



## Minutes of Meeting of Bridge of Allan Community Council

Held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018

in the Allan Centre

**Present :** Mike Watson : Chair ( MW ), Janie Meikle Bland ( JMB ), Leslie Harkness ( LH ), Iain McCusker ( IMcC ). Victoria McDowell ( VMcD )

**Apologies :** Michael Burt ( MB ), Joanne Chisholm ( JC ), Sandra Davidson ( SD ), Siobhan Hencher ( SH ), Margaret Sprunt ( MS ), Nick Yarrow ( NY ), Councillor Alasdair Tollemache, Alexander Stewart MSP, Stephen Kerr MP, Andrew Davis ( Stirling Council ).

**In attendance :** Councillor Douglas Dodds, Councillor Graham Houston, Councillor Alastair Majury, Councillor Jeremy McDonald

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

### **B 1521 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 1522 Approval of Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log**

The minutes for the meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2018 were read and approved ( Proposed : JMB ; Seconded : IMcC ). There were no action requirements to be reported.

In terms of matters arising from the minutes, LH reported on the following items :

#### *Item B 1519*

Councillor Dodds has raised with SC the concerns about the flooding in the Fountain Road car , and the jetting work to clear the blocked gullies will be undertaken later in the week. Councillor Dodds has also raised the apparent failure of waste operatives to monitor discarded rubbish in the car park and has asked that Land Services carry out a regular maintenance clean up of bush vegetation and overhanging branches ; Land Services have now indicated that they will be cutting back vegetation and removing some dead trees from the car park.

Councillor Dodds has raised the issue of the Lighting Programme and, in response, SC has indicated that the works have been programmed for completion around January, 2019; the



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SC officer will ask the Contractor to investigate and rectify the situation of displaced barriers and the Street Lighting Supervisor will carry out an inspection of the area.

Councillor Tollemache has confirmed that repair lines have been raised for the broken hair dryer and soap dispenser in the public toilets, and Facilities Management will ensure that similar repairs are raised on an ongoing basis by the staff who clean the toilets.

*Item B 1513*

With regard to the Telephone Kiosk, LH reported that the CC is starting to receive suggestions from residents on uses for the facility; these have included a book exchange, a repository of information about the town and its history, a seasonal flower box/terrarium. One resident has suggested that the kiosk be relocated to a more central point in the village.

*Item B 1517*

MW indicated that the figure given for the Christmas Lights balance should be corrected to £138.24.

**B 1523 Police Report**

The duty police officer, PC Gilliland, provided a summary of the essential matters covered in the report.

***Anti-Social Behaviour***

*September 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 : a parked motor vehicle in Cornton Road was vandalised with no suspect identified.*

*September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 : a male was arrested for a Breach of the Peace offence in Henderson Street.*

***Drug Misuse***

*September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 : a quantity of Cannabis and Amphetamine was recovered from a property in Allanvale Road and a male has been referred to the Procurator Fiscal for drug related offences, including two counts of being Concerned in the Supply of Controlled Drugs.*

***Violent Crime***

*September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 : a male was assaulted ( minor injury ) in Henderson Street with two suspects identified.*



***Housebreaking / Crimes of Dishonesty :***

*August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018 : a theft by shoplifting, involving a quantity of goods, took place in a retail property in Henderson Street and this is still being investigated ( CF011179818 )*

*Between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2018 : property was stolen from a parked motor vehicle on Pullar Avenue but all lines of enquiry have been exhausted ( CF0117610918 and Police Call Card PS-20180903- 4116 ).*

*August 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> : a motor vehicle was stolen from Cawder Road and a male has been arrested for this and other offences*

*August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 : a motor vehicle was stolen from Chalton Road and later recovered, accident damaged, in Cornton Road. Lines of enquiry are being progressed ( CF0114750818 and Police Call Card PS 20180829-0828 ).*

**PC Gilliland stressed that, owing to the recent thefts of vehicles and of property from within vehicles, the police would ask all members of the public to ensure that vehicles and doors/windows of residential properties are properly secured, particularly with the onset of the darker nights.**

JMB raised the issue of potential dog snatching in the town but the duty officer indicated that the police were not aware of any incident of this nature. In response to a further question from JMB regarding the safety of the pedestrian crossing at The Avenue, the officer agreed that any incidents such as near misses should be reported by calling 101 although it was his personal view that locating signage to this effect at the crossing would be inadvisable since it would be incorrectly identifying the crossing as an accident 'hot spot' when, in fact, there is no evidence that this is the case. Councillor McDonald indicated that a possible option would be the use of a video camera to confirm the validity of 'near miss' reports

A resident voiced safety concerns about the section of Blairforkie Drive running alongside the picnic area and he noted that there had been a traffic accident at that point on August 22<sup>nd</sup>; in particular, he highlighted problems caused by parked 4 x 4 vehicles and he suggested that the problem could be alleviated by having continuous double yellow lines down one side of the road. The duty officer indicated that the police had received no calls about the road and he explained that, at present, they were monitoring Cornton Road and three location points in Henderson Street.

