

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Business Meeting held on the 7th of April 2011 in the Inverkip Hotel at 7.30pm

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

Apologies: Cllr Gerry Dorrian; Cllr Ciano Rebecchi and Liz Roders

In attendance: Cllr Innes Nelson; A. Forsyth; A. Wallace; N. Cupples; Cliff Lyons and Tracy McKernan

3. Police Matters – no officers attended the meeting. The secretary was asked to contact the Community Policing Team for crime statistics for March 2011. Crime figures provided after the meeting:

Total number of crimes	11
(Detections 36%)	
Assault	1
Vandalism	2
Thefts	2
Fireraising	1
Complaints – Inverkip	10
Complaints – Wemyss Bay	7
Disturbance calls	3

4. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 4th of March 2011 and matters arising:

An email was received from Paul Cosgrove of Strathclyde Police in reply to the comment at the March meeting that **glass and debris at the A78/Inverkip junction had not been cleared as quickly as might have been expected after an accident.**

He said while officers on the scene will ensure the carriageway is clear of any potential obstructions and anything else which might cause a hazard, it is ultimately the duty of the Roads Department to clear up anything smaller

Correspondence forwarded by Cllr Dorrian re **railings on the pavement on the A78 at the west exit out of Inverkip** - discussed at March's meeting. He received a reply to say there are no railings at the location highlighted. If the inquiry is about the placement of new railings Cllr Dorrian should contact Amey

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

5. Secretary's Report and Correspondence

Forwarded by Cllr Dorrian – from energys~~h~~are a request to let people in the area know about the energys~~h~~are grant fund that has just been launched with up to £500,000 for community renewable energy projects

From Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority – details of its annual report and its Development Plan Scheme

The secretary sent to Inverclyde Council's (IC) John Arthur a copy of January 2011's Business Meeting Minutes and received in reply an email saying 'I am out of the office'. On Ron Potter's advice the secretary sent an inquiry to IC's Maggie Paterson, Safer and Inclusive Communities, to ask if she is the appropriate person to whom Minutes should be sent in the interim.

A letter from Transport Minister Keith Brown in which he says he's sorry the recent meeting to discuss the Inverkip junction was cancelled. He refers to last June's meeting with Transport Scotland, Amey and other interested parties. He notes the operation of the junction is being monitored and that he's asked Transport Scotland's Network Manager Stewart Leggett to write to the Community Council (CC) within the next week to inform the Council of the audit's findings. He adds he would happy to discuss the findings with the CC should it so wish

The secretary wrote to Keith Brown acknowledging his letter and saying Stewart Leggett had been in touch with the CC - see item 8

Letter to Stewart Leggett saying the CC would welcome a meeting with him

Press release from Stuart McMillan MSP attaching a letter from Stewart Leggett with almost identical content to that received by the CC

Press release from Stuart McMillan MSP welcoming news of upgrade work to Bankfoot Roundabout

From Charles Bell of Sasanbell details of the proposed Inverkip Community Facility Design Review meeting on the 14th of March 2011

From Charles Bell of Sasanbell notice of the public consultation event re the proposed community facilities in Inverkip

An email from Michele Barrett bowing out as editor of the Wemyss Bay Village News

An email from William Rice introducing himself as the new editor of the Wemyss Bay Village News

From the Association of Scottish Community Councils notice of the Big Lunch on the 5th of June 2011 – an initiative by the Eden Project that aims to get as many people as possible to have lunch with their neighbours once a year

Forwarded by Cllr Nelson, details of the visit to Navy Buildings, Greenock by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Coastguard of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency – the last opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns with regard to the proposed closure of the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre at Greenock before the end of the consultation period

From IC – the Agenda for the Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee meeting on the 8th of March 2011

From IC – an additional agenda item for the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on the 29th March 2011 re the Scottish Public Information Notices Portal

From IC – an agenda item from the above Committee's meeting of the 29th March 2011 – Results from Winter 2010 Citizens' Panel Survey

