



Minutes of Meeting of Bridge of Allan Community Council

Held on Tuesday 21st August 2018

in the Allan Centre

Present : Mike Watson : Chair (MW), Janie Meikle Bland (JMB), Michael Burt (MB), Joanne Chisholm (JC), Sandra Davidson (SD), Leslie Harkness (LH), Siobhan Hencher (SH), Iain McCusker (IMcC). Victoria McDowell (VMcD), Nick Yarrow (NY),

Apologies : Margaret Sprunt (MS), Councillor Graham Houston, Councillor Alastair Majury, Alexander Stewart MSP, Stephen Kerr MP

In attendance : Andrew Davis (Stirling Council), Councillor Douglas Dodds, Councillor Alasdair Tollemache, Councillor Jeremy McDonald

Abbreviations : Community Council (CC), Stirling Council (SC)

B 1507 Welcome, Apologies and Conflict of Interest

MW opened the meeting at 7.30 pm and welcomed everyone. Apologies were given, as indicated above, and there was no conflict of interest to note.

B 1508 Approval of Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log

The minutes for the meeting of 19th June, 2018 were read and approved (Proposed : JMB ; Seconded : LH). There were no matters arising and, in terms of the Action Log, LH reported that he had contacted Maria Lucey for a set of the overheads on SC's proposed Bridge of Allan Flood Alleviation scheme which she and her colleague had used in their May meeting presentation; these had now been

circulated to CC colleagues.

MW and LH explained that, since another two residents had only just expressed a willingness to serve on the Community Council, Andrew Davis had indicated that he would seek the advice of SC's Head of Governance on the most appropriate way forward in terms of procedural correctness regarding the filling of the current vacancies.

B 1509 Police Report

In the absence of the duty police officers, MW provided a summary of the highlights of the August report, as indicated below.

Anti-Social Behaviour : A male is being reported to the Procurator Fiscal for subjecting Avenue Park residents to swearing and threats on 17th July.

Drug Misuse : A male has been charged on 18th July for possession of Cannabis.

Violent Crime : On 5th August in Henderson Street, a male was assaulted and had his mobile phone stolen; two males have been charged with Assault to Injury and Theft.

Housebreaking / Crimes of Dishonesty :

Two males were arrested for traffic and drug offences on 21st June after a Henderson Street vehicle was removed without the consent of the owner

15th July - two instances of theft by shoplifting (from the Cooperative), one involving a large quantity of alcohol stolen by a male and female (Police Call Card PS-20180715-2808) and the other involving a quantity of foodstuffs (Police Call Card PS-20180715-2383) , are being investigated.

17th July - theft by shoplifting (from the Cooperative), involving a large quantity of alcohol and with, as yet, no suspects identified (Police Call Card : PS- 20180717 -2392).

18th July - an attempted theft of a charity box and an item of jewellery by a female suspect from retail premises in Henderson Street; this is still

under investigation (Police Call CPS-20180719 - 1239).

Road Safety : *During the early hours of 7th July, a vehicle parked within Union Street sustained accident damage from a silver coloured works van or similar which drove off; this is still under investigation (Police Call Card PS-20180707 - 1520).*

Councillor Dodds indicated that he would be meeting with police officers on the following day to discuss issues of concern.

B 1510 Tennis Courts

MW reported that that the Friends of Bridge of Allan have been involved in the cleaning up of the courts and he also indicated that Derek Leitch of SC has promised that some work, albeit limited in scope, namely the replacing of the lines, will be undertaken to address the condition of the courts. MW explained that, although there is one good playable court, it requires a net of an appropriate standard. It was noted that SC has estimated that upgrading the surface of the two blaes courts to one of macadam would have a cost of £30,000; given that the blaes courts are essentially 'knockabout' in nature, the question of whether such a cost would be justifiable was clearly pertinent.

