



## **Minutes of Meeting of Bridge of Allan Community Council**

**Held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**Due to Covid-19 this meeting was held remotely via Zoom**

**Present:** Mike Watson (MW) Chair; Leslie Harkness (LH) Secretary; Anna Doeser (AD) Treasurer; Janie Meikle Bland (JMB); Bill Fortune (BF); Siobhan Hencher (SH); Iain McCusker (IMcC); Vicky McDowell (VMcD); Alasdair Taylor (AT),

**Apologies:** Andrew Drummond Baxter (ADB); Sandra Davidson (SD); Duncan McDougall (DMcD) (associate member); Moira Randall (MR) (associate member); Lucy McCormick (Minute Secretary); Alyn Smith MP; Councillor Jeremy McDonald; Andrew Davis (SC); Graham Russell (Chair of Friends of Bridge of Allan) PC Paul Gilliland; PC Dee Chalmers;

**In attendance:** Councillor Douglas Dodds; Councillor Graham Houston; Councillor Alastair Majury Councillor Alasdair Tollemache; MSP Alexander Stewart; Douglas Neilson (Vice Chair of Friends of Bridge of Allan )

Abbreviations – Community Council (CC), Common Good Fund (CGF), Stirling Council (SC), Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### **B 1827 Welcome, Apologies and Conflict of Interest (MW)**

MW chaired this meeting. MW opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed all those in attendance via Zoom; apologies were recorded as indicated above. Councillor Douglas Dodds and Councillor Graham Houston both declared intention to step out of the meeting during any planning discussions to avoid potential conflicts with their positions on the Planning and Regulation Panel.

### **B 1828 Approval of Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log (LH)**

LH confirmed that all items from the Action Log are covered within the agenda and shared the following matters arising:

- Reference item B 1822 – Spaces for People: Councillor Majury forwarded the Sustrans guidance on options for targeting the Spaces for People funding. He also attached some suggestions which have emerged for specific initiatives in Bridge of Allan including secure cycle lockers at the railway station, widening the A9 footway from Bridge of Allan to the Keir Roundabout, adding a fixed cycle rack in Henderson Street near New Street, widening the Fountain Road Play Park footways to make them wheelchair friendly, and a facility for keeping school pupils heading for Wallace High School on the school side of the road.
- Reference item B 1822 – Road Improvement Programme: Councillor Tollemache confirmed that SC will commence improvement work on the Bridge of Allan/ Keir Roundabout footway on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and this is estimated to run for four weeks.
- Reference item B 1820 - Royal Hotel planning application: Councillor Tollemache forwarded confirmation from SC planners that, since neighbourhood consultation had taken place before the revised plans had not been available for viewing, the planning application had now been removed

from the agenda for the November Panel to allow for further neighbourhood consultation to take place. In that communication to Councillor Tollemache, SC explained that a change can be made in a planning application provided it is not "substantive" in nature and that, in this case, reducing the number of units from 14 to 12, was not deemed to be substantive. Local resident, Gavin Drummond also contacted the CC to say that he intended to submit his objections to the revised plans; he has subsequently done so and provided the CC with a copy of his comments to the CC. It is his view that the two front blocks should be removed and the area occupied by these blocks landscaped and also used for additional parking; he also feels that the matter of the designed materials in the remaining blocks should be revisited to ensure a development more in keeping with the original hotel building. In his communication, Mr Drummond expressed the view that the 1966 redevelopment of part of Henderson Street produced a development which some have felt was less than ideal.

The minutes were approved of the October 2020 CC meeting. Proposed by BF and seconded by LH

### **B 1829 Police Report (MW)**

Between 20th October and 15th November 2020, a total of 12 crimes occurred within the Bridge of Allan beat code (which includes Cronon, Causewayhead and Stirling University). The crimes detailed below are those that are of relevance to the local community.

#### **ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

On 14<sup>th</sup> November police took reports of several youths causing general antisocial behaviour in and around the Henderson Street and Hendrich Road areas of Bridge of Allan. Due in part to a swift response by police, the youths were dispersed and moved on. This will be monitored in the coming weeks.