Newsletter from the Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society – Spring Update
Forwarded by Cllr Rebecchi – Switchover News – the February briefing from
digitaluk re digital television switchover

From IC – a list of applications to be considered by the Grants Sub-Committee
meeting on Tuesday 29th March 2011

Further to the above meeting and as no award was made in November 2010 to
Inverkip Community Enterprise for improvements to heating at the Inverkip Pavilion,
supplementary information was received. Should the sub-committee decide to make a
grant award, it would be necessary to suspend the Council's Standing Orders as such a
decision would be contrary to that made in November 2010. The recommendation
was the committee agree to suspend Standing Orders to allow an award of a grant to
Inverkip Community Enterprise - £5,800 was requested

Forwarded by both Cllr Nelson and Cllr Rebecchi, Strathclyde Fire & Rescue

Inverclyde, the South West Ward's Tactical Assessment for March 2011

Several copies of the Inverclyde Elderly Forum newsletter

6. Treasurer's Report: Ron Potter said that expenditure to the 31st of March 2011
was £1924.09 and the balance of funds remaining is £328.36. He said that despite
contacting IC he had received no response and had no idea about funding for the new
financial year. He declared the situation very unsatisfactory. He said that twice in the
past he had injected £100 of his own money into CC funds but he wouldn't do so
again. Cliff Lyons observed it had been the same situation when he was Treasurer.
Brian McArthur asked what happens if the CC becomes insolvent. Ron Potter replied
that as a body established by statute the CC couldn't become insolvent. Grants come
to the CC from the Scottish Government via IC – but the money is not ring-fenced.
The per capita funding paid to the CC is based on 2002 figures. In the past any funds
left over in IC's CC budget were divided between and paid to all active CCs. Hugh
Ritchie said IC should only be a temporary custodian of the funds and the money
should be distributed to the CCs. He wondered if Cllr Nelson could help. Cllr
Nelson said he had complained bitterly in Chambers but if the CC feels the money is
not being distributed it should take its complaint to Audit Scotland. Ron Potter
explained the basic grant - £700 – is paid when financial returns for the previous year
are submitted to IC. The extra per capita grant is due to be paid when returns are in
and audited.

The secretary said that while no answers were being received on the financial front,
she was finding a similar problem in the administrative area. Over recent months,
approved Minutes had been sent to IC's Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities
John Arthur who is currently suspended from the Council. The secretary sent
approved Minutes to John Arthur hoping to receive information about where to send
the documents in his absence. However, all that was returned was a rather unhelpful
'I am not in the office' email message. The secretary then wrote to Maggie Paterson
of Safer Inclusive Communities asking if she was the appropriate person to whom
information should be sent in John Arthur's absence. To date there has been no reply.
Cllr Nelson said if no answers were being received to pass the information to him.
Ron Potter said he planned to forward the accounts to IC the following week - but to
whom, he asked. Should he send them to the Director of Finance? He said grants for
the last financial year were paid in September instead of April and the per capita grant
in November.

7. Inverkip Community Facilities

Before the discussion started the secretary said she had returned from an extended holiday to hear there was gossip in the village – she didn't speculate where the gossip might have originated – that there had been a poor attendance and representation of Community Councillors at the public consultation event, on the proposed site for a community centre, held in Inverkip on Saturday 26th of March. She asked if the Community Councillors attending the meeting would indicate whether they had visited the event.

Ron Potter, Brian Blacklaw, Telfer Ramage and Lynne Chambers all said they had attended the event. She learned there had been further gossip that the CC hadn't advertised the event and there was no information about the event on the CC's noticeboard. The secretary said she had received that day an email from Cliff Lyons saying on the 2nd of April he had seen a poster inviting attendance to the consultation event and a similar notice on the CC's website. He wanted to know the date these notices were posted. The secretary replied she couldn't be completely sure when they'd been posted – but it was after the consultation exercise - and pointed out the poster clearly referred to a past event and did not invite attendance at the event but gave information for those who had been unable to attend as to the website that could be consulted for details of the considered sites and the design of the proposed facility. In addition the secretary pointed out it was not for the CC to advertise the event – it was not a CC event but an IC event and it was its responsibility to promote the consultation exercise. Hugh Ritchie pointed out the CC was but one stakeholder on the Community Facilities Working Group.