**B 1524 Active and Thriving Community**





JMB introduced Kathryn Welch, Operations Director of the Macrobert Arts Centre and underlined the fact that culture and the arts were an invaluable part of the amenity provided by the Centre for the community.

Kathryn explained that that she returned in a new post to the Macrobert after a period of secondment and she stressed that she wanted her presentation to be interactive rather than simply a one- way conversation. She also found the CC's telephone kiosk to be a potentially exciting development for the town.

She highlighted the fact that, since the Centre is publicly funded, it needs to be shared with everyone and she stressed that her vision involved bringing people together more and allowing art to let them see a world different from their own while having fun away from the pressures of everyday life. To this end, she distributed a 'gold ticket' resources pack which included the current Live Events brochure. From the brochure, she drew attention to "The Yellow on the Broom" which she regards as a vital part this season's Conversation and from the pack she singled out a brochure covering Central Scotland Documentary festival held in the Centre from October 4 to October 8, 2018 and showing films that might not normally appear in a cinema.

Of particular importance to the Centre are the recently initiated Creative Breakfasts held on the first Friday of the month and designed to attract people from the Stirling area who are interested in being more creative and getting together in an especially appealing way. Kathryn appreciated that her vision might not be everyone else's vision and so she laid emphasis on the fact that her door was always open and on the importance of people letting the Macrobert know about their own personal needs; she extended an invitation for anyone to come in for a coffee and for a longer conversation about the Macrobert facilities. In conclusion, she invited CC members and residents to complete return slips indicating what would help them individually to become more creative and what would help the town as a whole to be more creative; in response to a question from JMB, Kathryn explained that the returns would assist in shaping future consideration of the Centre's programmes. MW praised the family friendly approach of the Centre and also the excellent afternoon sessions provided for senior citizens although he noted that the level of attendance was often limited; a resident suggested, in this regard, that parking was an issue.

At the close of the presentation, MW thanked Kathryn for an excellent and stimulating presentation which had been exceptionally well received by those present.

## **B 1525 Tennis Courts**

MW reported that, in terms of upgrading the red blaes courts with a tarmac surface, matters were now at the stage of moving forward with the support of Graham Russell and the Friends of Bridge of Allan. Graham had looked at a facility in Falkirk with a top of the range surface and a similar upgrade for Bridge of Allan would have an estimated cost of



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£60,000 ( with appropriate lighting and fencing ); SC Land Services have costed a less expensive upgrade and that would require £30,000 as a minimum sum. Graham explained that the fencing would have to be replaced and that, even with a tarmac surface, there would be ongoing annual maintenance costs albeit at a relatively low level initially.

MW stressed that it was necessary to firm up on the costings and then consider funding from a range of sources ( possibly including the Common Good Fund, Scottish Landfill Communities Fund, the Civic Trust Awards etc. ); he also indicated that, with regard to the MUGA court, SC has agreed to tidy it up and to fund a new portable net. Gavin Drummond emphasised the importance of continuing to press SC to make a contribution to the upgrade of the blaes courts, particularly given the resultant reduction in the cost of maintaining the courts. MW pointed out that SC has been doing less and less in recent years in terms of maintenance, although Gavin Drummond reminded the CC that five years ago SSC had spent a considerable amount in capital expenditure relating to the facility. It was agreed that it was essential to work in partnership with SC. JMB suggested that SH could explore a possible funding option at the forthcoming Funding Fair while a resident suggested as a further option the MacRobert Trust and also the EDF.

### **B 1526 Pendreich Road Tourist Pods Project**

MW welcomed Laura Robertson and her project consultant, Paul Houghton, to the meeting to discuss her planning application. Laura distributed a diagram and an aerial site photograph of the planned development and she explained that she purchased her six acre smallholding in 2015 for her two horses and acquired planning permission for a road and a lambing shed; she also keeps a variety of additional livestock including sheep ( rare breeds ), pigs, goats, geese, hens and guinea fowl. Essentially, in terms of breeding and selling on, the emphasis of Laura's operation is on sustainable living and development with income ploughed back into the smallholding, and she underlined the fact that the 'tourist pods' will bring in more money to support what she regards as her 'hobby' and will allow tourists to walk and fish and also to take advantage of the catering facilities of the town. The semicircular pods will incorporate a kitchen area, a double bed and a fold down sofa bed for children, and four pods are required to avoid having to accommodate too many people. She stressed that she would always need to be present when the pods would be occupied and so an application has been submitted for a single - storey bungalow built in front of the lambing shed; above all, Laura feels it is essential to ensure that tourists and children are safe and not left on their own. Although the tiled roof pods will offer magnificent views, very little of them will be seen from Pendreich Road since they are not at the roadside, since they are only 2.5 metres high and since it is intended to have a hedge; they will not be seen from the golf course. Dogs will be welcome but must be kept under control. Paul Houghton pointed out that the pods are similar to the ones at Loch Katrine and that the sole issue was that of visual impact. He confirmed that the pods and the house are the subjects of two planning applications submitted simultaneously and that, were the house application not to





be granted, there would be no point in having the pods. Gavin Drummond raised the issue of restrictions in occupancy and Paul Houghton stated that occupancy restriction would be acceptable.

