



## MINUTES OF BRIDGE OF ALLAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

HELD ON TUESDAY 20 February 2018

(in the Allan Centre)

**Present:** Leslie Harkness (LH) (stand in Chair & Secretary); Janie Meikle Bland (JMB); Michael Burt (MB); Iain McCusker (IMc); Victoria McDowell (VM); and Deborah Wood (DW) (Minute taker).

**In attendance:** Andrew Davis (Stirling Council); Councillor Douglas Dodds; Councillor Graham Houston; Councillor Alasdair Tollemache; Alexander Stewart MSP (Mid Scotland and Fife); Dunblane/Bridge of Allan Community Policing Team: PC Gilliland and PC Chalmers.

**Apologies:** Sandra Davidson; Siobhan Hencher; Mike Watson; Marie Gardner; Margaret Sprunt; Nicos Yarrow; Joanne Chisholm and Councillor Alastair Majury.

*(Abbreviations - Community Council (CC); Stirling Council (SC))*

### **B1494 Welcome, Apologies and Conflict of Interest**

As chair in Mike Watson's absence, LH welcomed everyone and started the meeting at 7.30pm. Apologies were given, as above, and there was no conflict of interest to note.

### **B1495 Approval of Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log**

January 2018 minutes were proposed (MB) and seconded (JMB).

**Matters arising:** LH confirmed that there was one matter arising from item **B1493** (under Resident's Voice January in 2018 minutes). This was raised in January, by a resident, about the deep pothole in the pavement crossover at the Library/Health Centre car park entrance. A few days after the last BofA CC meeting, Councillor Majury sent an email to update the CC on this issue. LH gave an overview of the email update: Councillor Majury had previously contacted the relevant council officer about the rationale underlying the use of 'jet patching' in temporary repair instances such as this. The response explanation was: using a 'velocity patcher' (such as in this case), delivers low cost temporary repairs which last significantly longer than traditional techniques; it can also infill many more patches in a day, although, on the negative side, the appearance is less attractive. The Council has its own machine and supplements its use in April/May, after the winter weather is over, by hiring a second machine.

**Action Log:** LH explained that he had been asked on behalf of the CC to write to the chief executives of both RBS and Bank of Scotland (BoS) to ask that each bank reconsider its decision to close their Bridge of Allan branch. LH confirmed he wrote to the Chief Executive of RBS (Ross McEwan) and by return received a brief response from Michael Purves (from the Chief Executive's office) who is responsible for Personal and Business Banking Complaints. The response stated that he was sorry to learn of the concerns raised about the closure and he also indicated that he would respond in full within the following 10 working days. LH confirmed he received this response that day and gave an overview, as follows: the decision to close the banks would not be revisited; there had been a 52% decline of use in BofA branch; the bank will proactively contact vulnerable, elderly and disabled customers to assist them with this change; the time before the proposed closure had been extended by 6 months; the bank will



SUPPORTING  
year of young people  
bliadhna na h-òigridh  
2018

provide technical expertise in the form of a task force to help customers develop their digital skills; the community bank will remain in communication and will run local events to engage with the bank user base on subjects such as fraud awareness etc.; pointed out alternatives such as telephone banking and online access/transactions etc.; identified the local contact who is Jane Paxton and that her team could be contacted for further details. In relation to this, Councillor Tollemach stated that he had a face to face meeting with Jane Paxton on 22 February 2018 and that after a long discussion Jane Paxton divulged that they may consider keeping either the Dunblane or Bridge of Allan branch open; the 6-month postponement of closure mentioned to LH had not been spoken about.

LH confirmed that he had, at the time of the meeting, not received a response from the office of the Chief Executive of Lloyds Banking Group, Antonio Horta Osorio. LH also stated that he had received an email from Councillor Tollemach informing the CC that he had met with RBS on 22 February 2018.

Councillor Tollemach confirmed that he was pushing to keep both those branches open. A response would be sent from the bank in one week's time regarding this. He also stated that the Community Banking would like to contact the CC to meet. However, they were reluctant to attend a public meeting.