Ron Potter said in his conversations with the consultants and IC's Head of Regeneration and Planning, Stuart Jamieson, it was clear any planning and legal issues would be thoroughly cleared. Brian Blacklaw said the design of the proposed community facility was fine but his concern was that more funds would be needed for the ongoing running of the building and it had been suggested talks were already underway with Inverclyde Leisure to take over the running of the building. It was observed Inverclyde Leisure had taken over all community facilities in Inverclyde. Cliff Lyons said the Pavilion in Inverkip essentially is run by volunteers. There was a general discussion and it was accepted the football pitch was probably the best site for the facility and of the many sites considered it was unanimously agreed by the stakeholders as the site to take to community consultation. Brian McArthur, the CC's representative on the Community Facility Working Group, said 17 sites had been identified, then reduced to 3 and finally 1. However there was a feeling at the Business Meeting the site decision was presented as a *fait accompli* rather than taking the sites to public consultation. Tracy McKernan, chairperson of Inverkip Gala Day, said when she was speaking to the consultant he revealed that in presenting the design of the proposed facility they'd got rather ahead of themselves as the consultation event was intended to be about the site. The question of ownership of the centre was discussed – the planning gain for payment by Stewart Milne Homes is for the benefit of the village. Also raised was a question about the proposed site for the facility – the lease from Ardgowan Estate (for 125 years) is currently owned by local businessman Rico Giovanacchi. Brian McArthur said this issue hadn't been investigated yet, though it was thought IC would ensure a long lease. Would the facility then be built on sub-leased land or would IC buy out the lease, it was wondered. Cllr Nelson said

as he understands it the Sainsbury building is owned by Mr Giovanacchi's firm and leased to Sainsburys, and a percentage of any rents is paid to Ardgowan Estate. Hugh Ritchie said he was in favour of the football pitch as the site for a community centre and Ron Potter agreed it was the logical position. He asked if/when the community facility is built what future is there for the Inverkip Pavilion. None it would appear. Cliff Lyons however reported that recently two table tennis tables had been installed at the Pavilion and so much use was made of the facility there wasn't a free evening. Hugh Ritchie praised him for the excellent work going on at the Pavilion. David Adams said that Wemyss Bay Community Centre was full every evening, apart from Saturday and Sunday, and like the Pavilion had only one employee – a cleaner. Volunteers run the Centre but it is hard to find replacements when the volunteers have completed their stint. David Adams asked if there was an Inverkip newsletter like Wemyss Bay's. He was told there had been one but it was no longer in existence. Tracy McKernan said she was trying to resurrect the Inverkip newsletter.

8. A78

Hugh Ritchie made those attending the Business Meeting aware of the latest correspondence from Transport Scotland by reading out the contents of a letter from Stewart Leggett, Transport Scotland's Network Manager, providing an update on the A78 Trunk Road, Inverkip junction. He says a post construction road safety audit has been undertaken at the junction and its performance continues to be monitored. The main concern raised by the audit team related to the operation of the give-way for the southbound left-turners into Main Street, Inverkip. Transport Scotland has instructed a follow up conflict study report to compare the before and after safety performance of the revised arrangement. It is expected video cameras will be installed shortly. A report is expected in April and Stewart Leggett says he will be happy to meet with the CC and other interested parties to discuss the findings. The other aspects raised in the road safety audit were:

- Main Street/A78 junction - the centre line on approach from Main Street on to the A78 is not perpendicular to the Trunk Road resulting in exiting vehicles aligning off centre
- A78 central hatching at Main Street junction – the hatching on A78 main line does not start opposite the extended kerb line. This could lead to overshooting of the junction by northbound drivers turning into Main Street

While the operation of this junction remains a concern for Transport Scotland, Stewart Leggett said he should note that the annual review of trunk road safety performance, completed in December 2010, has not identified this junction as an accident cluster site and as such there are other locations on the trunk road network that have higher priority for intervention.