#### **DRUG MISUSE**

On 26<sup>th</sup> October, a male was traced within university accommodation in possession of herbal cannabis and was dealt with accordingly in relation to possession of controlled drugs.

**VIOLENT CRIME** - Nothing to report.

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

Between 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of October a bicycle was stolen from the area of Munro Gate, Bridge of Allan. This is crimed as Theft – PS-20201025-3188 refers.

Between 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> November, a garage door of a property at Charles Avenue, Bridge of Allan, was forced open and a total of four mountain bikes stolen from within. This has been crimed as Theft by Housebreaking and is an ongoing enquiry at the time of update, PS-20201113-1604 refers

**ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD TRAFFIC RELATED CRIME** - Nothing to report.

#### **MATTERS OF NOTE**

The CPT officers have been carrying out patrols in and around Bridge of Allan in relation to parking complaints and have been engaging with motorists as and when issues have been identified.

Due to annual leave commitments, there has been limited opportunity to carry out speeding checks.

Between 20th of October and 15th of November 2020 there has been a total of 69 calls to the Bridge of Allan area. A breakdown of some of these calls is as follows, 3 were concern for person type calls, 8 were public nuisance calls, 1 was a disturbance type call, 6 were road related traffic calls, 2 calls were drugs/substance related and 4 were assist member of the public type calls.

**Activities for forthcoming month:**

- 1) Attend and patrol areas in which crimes of dishonesty have been reported.
- 2) Monitor and patrol areas where youth related antisocial behaviour has been identified.

**B 1830 Speeding Issues Update (AT)**

Further to actions discussed at previous CC meeting, AT is aware that a meeting took place however was unable to attend due to short notice. Councillor Dodds confirmed that a meeting had taken place the previous week to discuss combining the consultation sessions for this and the Spaces for People topic thus delaying progress on the speeding issue. Spaces for People discussion should not impact the project for Henderson street which is going ahead but delayed by reliance on a contractor for installation of speeding strips and likely to start in January. Once confirmed that Spaces for People does not impact the plans around speeding, consultation with traders and residents of Henderson Street will begin. AT expressed concern that traders would be in a very busy period following the end of lockdown restrictions and a busy trading period up to Christmas so would likely not be supportive of consultation at that time. Councillor Dodds confirmed that, timescales aside, the plans for Henderson street will ultimately be delivered with appropriate consideration of the changing circumstances due to COVID. MW also expressed the view that consultation this side of Christmas would be unwise and advised pushing back to the New Year.

**B 1831 Tennis Courts (BF)**

MW & BF met with representatives from Stirling council on 30<sup>th</sup> October to review the two quotations and these will now be revised. Councillor Dodds advised to setup a meeting with Councillor Brisley to discuss funding options via the Council, however BF noted that funding from the council may not be available until towards the end of the tax year, by which time the work could already have been completed if otherwise funded. Indicative costs of the project are circa £50k and crowd funding, CGF or council funding with a contribution from the CC of £5750 are being considered. MW suggested also exploring 'planning gain' / Section 75 funding to finance the maintenance & repairs required. Councillor Dodds confirmed Section 75 would not be appropriate as this is between the relevant developer and SC, however direct negotiation with a developer is an option.

Councillor Dodds to setup a meeting with Councillor Brisley to discuss council funding once MW & BF have obtained the various quotations and determined costs.

**B1832 Wallace Monument (JMB)**

JMB is representing BOFA CC on the National Wallace Monument Stakeholder Advisory Group (NWM SAG) which has been established to shape the workings & role of the monument once transferred to Stirling council on 27<sup>th</sup> November. An inaugural meeting was held on 30<sup>th</sup> October which introduced the aims and took ideas, the membership demonstrating that there is a strong focus on tourism and business. JMB shared minutes for the meeting on screen (timestamp 25:40) showing the ideas and opportunities discussed; particularly relevant to this group is how to engage the local community beyond JMB as our single representative. Notable stakeholders not already involved include Stirling university and businesses of Bridge of Allan; JMB posed the following for the CC to consider:

- How can the CC support marketing activities to ensure residents are aware of the offers available?
- How best to engage local businesses?
- What can be done to direct tourism / traffic to the Monument via Bridge of Allan

Councillor McDonald referred members to public papers of the financial economy committee who will meet on 19<sup>th</sup> November to discuss fees and proposal to provide free access to Stirling residents.