### **B1496 Police Report**

PC Chalmers and PC Gilliland introduced themselves and confirmed they were dealing with an incident but wanted to be present for a short while as there had been a few occasions where they had not been able to attend previously. The stated that in future the one of the team will do their best to make it along to at least every second meeting.

**Introduction / synopsis of previous month:** *This report should provide sufficient information of the police activity since the last community council meeting. If you have any further questions about the police report or any incidents that you are aware of that are not included in this report, then please email us direct on the above email address and we will answer your questions. **If anyone has any information on any incidents that we have been unable to identify a suspect then please let us know by email, 101 or by contacting crimestoppers.** The report encompasses incidents of crime and other matters raised with the police from the last community council meeting up to and including the 20th February 2018. **Current Priorities:** The current priorities in the Bridge of Allan area continue to be Anti-Social Behaviour, Violent Crime, Theft, Road Safety and Community Engagement and Reassurance.*

### **Main Report**

#### **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

- On 2nd February 2018 at Airthrey Road a male was seen to be taking photos of another female not known to him. Enquiries are ongoing in relation to this and if you have any information in relation to this please contact 101 ref: CF0016070218.
- On 10th February 2018 at Union Street, a vehicle had its wing mirror cracked. Enquiries are ongoing in relation to this, if you have any further information in relation to this please contact 101 ref: PS-20180210-3906.

#### **DRUG MISUSE**

No reports.

#### **VIOLENT CRIME**

No reports.

#### **HOUSEBREAKINGS/CRIMES OF DISHONESTY**

- On 23rd January 2018 whilst shopping online a male was defrauded a substantial amount of bitcoin. Enquiries are ongoing into this and the public can be assured this was an isolated incident.
- On 7th February 2018 at Beech Court, Stirling University a jade pendant was stolen, enquiries are ongoing in relation to this. If you have any information in relation to this, please contact 101, ref: CF0019190218.
- On 8th February 2018 at Fountain Road, a quantity of alcohol was stolen from a local shop. Enquiries are ongoing in relation to this. If you have any further information in relation to this, please contact 101, ref: PS-20180208-1831.
- On 11th February 2018 at Henderson Street a male exited a taxi without paying the fare.

Enquiries are ongoing in relation to identifying the male. If you have any further information in relation to this, please contact 101, ref: PS-20180211-0417.

#### ROAD SAFETY

- On 6th February 2018 the community team conducted hand held radar, in the area of Cornton Road; 1 driver was warned in relation to speed.
- The community team have been carrying out patrols within the Henderson Street area and dealing with any issues regarding parking, which they can. On 2 occasions drivers were moved on and warned in relation to their parking. **The community team are aware of the parking issues within Henderson Street and will deal with issues they come across as and when they can.**

#### OTHER MATTERS OF NOTE

None.

#### ANY ISSUES RAISED AT THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING:

PC Gilliland stated to report any witnessed incidents of speeding to 101. This information helps the Police to gather a picture of the nature of these incidents and therefore, they are better able to see if there is a pattern to these and therefore target when to attend an area to monitor it given competing demands. LMB asked if there was any suggesting the Police could make or help with to engage positively with the community regarding the future reduction in speed limits for Airthrey Road e.g. to raise awareness etc. PC Chalmers stated that they could raise awareness via social media and by doing a 'friendly day' with hand held radar a week prior to the changes.

LH raised an issue on behalf of a CC member who was not in attendance: a resident asked if any measures had been taken to look for and remove a number of hypodermic needles that had been spilled from a car that had been found at Blue Banks. PC Chalmers asked LH to please send details to Sgt. Mathieson to take this forward and respond to the resident. **(Action: LH)**

A resident commented that he had observed 7 dead ducks floating down the Allan Water a week or so previously. He asked that this be looked into. PC Chalmers confirmed she would make the Wildlife Officer aware. PC Chalmers and PC Gilliland then left to attend to an ongoing issue as there were no more questions/issues raised.