MB felt that the issue of upgrading the blaes courts with a view to encouraging their greater use merited a constructive debate. I McC suggested that one advantage of such an upgrade would be that provision could be made for basketball. Kate Buchanan pointed out that, while Falkirk Council operates charges, SC has always wanted its courts to be free to the public and she also felt that providing a facility for basketball would be a positive development. NY expressed his concern over the fact that there appeared to be no discernible attempt to publicise the courts, to encourage and stimulate children to make use of them and to provide appropriate guidance on their use, and he stressed that the town would lose something of value were it to lose one of the courts. JMB emphasised that, while she often saw children using the courts, it was certainly possible to promote them more effectively through Active Stirling and other bodies. One resident valued the the idea of having a multiuse facility which could include netball.

Gavin Drummond indicated that, in the past, it had been felt that a

£30,000 expenditure would only be justified if the courts became multiuse; he also stressed that, at that time, the CC had not taken the matter any further because it did not wish to stand in the way of the development of the primary school's MUGA facility. Graham Russell emphasised that the courts have suffered from years of neglect and that, although his team have removed years of accumulated needles, the courts require ongoing daily maintenance. JMB agreed with MB that, since Bridge of Allan is very much a community with a strong emphasis on sport, the issue of changing the courts into a MUGA facility should be taken to the community for a robust discussion.

In conclusion, MW reiterated that **a blaes surface is unsuitable for public tennis courts unless these are maintained on a daily basis and he also stressed that an immediate priority is the provision of a new and easily transportable net.**

B 1511 Pedestrian Crossing Issues

NY opened his comprehensive presentation on this significant issue by thanking Councillor Dodds for having ensured that SC had now provided the CC with the criteria for different types of crossing, although he did feel that the specified criteria were a little too predictable. He also stressed that there were no issues involving the two crossings with pedestrian controlled lights; however, in terms of the crossing close to the Avenue and also closer to a larger number of the retailers, there were some significant concerns, particularly the poor visibility, the uncertainty in terms of determining pedestrians' intentions, the lack of effective illumination, the fact that pedestrians are required to take a decision on whether or not drivers have spotted them, the limited distance between the mini roundabout and the crossing, and the limited impact of the presence of the bollards on the element of risk. (Some concern was expressed about the apparent lack of consultation about the bollards).It was agreed that the advantage of a red stoplight is that its significance is unambiguous. The Cornton Road example highlighting the inherent incompatibility of an adjacent bus stop and pedestrian crossing was noted.

NY itemised a number of relevant traffic statistics ; these included the fact that 73% of Henderson Street drivers break the speed limit at some point (a 6-day survey revealed that 10,000 vehicles broke the speed limit), and also the fact that, on average, 28 vehicles per minute pass through the street (equivalent to a daily rate of 15,000 vehicles).

In addition, he also underlined the fact that the town has 2,000 people above retirement age and 1,500 below school age. It was noted that a high proportion of the drivers using Henderson Street were not resident in the town and that many of them could well be unfamiliar with the roads. In conclusion, NY firmly emphasised that the essential consideration for the viability of any upgrading of the crossing should be safety concerns rather than funding concerns and he reaffirmed his view that any upgrade that improved the safety of the crossing would be fully justified.

The presentation generated a degree of discussion around the issues raised. V McD felt that the five criteria were too vague and she emphasised that it was not appropriate to delay a further upgrade until someone was injured; she suggested that the key priority was to decide whether the CC should now actively pursue the matter with SC with a view to securing an upgrade. JC pointed out that we have already raised concerns about the crossing with SC. Gavin Drummond reminded the CC that, at one point in the past, the 'Avenue' crossing had been located outside what is now a hairdressing salon, and he also confirmed that Tesco had paid for the crossing in the vicinity of its store. Councillor Dodds stressed that the recent accident on the crossing had taken place before it had been improved. One resident who lives close to the crossing underlined the effect of the excessive lorry noise and suggested that the island crossing at the Westerton was safer. MW was in sympathy with NY's central point relating to the inconsistency of having two crossings with lights and one without. It was also suggested by a resident that bringing out the waste bins from The Avenue into Henderson Street made matters worse in terms of limiting visibility. There was agreement that the tailbacks between the mini roundabout and the crossing also limited visibility.