BF reminded of a previous initiative linked to Stirling district tourism which was chaired by Douglas Ross who may be a good contact, also Alison Kilgour who has obtained permission to conduct advertising etc during the festive period. SH suggested contacting merchants via the Facebook page Bridge of Allan Merchants

Councillor McDonald shared that a Stirling App was developed to link up the different tourist attractions in the area to form a journey and steps were taken to setup local heritage and archaeology projects to form smaller attractions between the already familiar Doune Castle / Wallace Monument etc.

JMB will put forward suggestions at the next meeting; the priority being to agree how the NWM SAG intends to establish clear lines of communication and manage community engagement both into the Advisory Group and feeding back to the communities. The CC requires material to share with the local businesses and residents and it was agreed that any transport and walking routes / waymarks that support tourism should include BOA.

JMB shared the Terms of Reference for the National Wallace Monument Stakeholder Advisory Group (NWM SAG).

The question of why the monument was taken back into Stirling Council's care was not discussed at the SAG meeting; JMB noted that this is a question likely to keep coming up so a clear and concise answer would be helpful to support the CC's communications; GH confirmed that SC conducted a thorough investigation and commissioned Grant Thornton to produce a report on how effectively the NWM was being run by Stirling District Tourism. This concluded that the council was not getting 'best value' and it was felt that the asset could be utilised more effectively to promote local tourism.

### **B 1833 Playpark initiative (SH)**

Not much progress to report due to current restrictions, although the roundabout was delivered, and Donna Mills from SC is due to meet contractor to discuss installation and re-surfacing including pathways to link the various new additions. Work likely to begin early 2021 (Feb-March)

### **B 1834 Blairforkie Drive development (IM)**

Councillor's Dodds & McDonald excused themselves from the meeting.

IM reported that a PAN notice has been received by SC regarding a proposed major development on Blairforkie Drive including high level details and a map only. Observations made:

- Previous applications have been rejected, on what grounds and what has changed since those objections were upheld?
- The area is not zoned for housing on the local development plan (LDP) therefore the due and correct process of an options appraisal has not been followed
- An area of the proposed site includes a long section of the Darn walk which is a designated path on SC's core network therefore should be protected

- 14 Fishers Green is heavily populated with mature trees which would be removed as a result of the proposed development
- Increased pressure on local services including schools & healthcare plus additional traffic

MW queried options for putting forward these concerns; IM indicated that this is unclear as the website has been marked as 'closed for comments' however a full planning application has yet to be submitted.

Inga Bullen commented that if land is not on the LDP the expectation should be for any application to be summarily rejected and advised that information available on SC website indicates public consultation will last until 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021. Also expressed concerns that an online consultation may not be well advertised or attended, and all residents should be given an opportunity to express their views

Until consultation and full plans are available the CC is unable to take a formal position, however, in principle cannot support the application for the reasons outlined above. Regulations require a 12-week period between submission of PAN and a full planning application; in the meantime, IM will request further details and express the CC's initial concerns.

### **B 1835 Planning Report**

As indicated earlier, Councillor Dodds and Councillor Houston withdrew from the meeting at the start of the Planning Report in view of any potential conflict of interest arising from their position as members of the Planning Pane

Details of a new Co-op building have been reviewed and are much improved and more in-keeping compared with the previous proposal. The CC members are invited to attend an online meeting with Mr Campbell from Co-op on 24<sup>th</sup> November at 19:30 for consultation prior to an application being submitted

Restoration of the old well-house began without planning permission; this has now been submitted and IM proposed a visit to the site to express the CC's support.

Plans for The Royal Hotel have been revised however the changes are only minor and are not sufficient to overcome the objections submitted by the CC earlier in the year, which IM will express through the appropriate channels. MW queried whether the sub-committee meeting could be attended by the public and whether this is something the CC wants to pursue; Councillor Tollemache advised that anyone who has objection can be invited to attend. AM advised to contact Councillor McPherson as the Chair to discuss and it was agreed that the CC should be represented if possible.