<https://scotland.police.uk/yourviewcounts>

#### B1497 Active and Thriving Community (JMB)

LH handed over to JMB who confirmed that the results from the recent survey conducted by the Stirling Cycle Hub should be ready for the next CC meeting and will also be distributed via the usual CC channels. JMB then introduced the guest speaker, Ruth Henderson from Active Stirling. Ruth explained she was a Club Development Officer in the Wallace Community (Wallace High School catchment). She continued that there are a fair number of sports clubs in BofA that are affiliated to ClubSport Stirling (A voluntary organization supporting the growth and development of sports clubs in Stirling's communities) and that she works with 35 clubs across the Wallace Community; shortly she will move from her title as a Club Development Officer to become a Community Sport Officer, aligning with the new priorities from The Scottish Government and Stirling Council. Ruth explained that she was at the CC meeting to help her better understand what is going on in the community and to see how Active Stirling may play a part to help here.

Ruth then gave a very informative talk about the work she is involved with including: activities for older people such as Walking Football and more recently, Walking Netball (with some encouraging feedback on the success of this and a view to expanding it across the area to make it more local and therefore, accessible to all. Sessions are currently held at the Peak and there is a coffee club afterwards); the possibility of launching a variety of project intervention work (e.g. addressing homelessness, armed forces veterans and alcohol recovery).

It was highlighted that there were not netball lines in the Allan Centre, which could provide a possible future venue for Walking Netball. Ruth commented that this could be overcome and Andrew Davis (SC) stated that the sports hall floor here would be sanded and redone over this coming summer and that

this may present an opportunity to request the addition of netball lines. In addition, Ruth asked that if there are any community events in BofA, to please make her aware as she would like to better engage and help with these.

JMB raised the matter of the public tennis courts in Keir Street; they appear to be underused. Ruth commented that she had provided tennis lessons there 3 or 4 years ago, but the response was very low (3 or 4 persons). The upkeep appears to only be done when it looks needed (MB). JMB suggested that CC could work to raise interest by working with Active Stirling on this.

A resident offered information on the RSVP walks in Bridge of Allan: leaving from the Bield Housing and that they were trying to get a Thursday walk started that would accommodate people with walking aides. JMB offered CC support to share and support Active Stirling, and keep the dialogue going. She asked Ruth that they please tag BofA CC in any social media output in relation to events etc. MB explained the BofA CC newsletter and the sign-up process for this, adding that we could promote anything for Active Stirling via this route too.

Ruth asked if there was anything the BofA as a community were missing e.g. the Allan Centre could be utilized more. A resident suggested that the RSVP walking might link up with local nursery walking groups so that the older residents could join up for a walk with the young ones, or that the RSVP walks might like to join with the Primary School for their daily mile. Ruth confirmed the link between a local nursery and BofA Sports Club – tennis for tots. Another asked about the links to the University and Ruth confirmed that they provide undergraduate placements (4 x students x 30 hours small project) and that they also try to engage the students to help put with local clubs. JMB commented that the microteaching at the University provides a link here with the Primary School. Ruth also confirmed that she met with Cathy Gallagher (University of Stirling Sports Development Service), who was interested in launching a Park Run on campus. She was eager for this to be community driven with investment from the University, and Ruth is sure that she will contact the CC soon regarding this. LH thanked Ruth for her refreshing and positive exchange with the CC meeting.

#### **B1498 Education Scotland Inspection Meeting (LH)**

LH explained that Education Scotland, the national body which used to be called Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education, had recently inspected aspects of Stirling Council's (SC) Community Services. This involved looking at the support provided by SC for the community councils within the area: two weeks ago, community education HMIs met with 12 community councilors in Active Stirling's Community Campus. Five Stirling North CCs were represented (Cornton, Logie, Mercat Cross, Raploch and BofA) and LH attended the meeting. The HMIs collected the views of these CCs on a number of key areas regarding the effectiveness of CCs function within the SC area. LH reported that he 'found particularly productive and fruitful', 'given the nature of the questions asked by HMIs, it provided and insight into what Education Scotland regards as key priority areas for CCs'. LH explained that there were 7 of these and that they were all issues which BofA CC regards as fundamental, and that it was helpful to have that confirmation of being in tune with national priorities:

- How CCs engage with communities
- How representative we are of those communities
- What support is provided to CCs by SC
- The degree of involvement CCs have in community planning
- The level of networking that CCs establish within other CCs
- The problems CCs have in recruiting members
- The challenge of attracting young people

LH Thanked Andrew Davis (SC) for his continued support and asked for any questions. Andrew Davis responded and stated that full results from this exercise would be reported 12 to 12 weeks from the date of the inspection week and that he was pleased with the informal feedback that he had already received.