Councillor Dodds firmly stressed that SC would require soundly based evidence that the crossing posed a safety risk, particularly given that there had apparently been no near misses since the recent revamping of the crossing; he was of the view that the crossing was safe. Councillor Tollemache indicated that the matter could be brought up at the next day's meeting with the police about speeding and he stated his intention of raising the option of imposing a 20 mph limit, although NY responded to this latter point by suggesting that Keir Street could then become the most dangerous street in the town.

At the close of the decision, it was agreed that the CC would closely

monitor the situation at the crossing over the next six months. In light of this decision, JMB suggested that the staff in Funeralcare might contribute to an informal monitoring process anecdotally; however, she stressed that the CC should not place undue responsibility on a third party. JC raised the option of having a 'near miss' report form on the website; a resident put forward the idea of having close to the crossing a notice encouraging the public to report any near misses via 101.

B 1512 Active and Thriving Community

JMB explained that, with the schools and university on vacation, the Summer has been a quiet period in terms of 'activity' developments and that, with a number of new people in posts, the CC would have fresh opportunities to take forward previous developments. She proposed that, now that a new primary head teacher, Mrs McNair was in place, the CC should make contact at an early point in the new session to continue the initiatives the CC had already started (on Active Travel and Safe Routes to School) with John Craven and the school's pupils, particularly given that a new group of Junior Road Safety Officers would be formed. **It was agreed that JMB should action contact with the head teacher and that she should be invited to a meeting of the CC.**

JMB indicated that **the CC would also continue with its contact with Active Travel Hub and would follow up with its new Active Travel Officer on the Sustrans project and on the Clyde Friendly Community Award.**

It was also JMB's intention to initiate closer liaison with the University. It was also noted that a new Operations Director at the Macrobert Centre, Kathryn Welch is now in post and she will attend the next meeting to outline her plans.

A resident felt it would be beneficial if the CC were to be involved in the new City-Region Deal, particularly in terms of potential parking developments.

B 1513 Telephone Kiosk

MW confirmed that the CC now carried full responsibility for the

Inverallan Road kiosk. JMB underlined the fact that many communities had found imaginative and creative uses for their kiosks eg as 'libraries' and **she suggested that the CC engage with sections of the community, possibly including local primary school pupils, on this.** The possibility of using the kiosk as a defibrillator was raised.

B 1514 Beaconhurst Closure

The closure of what had been a long - established feature of the everyday life of the town was noted with some regret.

B 1515 Planning Update

IMcC indicated that the Firs of Kinbuck matter, which had not been referred to the CC by SC, should properly fall within the purview of Dunblane CC. He also reported that he had written to SC to inform the Council of the CC's support for the Pendreich Road application; Councillor Tollemache noted that the resident involved with the Pendreich application would still welcome an opportunity to address the CC.

I McC confirmed that Graham's Dairy has appealed to the Court of Session in response to the Scottish Government's decision to reject the development proposals.

In relation to the Park of Keir development, IMcC reported that negotiations were still ongoing and that SC was keen to secure an agreement to avoid the matter being referred back to the Scottish Government.

Councillor Tollemache intimated that, in response to the elected members' motion seeking appropriate transparency with regard to the negotiations, the Council had indicated that, since it is almost 12 months since the Scottish Government imposed its conditions, it could be that there will be a request for another extension; he emphasised that the elected members have continued to advocate that the Council adhere to the original conditions. Councillor Tollemache also suggested that Bridge of Allan and Dunblane CCs might wish to make

a joint submission to SC, particularly since it was noted with some concern that the phrase, “no occupation” had now been substituted for “no building.” JMB sought clarification from Councillor Tollemache on what precisely was being pursued in terms of “transparency”: he explained that the term implied that the community would be consulted on the proposed conditions to be observed by the developer.

B 1516 Roads Report

NY indicated that there was nothing to report.

B 1517 Chair’s Report

MW reported that the bank balance for the Christmas Lights funding currently stood at £195. SD reported that the date for the lights to be switched on would be the last Sunday in November and she confirmed that the lights were now the responsibility of the newly established committee. MW also indicated that the residue of the “Playpark” funds (£1,900) remains on a “restricted” basis in the CC account.