MW thanked Laura for her lively and engaging presentation.

### **B 1527 Community Council Elections**

MW explained that all CC members would stand down at midnight on Thursday, October 18 and that the election process for a new CC of 13 members would begin on October 1<sup>st</sup>, with nomination forms to be submitted by Friday, 19<sup>th</sup>. He indicated that, were more than 13 nomination forms to be received, a postal ballot of the electorate would be conducted. LH pointed out that, should no postal ballot be required, the first meeting of the new CC would be held on the third Tuesday in November.

### **B 1528 Planning Update**

I McC indicated that there was nothing to report.

### **B 1529 Chair's Report**

MW reported that the Christmas Lights committee now has a constitution, chair and treasurer and he indicated that minuted CC approval for the transfer of funds to the committee was now required; there was unanimous approval for this. He also indicated that the next priority was to establish a lease agreement for the CC's Christmas lights assets. In terms of vacant retail premises, MW reported that a flower shop would be opening in New Street; he indicated that, as yet, the future of the vacant Tree House premises is uncertain, while there is no news about the sale of the Royal Hotel.

### **B 1530 Secretary's Report**

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

The Big Lottery Young Start funding programme re-opened at the end of August.

Network Rail alerted the CC to the intensification of the electrification work on the Stirling-Alloa-Dunblane railway from early September to late November and to its impact on some Sunday services.

SC and Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise are holding a Funding Fair on Tuesday October 2<sup>nd</sup> and Siobhan Hencher will attend.



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The SC Community Engagement Team have provided CCs with a helpful set of tools to assist in developing their data protection policies.

SC has asked all CCs to engage with the public about the need for residents to cut back overhanging vegetation.

A resident has written to voice concern about a local resident being permitted to to sell house contents from his driveway but this matter is now beyond the control of the CC.

Councillor Dodds has contacted RBS and has confirmed that the closed branch is on the market for offers in the region of £250,000 and that the option of selling the site to the community at a discount was not acceptable. He also referred to the CC the rumours of two men in a white transit van looking for dogs to snatch in the town, and he reported, in response to his concerns about dog fouling, SC have identified this as a future priority in the form of a short but intensive focus on the problem; Councillor Majury has reported that, with regard to the dog fouling in Union Street and Keir Street, the problem has been addressed to a degree although it appears that the presence of enforcement officers would need to be increased to deal properly with the problem. The councillor has raised with waste services residents' complaints about the waste bin lorries taking their break opposite the Provost park on double yellow lines and this has been addressed; he has asked SC to indicate the number of fixed penalty notices issued by enforcement officers since January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. Councillor Majury has reported that the mattress discarded outside Lloyds has been lifted and he has informed us that, in relation to the collapsing road surface in Inverallan Road, the defects have now been repaired.

Sem Curley has contacted us to report that SC has carried out effectively the clearing of the paths by the river, the burn and Centenary Walk although he feels that this needs to be undertaken at least twice in the growing session.

### **B 1531 Residents' Voice**

Various issues were raised by a number of the residents.

One concern was that of instances of vegetation obscuring road signs; MW agreed and noted an example of this at the Keir Street roundabout. Councillor Houston confirmed that, in significant cases, SC will take action and will subsequently bill the responsible parties and he made reference to the Scotland Hedge Act of 2013 which, he stressed, only covered tall hedges and not trees. JMB suggested we should post this issue on our Facebook page.

MW, Gavin Drummond and Councillor Dodds updated a resident on the status of the proposed improvements to precarious sections of the Darn Walk, including those relating to the project for a new bridge. The issue of Blairforkie Road parking was raised again,





particularly in terms of the access difficulties for emergency vehicles. The problem of delivery vehicles servicing Domino's Pizza and parking in the middle of Fountain Road was raised. The proposal to move Bridge of Allan Station was raised once more and it was noted that Transport Scotland have given SC a grant to relieve traffic pressure in the Stirling area, with moving the station being one option.

### **B 1532 AOCB**

MW and Ian McLaren of the Dr Welsh Trust provided a briefing on the imminent launch of "Bridge of Allan : A History " by Craig Mair. Mr McLaren in his remarks stated that he was confident the handsomely produced book would sell successfully and, on behalf of the Trust, he thanked the Friends of Bridge of Allan for their assistance in the project. He also indicated specific dates, times and locations for book signings.

JMB reported that Cathy Gallagher, the University of Stirling's Director of Sport has indicated that, during the renovation of the sports facilities, the University would wish to make use of the Allan Centre. JMB also reported that Cycling Scotland is to relaunch the Cycle Friendly Community Awards; interested residents should contact the CC.

### **B 1533 Date of Next Meeting**

Contrary to what was reported in error earlier, there **will** be a CC meeting in October **at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2018.**