### **B1499 Christmas Lights Update**

LH confirmed SD would give this update at the next meeting in March.

### **B1500 CC Development Meeting/PBB Proposals (JMB)**

JMB confirmed that the 2-hour development meeting focussed on PBB proposals, and thanked Andrew Davis (SC) for helping to facilitate this. She explained that that the task was onerous given the scope and range of SC proposals. To manage the task, the members split into two groups. Group 1 reviewed and commented on Transformation and Income Generation options and Group 2 examined Stop/Reduce Options and Fees and Charges Options. Key points of difference were debated and a consensus view recorded. These were summarised and fed back to SC by LH.

JMB commented that this had been a challenging task given the timescale set and the knowledge and resources available to the CC. Andy Davis' input had been invaluable to the CC making meaningful comment. SC should be advised that effective community participation requires significantly better planning and information sharing.

In LH response to SC, on behalf of CC, the following observations were made:

- The short timescale given to respond was inadequate
- It was a positive move to engage with the community, but CCs need the time to do this
- There was an absence of the SC vision in the provided information, making consideration of options difficult
- This process assumes an extent of pre-knowledge about the SC organisation from the CC members
- CC has benefited from Andrew Davis' input but, if CCs are to acquire clarity of understanding and engage in productive debate, then Andrew's job is an essential element of this
- With the introduction of Participatory Budgeting SC must provide adequate training and resources if community input is to be informed and effective.
- CC need to adapt to the new demands this brings

Andy Davis (SC) confirmed that the subsequent report will be made public, however, this will probably not record individual's comments. JMB asked about the online survey/comment option that had been shared/promoted by Stirling Council; Andrew confirmed there had been approximately 2K responses from over the region.

A resident commented that she had attended the meeting in Raploch about the above and that it was a bit chaotic; she expressed her worries that this meeting had been dominated by one particular group, and that she was unsure how SC would therefore, be able to put anything that was unbiased and fair. JMB responded that as a CC, BofA had tried to be balanced and, given the extremely short turn around for response, they were confident that they had done as best they could.

JMB commented on Community Empowerment and Andrew Davis stated that introduction of Participatory Budgeting would happen next year. JMB added that this is where the CC needs to work proactively with Andre and SC, to ensure that the whole community feel they truly are influencing the way monies are spent in their communities.

### **B1501 Parking Proposals**

LH read an update communication on behalf of JC, acknowledging the amount of work she had put into this to date:

- A draft survey has been prepared. This will be sent to SC who will assist with turning it into an electronic survey. Paper copies will also be available to complete in the library.
- Updated roadmaps have been received from Stephen Easton (SC).
- Contact has been made with the library to request space to exhibit the consultation.
- A letter to the merchants has also been drafted and will be distributed once the online survey has been finalized. A poster has also been created to advertise the consultation and we will request the merchants to display this if possible.

- An online awareness campaign will take place once the dates for the consultation are known. JC anticipates that the consultation could take place week commencing 26 February 2018.
- Quotes will be requested for printing and the costs circulated to the CC members for approval once known.

LH asked for questions: IMC – how long is the consultation process (90 days is standard)? Those in attendance at the meeting did not know the answer to this at that time.

### **B1502 Planning Update (IMc)**

LH introduced the planning update, referring to a letter written to SC post the discussion held at the February 2018 CC meeting with regard to alterations done in Alexander Drive. IMc explained that he had written to Christina Cox (Planning and Building Standards Manager at SC) recently, raising concerns about this specific case and about the appearance of a general lack of robust scrutiny of applications, including a failure to consult/involve other relevant departments (SC) e.g. Road, Environment, and a lack of evidence of enforcement action. In addition, IMc confirmed he had queried the public ground conversion to a private garden in Alexander Drive. IMc had not yet received a response to this letter. Councillor Dodds stated that residents of Alexander Drive had met with planning officers in the previous week and had raised their concerns, however, to date he does not know if any action has been taken.