B 1518 Secretary’s Report

LH reported on a range of relevant correspondence received since the June meeting :

- SC’s Licensing board sent a copy of the premises license application by Friend of Mine, the new enterprise in the former Bank of Scotland premises;

- Fiona Buchanan of SC has written to suggest her Economic Growth team would be happy to discuss how her team can assist the CC with the development of a Bridge of Allan action plan; IMcC asked if SC would be in a position to provide any assistance to the CC for the production of an action plan but Andrew Davis pointed out that the previous action plan had used external funding, while Gavin Drummond suggested that it would be sensible to take the existing plan and update it

- the charity, Food Train which helps older people with their weekly grocery shop is looking for volunteers and would be happy to attend a CC meeting;

- Councillor Dodds forwarded a communication from Graham and Sibbald regarding the proposed road-side services development at Firs of Kinbuck;

- SC invited us to complete a short online survey relating to the development of Community Learning and Development for 2018-2021 and their final report on how community councils can make a difference in the areas they represent will be issued in November;

- SC has invited to contribute to an online consultation on the development of a Scottish Governance code for the Third Sector;

- Councillor Dodds contacted the CC to voice concern about the delay in the relining of the Station car park and about the absence of parking enforcement by ScotRail; he has observed that users are continuing to park inappropriately in disabled bays;

- the third and final phase of SC's review of the operation of CCs has now concluded and the CC has commented on the drafts of four significant SC documents : the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils; the Standing Orders; the Code of Conduct and the Constitution;

SC's Waste services have informed us of changes to their recycling bin sites; the CC has also received details of a concern about the placing of the waste bins in The Avenue, about the build up of leaves and waste against the fire exit of Coop Funeralcare and about the risk of the overflowing bins/bin bags attracting dogs and vermin;

- The Dr William Halliday Trust has contacted the CC about a book launch for Craig Mair's new book on the history of Bridge of Allan to be held in the Library at 7.30 pm on Thursday, September 20th ;

- Councillor Dodds has forwarded a communication from Wallace View Nursing Home informing the CC of a presentation in the home on its 'Cycle without Age' initiative; and

- Councillor Tollemache has informed the CC that the dryer in the

public toilet is not working and the soap dispenser is broken; he has also referred to the police complaints he has received about excessive speeding in Keir Street.

B 1519 Residents' Voice

In relation to the Beaconhurst closure, one resident expressed an interest in learning what was to happen to the buildings and the site.

A resident sought clarification on the use of the term "restricted" in relation to the Playpark funds; IMcC unexplained that the funds were ring-fenced solely for expenditure directly related to the Play park and MW stressed that any resident with a concrete proposal for the funding should get in touch with the CC.

An Inverallan Drive resident raised the issue of the ongoing noise and nuisance arising from the current ScotRail operations; Councillor Dodds underlined the fact that this was the specific access point between Stirling and Dunblane for work on the line and he indicated that, once the electrification is complete, he would be hoping to secure a car park from Network Rail, something that would go out to consultation.

A resident raised the matter of the street lighting contract and asked if there was a timescale for completing the work since some features of the work appeared to be unfinished with barriers still remaining in place. Councillor Dodds confirmed that the contractors were moving on to Chalton and Kenilworth, while Councillor Tollemache stated that the elected members would get back to the CC on the whole issue of the timescale. The problem of the drainage in the Coop car park was also raised.

One resident expressed concern about dog excrement on the path, close to the Fire Station bridge, which is used by schoolchildren and; it was agreed that the situation is complicated by the fact that the land is private and Andrew Davis explained that that SC's enforcement team can take action if public concern is expressed to them.

Councillor Tollemache agreed to take forward with SC some outstanding road traffic issues eg Aithrey Road ; it was noted that SC is not able to establish a repeater sign since the full stretch of roadway is now governed by a 30 mph restriction.

VMcD reported that two residents had complained about adults cycling at speed on the footpath in Fountain Road; Councillor Dodds asked if MB could use the CC website to encourage residents to make a 101 report in situations of this kind or where there is evidence of any other infringement.

SD reported that a defibrillator will be installed at the Allanwater Café on September 29th.

B 1520 AOCB

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.17 pm.

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday, 18th September, 2018 at 7.30 pm.