It was reported cameras had been installed at Bankfoot Roundabout though now removed. The same has happened at the A78 junction. Hugh Ritchie said the CC awaited the results of the report and looked forward to a meeting with the Network Manager. Cliff Lyons said he would like to be included in the meeting.

Reference was made to flooding at the Bankfoot Roundabout. Harold McPherson said if the flooding isn't tackled there could be bad accident.

9. Improvement to road signs to indicate Station Avenue, Inverkip, is a dead end:

This issue has been brought to the Meeting by Community Councillor Brian Blacklaw. He said there is a 'dead end' sign on the right hand side but not on the left, and drivers don't see it. Satellite navigation systems are bringing traffic up Station Avenue in error as a through route to the building development at Hill Farm. Lorries and delivery vehicles including articulated vehicles end up at the Station. Cllr Nelson said in fact in a conversation with an IC planner he told him that there should be no dead end sign as Back Station Road is still technically a road. However *using* it as a road is another matter. Brian Blacklaw also said as work proceeds on the bridge at Inverkip Station parking is becoming even more of a problem with badly parked vehicles having the potential to cause obstructions in the case of an emergency. When the police were called to view the situation they said if a fire engine was called to the area they would 'take away' any cars that obstructed their passage. Cllr Nelson said he would pursue the issue

Norman Cupples and David Adams complained about overgrown hedges in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay obstructing vision at road junctions. However Cllr Nelson said if the hedges are in private gardens it's a bit difficult to deal with.

Brian Blacklaw informed the meeting Inverkip station parking would be closed for 20 weeks while the bridge is being constructed and that police would need to patrol the area. It is planned work will be carried out on Saturdays from 8am until 6pm which is contrary to environmental health advice. Prefabricated work is being carried out offsite and then the foundations will be dug. There will be 5 official car parking spaces

10. Planning Matters

From IC – notice of Local Review Body meeting on Wednesday 4th May 2011

From Renfrewshire Council – notice that the application for the erection of a wind turbine at Glenlora Estate, Lochwinnoch – to which the CC objected – has been refused

Inverkip – 126 Harbourside – erection of garden shed (in retrospect) and a fence with gate – granted

Inverkip – Hill Farm – application by Redrow Homes for the construction of 14 dwellinghouses and creation of public open space (amendment to planning permission) – granted subject to conditions

Wemyss Bay – Dunloe, Wemyss Bay Road – power washed algae, moss from front elevation (in retrospect) – Listed Building Consent – withdrawn

Wemyss Bay – 48 Brueacre Drive – formation of conservatory base structure, access platform and associated building works with glazed products above and into openings. David Adams asked if the renewed planning application for 28 houses at Bridgend, Inverkip, had been received by the CC. The secretary said notification had not been received as yet

11. Date and time of next meeting (Thursday 12th May 2011 at Wemyss Bay Primary School – a week later than usual because of the elections on the 5th of May 2011)

12. Any other business:

Review of the Scheme of Administration for Community Councils

Ron Potter asked Cllr Nelson if he knew when the next IC Community Councils/Boundaries meeting would take place, as the 12 week consultation period had now expired. Cllr Nelson didn't know. Ron Potter said it would appear no notice had been taken of any submissions to working groups. At the last meeting he had been annoyed by the then chair announcing boundaries had been formalised after the first public meeting and that after three consultation periods it was bluntly announced the decision had been taken on the 14th of January. If the decision had been made with no further discussion why the consultation periods, he asked. Cllr Nelson said he had raised the issue of boundaries at the meeting but had had little feedback. The only issue agreed was that IC's Legal Department would look at adjusting the Council boundary at Kip Marina. He agreed that currently there was no timescale.

On the continuing theme of boundaries, Ron Potter said he had no indication if the CC's submission had been received. Cllr Nelson said he had received the initial submission. Ron Potter said he had sent copies of the submission to each of the Councillors. Cllr Nelson confirmed it was admitted at a full Council meeting that no minutes were taken of the Review of Community Councils' meetings.