IMc informed the meeting that MB had asked Christina Cox, on his behalf, if there were specific criteria on planning proposals that the CC are consulted on. MB confirmed that CC comment on new build only and try not to comment on residential properties/neighbourhood disputes unless there is a related issue with regard to e.g. road safety, environment, tree management etc. Christina Cox responded that they are redrafting the CC process and that CC will get consulted on this redraft, basically CC decide their own remit; there is not set criteria. IMc confirmed that the full planning schedule is sent to CC, who should go through this to decide what to do. A resident asked why there was no more detail given on the schedule on enforcement notices as CC should be made better aware of the detail of these, given their implications.

IMc confirmed that a planning application had been received for 45 Henderson Street to become a restaurant. A resident added that a number of complaints had already been lodged against this.

### **B1503 Treasurer's Report**

LH explained that this was off the agenda as MG had sent her apologies, however, had asked LH to raise a few points. LH read these out:

- The Administration Fund, our main functional account, remains solvent with a balance of £2,873 (as of 18 February 2018).
- There has been very little movement this month, with the exception of the usual monthly minutes and a 3 months (Dec/Jan/Feb) accrual for the £6 monthly website hosting fee due to Nettle (expenditure was approved during Jan meeting). This accrual remains unpaid from our side even though a direct debit was set up last month according to Nettle's instructions. MG has contacted Nettle and awaits a response.
- The unused Connect funding (£409.40) is required to be returned to SC. MB approached Jean Cowie (SC) who confirmed that £72 could be used for the annual cost of the hosting fee. The balance will then be returned to SC.
- BT phone box: MG has contacted the insurer and is obtaining a quote for this: asset cover and liability – insurable value of £500.00 as per Dunblane CC. MG will seek approval for expenditure on this item once she received answer.
- Funding – end of project reports. SC (Jean Cowie) have advised of a tightening up on their funding process. They chased up 4 monitoring and evaluation reports (outstanding from 2015 & 2016: P.a. system, first Christmas Lights, 2 x Memorial Park benches and 2015 Play Parks funding). No new applications will be considered until all reports have been submitted. MG will action the above as the project managers involved are no longer with CC.

**Action All:** ensure that project leads understand, duly note and complete all the required funding steps

in a timely manner. MB confirmed that he had a report to do on the branding/website etc., however, he needs more data on the uptake. He has confirmed to Jean Cowie (SC) that this is the case.

#### **B1504 Flood Group Update (VM)**

VM commented on the vast amount of work that had been done by Sem and Brian. She stated that it had become apparent that the group needed more people and the CC led a drive to encourage others to join; a lot of the work was grant aided and needed an active group which is in discussion via CC Development meetings. Unfortunately, in the meantime, both Sem and Brian were unable to keep going with the group. Until further notice, residents should bring any issues etc. to the attention of the CC. VM confirmed that CC will not drop these ongoing issues and will ask SC to engage with CC as there are plans and funding that will/may affect the present and future hydrology of the area. VM wanted to show both Sem and Brian public support for the invaluable work they have done both by way of administration and manual labour over the last few years. And highlighted that their work had spurred action from SEPA and SC.

JMB asked if flooding could be part of River Development Group – taking a long view of the river, involving all the communities along its reach. Possibly by way of a River Development Proposal and challenge SC to take responsibility for this. There is an opportunity here to push back development and take a river long view of this; maybe a Forth, Allan and Teith - Cross community group. A resident added that there is currently a development plan to manage river flow (watercourse management) and that flooding is a major consideration for this. SC should take on this responsibility, there is a Flood Management Plan in place. Suggestion was made to take this issue to the CC open forums. VM confirmed that she would write to Paul Laidlaw (Scottish Flood Forum) the next day (**Action VM**). LH commented that he assumed this was a SC issue, the same as parking and in his personal view was surprised there was a separate flood management group.

MB introduced a related matter: he had been approached by visitors to BofA who commented on the long-standing 'puddle' in Fountain Road and asked if CC could report this. MB explained that he had emailed Andrew Davis (SC) who confirmed this had already been reported – it is apparently a clogged gully pot and when the operatives came to clear it there were cars parked in the way. This will be cleared as soon as it is accessible to do so.

