exists and repeated there is no merit in Inverclyde Council pursuing a Right of Way. The solution is to gain access to an informal path.

He felt the Right of Way issue was a red herring and if residents wish to establish an informal path they should address questions of ownership, funding and planning. Clearly, owners immediately adjacent to the footpath would be part of the formal planning process. Telfer Ramage said the footpath existed before the playpark but

Stuart Jamieson said no representations were made to the planning officer at the time. There had been informal access which the developer closed off – as he had permission to do. The way ahead would be to install an informal path fenced off away from the immediate boundary of the neighbours affected by anti-social behaviour. It was pointed out by some attending that the playpark was not on the original planning application. Stuart Jamieson said he was trying to come up with a solution. The secretary asked those residents attending if they thought they and their neighbours would be interested in taking the project forward, and the answer was ‘yes’. Hugh Ritchie said if the residents formed a working group the CC would support it. Stuart Jamieson was asked how long it would take to establish a Right of Way – he answered by asking – ‘how long is a piece of string’. Since he was first approached by the ward councillors on this matter and having consulted with Scotways, he has found there is no definitive view. It would be a long arduous process and in his officers’ opinion there is no Right of Way. The potentially quicker option would be an informal path. He said Inverclyde Council is supportive of access. Cllr Nelson said the former Head of Planning was at odds with Scotways and Ron Potter said three of the four criteria for establishing a Right of Way have been met. Stuart Jamieson replied the planning department’s view has not changed. Cllr Nelson said Scotways and the community could take IC through the courts to establish a Right of Way. Stuart Jamieson reiterated he had consulted access officers and policy officers and there is no Right of Way. Cllr Nelson asked if a Right of Way was established would IC have to reinstate the pathway. Stuart Jamieson said the contractor would be responsible. Hugh Ritchie said if IC claims there is no Right of Way then the way forward would be an informal path if both sides agree – he asked those present if they could work with people diametrically opposed to their way of thinking – and if they could not the project could fall at the first hurdle. There may have to be compromise to have both parties come up with a working resolution. Cllr Nelson asked Stuart Jamieson if the planning application fee would be waived by IC as it would come from a community group. The answer was ‘no’. But there is support for community groups, he said. If the group goes through the proper process and is formally constituted there are potential funding sources. Gail Baxter was identified as a contact person for the residents and the secretary suggested Telfer Ramage as a contact point for the CC – but communication could be directed via the secretary. There was also a suggestion of involving the Ardgowan View Residents’ Association. Cllr Dorrian asked Stuart Jamieson if the CC as a formally constituted body could apply for funding and he said it could. Eric Forbes said consideration should be given to both sides – those who want a footpath and those who don’t. Telfer Ramage observed that residents are annoyed because two footpaths have been lost – the Hill Farm path and Jacob’s Ladder. Stuart Jamieson was thanked for his attendance.

5. Minutes of Business Meeting held on the 3rd of June 2010 matters arising:

Removal of glass from the Wemyss Bay woodland area: Cllr Rebecchi said IC is still considering how best to deal with further large quantities of glass found at the site
Closed gates at the playing fields in Wemyss Bay during the summer holiday: David Adams and Eric Forbes told the meeting if the school is closed the playing fields are

locked up too. It is an IC facility and there is a fee to use the playing fields unless youngsters are under 16 and part of a recognised club.

Name of the Port Glasgow firm that carries out gardening work at a reasonable rate:

Cllr Rebecchi told the meeting the name of the firm is the Muirshield Centre on 742559, charging £5 per hour, but there is a waiting list.

David Adams remarked at June's meeting it was a shame the police advice at the CC meetings isn't being heard by Wemyss Bay residents. The secretary contacted the Community Policing Team and received information and advice. It was posted on the CC's website and the Inverkip Notice Board and passed to the Wemyss Bay newsletter. Cllr Forbes asked if there was a noticeboard in Wemyss Bay and the secretary said during term time notices are posted on the notice board outside Wemyss Bay primary school. It was agreed the notice board is not satisfactory, had recently been vandalised and that a sheet of Perspex would improve it.