Brian Blacklaw said there were two issues here – the fairly serious issue of finance from IC – and now a personnel issue in dealings with CCs. The situation was farcical. David Adams asked if all the Inverclyde CCs were similarly affected and Ron Potter confirmed they were. It was agreed the secretary would write to IC Chief Executive John Mundell expressing the CC's concern.

Redundant Community Council laptop:

The secretary said she learned on her return from holiday that Cliff Lyons had spoken to a Community Councillor to say he was unhappy about the disposal of the CC's redundant (5 years old) laptop but would not pursue the matter in this instance. He agreed he had said this and continued that he was disappointed it hadn't been offered to Inverkip Community Enterprise as he has to use his own laptop, and that it should have gone to a charity. Cllr Nelson said there are over a dozen charities registered in Inverkip alone. Hugh Ritchie said while he understood Cliff Lyons' viewpoint, the procedure had been completely transparent as noted in the Minutes of December 2010. It was offered to Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Councillors who were invited to make a bid for the laptop. Only one bid was received. Inverclyde Council was informed of the procedure and offered no objection. Cllr Nelson said the sale contributed to the CC's funds. Some of those attending said either they or family members had laptops older than the 5 years and they didn't consider them redundant. The discussion was halted by Brian McArthur who said he had been part of the design team working on the IBM Think Pad and its lifetime is 5 years. Cliff Lyons admitted he had misread the Minutes and thought the laptop had been offered to other Community Councils not Councillors

Inverkip Gala Day

The secretary then asked Cliff Lyons if he would tell her why he had been making inquiries in the village if she and Cllr Innes Nelson were Inverkip Gala Day (IGD) committee members. He said he would not tell the secretary why but had been told by a committee member in the village that both the CC secretary and Cllr Nelson were members. The secretary asked Cliff Lyons if he had also phoned Community

Councillor Telfer Ramage to ask if he was an IGD committee member. Telfer Ramage had replied he wasn't a member of the IGD committee. IGD chairperson Tracy McKernan said Cliff Lyons had been misinformed – neither the secretary nor Cllr Nelson was a committee member, and that perhaps in future if he had questions about IGD he should address them to her. He said he would have but she wasn't in the phone book. Mrs McKernan said indeed her number was listed in the directory. She asked Cliff Lyons what this was all about and why he seemed so opposed to the Gala Day. He protested that he had supported last year's Gala Day and had provided the PA system. While the secretary is not clear about his response, made in a low voice, it would appear his concern is that CC members and a Councillor may in Mrs McKernan's absence deputise for her on the Community Facilities Working Group. As the exchange continued Mrs McKernan asked Cliff Lyons please to stop talking over her at which he shouted 'Shut Up!'

Hugh Ritchie immediately asked Cliff Lyons to apologise and said while it was one thing to spit venom at the Community Council he would not tolerate such behaviour, insulting members of the public who are doing a good job for the community. To this Cliff Lyons said something like – '*sotto voce*) I apologise for saying SHUT UP!' Mrs McKernan was clearly shocked by Cliff Lyons' behaviour. She said she'd come to the meeting to hand out leaflets to alert the CC to upcoming fundraising events before the Gala Day itself, and said she was looking for people to become Friends of IGA. Telfer Ramage and Lynne Chambers indicated they would. Mrs McKernan left the meeting.

Hugh Ritchie rose to his feet and said he was bringing the meeting to a close. He said he would check if he as chair of the CC had the power to prevent people such as Cliff Lyons attending Business Meetings and insulting other members of the public. He didn't want, he said, people attending the meeting who would turn round and say 'shut up' to people they don't agree with.

Cliff Lyons told Hugh Ritchie he would be hearing from him and Hugh Ritchie replied in the same vein.

The meeting was brought to a close around 9.30pm

After the close of the meeting the secretary suggested to her fellow Community Councillors that perhaps they should take a vote as to whether they supported the Chairman in his action. There was unanimous support for the Chairman.