#### **B1505 Secretary's Report (LH)**

LH explained that, after the last CC meeting in January, he had received several emails from Councillor Majury. These covered a range of local issues, including a number relating to street lighting:

- Streetlight on private land near 45 Allanvale Road had stopped working. This had now been fixed by SC. This light was presumed to have been an unadopted light, however, this was not the case. It should have transferred from Central Regional Council to SC 22 years ago.
- A light on Wellgate Drive has now been fixed by the residents, with SC assistance, as part of the process of getting the unadopted street adopted.
- An area in the vicinity of Well Road and Sunnyslaw Road has been experiencing streetlight difficulties and, in response, Council electricians immediately reported the matter to Scottish Power engineers – the underground cable fault, at the time of the communication, had not yet been fixed.
- Concerns had previously been expressed about wheelie bins left for collection on the cycle path ear the corner of Pullar Avenue and Cornton Road. SC confirmed to Councillor Majury that this is not an appropriate spot for the bins and a letter had been provided for residents to underline this, and to highlight the importance that the bins should not be left out for an excessive amount of time after collection. Councillor Majury, in his communication to CC emphasised that, if this continues to be a problem, to contact him.

LH followed on from the discussion at the January 2018 CC meeting, about the waste bins (in general) and the bottle/paper banks in the Cooperative car park, specifically that CC had continued to receive relevant email correspondence on these matters:

- At the January 2018 meeting, a resident raised a complaint regarding the large waste bins on his property (Monroe Gate). Jim Thomson of SC responded to an email from Councillor Dodds by conceding that the gentleman had a point, in that when he intervenes his officers relay the information to the operatives but, despite this, on a few occasions, the operatives do forget to return the bins to the correct position; he intends to speak to the operative again about this.
- Co-op bottle/paper banks: Councillor Dodds received an email from Lindsey Hepburn of Stirling Council providing some clarity on the Council's position i.e. This explained that SC do not service the glass collection at these banks and that it is not their responsibility. The overflowing glass was collected by SC operatives on one occasion, in response to a criticism in a local newspaper, resulting in SC feeling pressured to do so.

LH informed the meeting that he had received an email from Mike Watson, CC Chair, asking that LH remind the meeting of his view on the issue of the Cooperative based recycling banks, namely that he would like to see them relocated on the vacant raised plot, against the west wall in the Fountain Road car park; he feels that this would have 3 benefits: 1)removal of unsightly bins from Fountain Road, 2)potential provision of additional parking spaces in the Cooperative car park and 3)retention of central waste facilities.

LH informed that the CC had received an email from a group of Beaconhurst School pupils who have formed a Plastic Focus Group in order to reflect the growing public awareness of the danger to the environment of our uncontrolled use of plastics. The group had organised a special event, held on 23 February 2018. Unfortunately, there were no CC councilors available to attend, however LH commended the pupils for their initiative and extended BofA CC's apologies for not being able to attend on this occasion.

An email has been received by LH/CC from Councillor Dodds, forwarded from SGN (Scotia Gas Networks), intimating that work was due to start on Monday 12 February 2018, to upgrade the gas network in Sunnylaw Road, Blairforkie Drive, Glen Road, Upper Glen Road and Pendreich Road: the replacement plastic pipe has a minimum lifespan of 80 years.

Councillor Tollemache confirmed that the road markings indicating the end of the cycle path on entering Bridge of Allan, from the Keir Roundabout side, had been corrected.

#### **B1506 Residents' Voice**

Councillor Dodds informed the meeting that the zebra crossing in Henderson Street will be fully re-vamped week commencing 19 March 2018. JMB asked about the issues with the manhole covers at the crossing as there had been incidences of tripping/slipping. Councillor Dodds stated that he was unaware if these would be included or not. JMB confirmed that this was brought to the attention of the traffic officer and Councillor Dodds offered to send a reminder email to this effect.

#### **B1507 AOCB**

There being no other business, LH declared the meeting closed at 9.12pm.

**The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018, at 7.30pm.**