The secretary said Cllr Rebecchi had let her know that IWBCB's noticeboard in Inverkip would be repaired. For free by IC, asked Ron Potter. The matter continues. The secretary referred to a letter sent to Scottish Power by IWBCB saying as the CC is the local statutory body it should be kept informed of developments and progress at the Power Station site and that neither acknowledgement nor reply had been received. Since then a letter has been received from Scottish Power apologising for the lack of communication concerning the current demolition works. Should planning permission be granted Scottish Power and its contractors will liaise with both Inverclyde Council and the CC about the schedule of works so that local residents are made aware of development taking place on the site. Scottish Power trusts the future arrangements are acceptable to the CC.

The Minutes were proposed as accurate by David Adams and seconded by Brian McArthur

6. Secretary's Report and Correspondence

From Inverclyde Community Care Forum – notice of their AGM on 19th August at the Tontine Hotel

Letter from Planning Aid for Scotland – request for subscription renewal (£25) approved

Letter from Inverclyde Council – notice the Local Review Body will meet on 4th August – checked to see nothing of interest to Inverkip and Wemyss Bay

From Inverclyde Council – a note of a Special Meeting of the Audit Committee on Wednesday 22nd September

Letter from the Scottish Government, Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals, enclosing an agenda for the pre-inquiry meeting re the planning appeal for a proposed wind farm at Wings Law, Kilbirnie, to which IWBCB objected

Letter from the Scottish Government as above with a copy of a note of the second pre-inquiry meeting and a copy of appellant's letter re the planning appeal for a proposed wind farm at Wings Law, Kilbirnie

Papers from Inverclyde Council detailing the meetings of various Council committees until the end of the May 2011

Notice from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde suggesting IWBCB helps shape the future of NHS GGC by joining NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde's Involving People Group. David Adams and Hugh Ritchie both expressed an interest and the secretary will forward details. Cllr Rebecchi commended membership of such projects.

Email from Michele Barrett of the Wemyss Bay newsletter complaining about the noise and dust experienced in her garden during the Power Station demolition. The secretary advised her to contact the environmental health department at Inverclyde Council

Via website, an enquiry from a member of the public about the green waste facility in Inverkip – dealt with by Hugh Ritchie

Application from IWBC to Inverclyde Council to book Inverkip PS for business meetings in September, October and November, and Wemyss Bay PS in December

Letter from Inverclyde Council – Inverclyde Alliance with details of the Comet Festival in Port Glasgow on the 26th of June

Letter from Atkins Limited saying it has been commissioned by Inverclyde Council to develop a parking strategy for Greenock Town Centre, and gave details of a workshop on 22nd June

Letter from Maggie Paterson, Inverclyde Council's Lead Officer Community Learning and Development, enclosing maps of the proposed Community Council boundaries

A letter to Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities at Inverclyde Council, John Arthur, pointing out boundary anomalies in the maps

Via the website, email from David Moir of Atkins Global on behalf of Scottish Power with a timetable of accomplished and proposed demolition work at the Power Station site. Details posted on the CC website and Inverkip CC notice board.

Phone call from Jim Anderson at Roads department, Inverclyde Council, with information about resurfacing work on Main Street, Inverkip. Details posted on website and Inverkip CC notice board

Phone call from Lynn O'Keefe of Kilmun Community Council asking whether a member of IWBC would wish to speak at a pre-Public Local Inquiry hearing to be held on 9th August in Dunoon in support of the objection the CC lodged last year to the Strone Saul wind farm application. The secretary replied she was sure the CC would be happy to be represented by Kilmun who would speak on IWBC's behalf quoting from the written objection

Email correspondence organising the A78 meeting with MSPs, Inverclyde Councillors and Community Councillors, Transport Scotland and Amey

Via website, reports from Transport Scotland following the A78 meeting

By email, a Stuart McMillan press release on the final report of the A78 safety meeting

Correspondence with and from residents re Hill Farm footpath

Email to Catriona Davies of Scotways re Hill Farm, informing her of Stuart Jamieson's investigation

Save Your Regional Park's June newsletter

Inverclyde Elderly Forum Summer newsletter

2 Newsletters from MSP Stuart McMillan

Newsletter from The Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (Scotways) and a request for subscription renewal (£20) - approved

Letter from North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority from whom IWBC receives a newsletter, to say newsletter will now be circulated by email or available on its website

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Health News newspaper

Firth of Clyde Forum newsletter, Clyde Breakers

7. Treasurer's Report

Ron Potter reported the CC's financial return for last year has been submitted to IC, had been acknowledged by John Arthur and copied documents forwarded to the Finance Department for scrutiny. The Treasurer has asked that the annual grant for Inverkip and Wemyss Bay be reviewed, but was informed it was inappropriate to review the grant for only one CC. Ron Potter said the grant was based on 2002 population statistics, now totally inaccurate as so many houses had been built in Inverkip in the past years. It seems no-one is interested in helping the situation. Brian Blacklaw said if IC used 2002 figures for its calculations the Council would fall down. Cllr Dorrian said what the Council officer is saying is that all should wait until all reviewed. Hugh Ritchie wondered if he was naïve to think that Council officers should be trying to accommodate Councillors. Cllr Dorrian said John Arthur should be invited to the CC's next Business Meeting and if required he would do so. Ron Potter said the final paragraph of John Arthur's letter included the information that the 2010-2011 grant will be confirmed following approval of the financial return – last time, Ron Potter said, approval took ten and a half months, and the CC can't survive for the next ten and half months without funds. Ron Potter said the per capita element of the grant is on the agenda for Inverclyde Community Council Forum's (ICFF) meeting on Monday the 9th of August. It would perhaps be better to wait until after the ICCF's meeting to take the matter further.

Ron Potter also reported he'd had a letter from the Bank of Scotland to say that as a result of a recent review of accounts, after the 8th of October the Bank would not be paying interest on treasurers' accounts. The balance of the CC's account is £797.27 – that sum may be reduced by £400 if a bill for repair of the CC noticeboard is received. The Treasurer said any outstanding expenses claims should be submitted now.

8. Planning Matters

Wemyss Bay – West side of Greenock Road – installation of electricity sub-station housing – Hugh Ritchie lodged an objection on behalf of IWBC and corresponded with local residents opposing the application. Hugh Ritchie reported on his contact with the objectors and why he thought it appropriate to lodge an objection. Papers for the Planning Board meeting on the 4th of August recommending approval – with conditions - for the application to change the use and extend the former anti-aircraft operations room to form a single dwelling at the former HMS Dalriada, Langhouse Road, Inverkip. Brian McArthur said the building couldn't be knocked down so the framework of the building will have to be used to form the new house. He added he thought the work would be good for the community as occupation of the site should reduce vandalism and fly-tipping

Inverkip – 10 Willow Place – extension to form sunroom – granted

Wemyss Bay – Wemyss Bay Station – north end of platforms 1 and 2 will be elevated (along approx 90 metres northwards towards Glasgow) to create a consistent level along the whole platform. To bring this area of platform up to modern standards new lighting, CCTV, public announcement, drainage and signalling equipment will be provided on the new platform lengths. The equipment will match the existing sets throughout the Station

Inverkip – Hill Farm – substitution of house types on 42 plots and adjustments to associated works (amendment to planning permission) – Redrow Homes
Inverkip – Hill Farm – substitution of house types on 21 plots (amendment to planning permission) – Redrow Homes
Inverkip – Hill Farm – erection of temporary sales cabin, associated parking and landscaping (in retrospect) – Redrow Homes
Wemyss Bay – 11 Etive Road – erection of front porch and rear extension – granted
Inverkip – 3 Primrose Place – extensions to house – granted subject to conditions
Wemyss Bay – 20 Lomond Road – Certificate of Lawful Development in respect of the erection of a conservatory and associated works – granted
Inverkip – 8 Hebrides Grove – erection of playhouse in rear garden – granted
Inverkip – 3 Primrose Place – extensions to house – granted with conditions
Inverkip – The Chartroom, Kip Marina – display of illuminated wall mounted raised lettering – granted subject to conditions

9. Report on the A78 Road Safety Review:

Hugh Ritchie thanked Telfer Ramage and Inverkip Bowling Club for hosting the meeting. Hugh Ritchie said those attending the meeting saw the information and photographs from the survey cameras that were positioned at the Inverkip Main Street/A78 junction. Scottish Transport said its view – following the surveillance exercise - was the junction was no worse than many other junctions across Scotland. Starting from scratch, widening of the slip road, traffic lights and a reduction of the speed limit were not feasible – and no work would be undertaken apart from relining. CC representatives asked that the junction be resurfaced. There was general disappointment with the findings. However, Hugh Ritchie said, he felt the pressure put on Scottish Transport by local residents, the CC, councillors and MSPs had put down a marker in this part of the world where more and more housing is being built, especially the prospect of hundreds of houses being built at the Power Station site. The road would be an even bigger problem than now. He said the issue had been pushed to the wire and it seems that's all that's coming out of it now. Sadly it would appear an accident has to happen on the slip road of the A78 for anything further to be done. Eric Forbes urged care there is not a domino effect on the trunk road by focusing on one junction. It was also observed that extra traffic from north Ayrshire is exacerbating the problem. Cliff Lyons said the transport traffic section of Scottish Power's planning application showed a roundabout at the Main Street/trunk road junction., and he said Scottish Transport had not looked at the fundamental problem - drivers can't see because of oncoming cars turning right. Ron Potter said another problem was the cameras placed at the junction for the safety review were on poles, and could of course view over and above the oncoming traffic. Hugh Ritchie said Scottish Transport claimed it had limited funds and there are other junctions across Scotland that are worse and where they are legally bound to make improvements. Cllr Nelson confirmed that indeed Scottish Transport was legally bound to undertake such improvements.

10. Proposed Community Council boundaries:

Ron Potter said the CC doesn't agree with the boundaries as shown on drawings received from Inverclyde Council. Following a conversation with IC's Lead Officer

Community Learning and Development Maggie Paterson and sight of magnified drawings at a meeting with Senior Community Worker Tommy Roger the CC has written to IC's Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities John Arthur expressing its disquiet. There has been no reply as yet from John Arthur. This issue too is on the agenda for ICCF's meeting on Monday the 9th August. The comment from Maggie Paterson to the Forum was along the lines, Ron Potter said, that nothing will happen until the 13th of August when all agreements and disagreements will have been advised to the Council and only then will the Council consider the matter. Cllr Rebecchi, a member of the committee considering the review of CCs said he had no further information. Ron Potter asked that large scale maps should be made available to the Forum so that various areas can be determined.

11. Date and time of next meeting – Thursday 2nd September 2010 at Inverkip Primary School. Cllr Dorrian said that was the evening the Inverkip community facilities meeting was due to be held. It was discussed whether the CC meeting should be deferred for a week. However Cllr Dorrian said he would discover if the facilities meeting could be brought forward to 6.30pm which would allow the CC business meeting to go ahead as scheduled. He will let the secretary know.

12. Any other business:

Ron Potter said he'd asked Cllr Nelson why grass at the corner of Langhouse Avenue and the playpark at Langhouse Road in Inverkip had not been cut by the Council. Cllr Nelson reported he'd viewed the title deeds of the properties adjacent to the area and it is the householders' responsibility to cut the grass.

Ron Potter said he'd alerted Cllr Rebecchi that road signs on Finnockbog Road are obscured by overhanging branches. Nothing has been done. Cllr Rebecchi had passed on the information but will pursue the matter.

Telfer Ramage reported the fence surrounding the playground at the bottom of Langhouse Road in Inverkip was in a precarious condition, confirmed by others attending the meeting. The secretary was asked to write to leaseholder Rico Giovanacci about the situation so it may be remedied. Cliff Lyons informed the meeting that IC maintained the playground but the land is leased from Ardgowan Estate.

Telfer Ramage said there was a very strong smell of sewage from the manhole cover between the railway bridge and the corner of Beatoch Place in Inverkip. The secretary was asked to write to Scottish Water.

Telfer Ramage reported a bollard at the junction of Everton Road and Finnockbog Road should be reinstated. The secretary was asked to write to developers Stewart Milne.

Telfer Ramage also said the reinstated pavement surface at the entrance to the Stewart Milne development at Cullen Crescent in Inverkip needed a final coat. The secretary was asked to bring this to the developer's attention.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.