Grahams Dairy submitted a planning application in August and IM indicated that he has only recently become aware highlighting a need to review the process by which the CC is notified of relevant applications. No specific objections raised.

Airthrey Kerse - MW to seek clarity on whether a public meeting is appropriate and revert to the members.

### **B 1836 Christmas lights (AD)**

Lights have gone up on Henderson street and light sponsors have been confirmed; sponsorship plaques have not yet been installed due to one needing to be re-done. These will be installed within the week and the tree will be in place by 25<sup>th</sup> November. Members and Friends agreed for lights to be switched on asap prior to Tier 4 restrictions taking effect understanding that there will be no 'switch on' event and the tree will arrive later.

### **B 1837 City Fibre (AT)**

Councillor Tollemache indicated that most streets have now been completed and invited residents to provide feedback. Thanks were expressed to the CC and confirmed that the works were undertaken quickly, and the team were tidy, flexible and polite. Councillor Tollemache will submit this feedback to City Fibre and continue to push for completion of the outstanding streets.

### **B 1838 Communication role (MW)**

AD will resign Treasurer role at the earliest opportunity to take up the role of Communications Officer with Treasurer role to be fulfilled by AT; they will complete a handover offline prior to the next meeting and formalities addressed at the next AGM.

Michael's considerable contributions were recognised, and MW proposed that thought be given to how the CC's gratitude could be appropriately expressed.

MW suggested that a new communications strategy should be considered and discussion was held around options for recruiting to fill the spaces on the CC concluding that members can be co-opted until formal procedures can be followed. LH to contact those members that have not attended for several months to discuss whether they would like to continue.

### **B 1839 Chair's Report (MW)**

- No action on the AGM until early 2021
- Level 4 COVID restrictions in Stirling are a result of spikes at the meat plant in BOA, care home in Bannockburn and students from Stirling University

### **B 1840 Secretary's report (LH)**

- A resident used the CC website to voice his serious concerns about the apparent neglect of the former Ivy Hotel building, particularly in terms of water saturation. Andrew Davis, our link SC community council liaison officer sent us a link to the Towns and Business Improvements Districts Resilience and Recovery Fund.
- SC's Community Engagement team sent the CC a copy of its draft Community Engagement Strategy along with a link to the online consultation which closes on 12<sup>th</sup> December. Councillor Tollemache forwarded to the CC a copy of the question (along with the answer received) he had put to the full SC on when a dedicated cycle route between Bridge of Allan and Dunblane would be provided. In its answer, SC confirmed that the creation of such a route is identified in the Local Transport Strategy and in SC's Active Travel Plan and that SC has now received funding from Tactran which will be used to explore the feasibility of several route options. The work will be progressed over the coming months with engagement with the communities and target completion by the end of March 2021. The delivery of any potential project would be subject to a future capital allocation.
- Councillor Majury informed the CC that it appears that the full barrier level crossing will be in place in Cornton Road in December.
- Councillor Dodds forwarded a communication from SC relating to the first phase of the Waste Transformation Programme to replace the "diamond" style Grey and Brown bins. Bridge of Allan is included in both Phase One in December and in the second phase in January.
- The CC received a copy of the minutes of this month's committee meeting of the Friends of Bridge of Allan.

### **B 1841 Treasurer's Report**

- £500 donation received from the Scouts to the Playpark fund bringing the balance to £29,896 (earmarked for play equipment)
- This month's outgoings: admin fund of £6 for web posting; £40 for minutes; £14.39 for zoom subscription leaving balance at £4871
- No movement on the COVID larder fund
- Christmas lights sponsorship funds still coming in, current balance £1609

**B 1842 Residents voice**

- Inga Bullen raised concerns about changes to planning application for the Park of Kier sports facilities not being made publicly available. Councillor Tollemache confirmed that the nature of the re-design is not known, an extension was granted by the government until 30<sup>th</sup> December against the advice of SC and Councillor Tollemache agreed to highlight that the CC should be provided with visibility of the changes.

**B 1843 AOCB**

- LH has received a proposal to have specific time slots for individual items and requested members to give an opinion at next meeting
- SH has received a request from a resident to put up signs relating to protection of hedgehog populations, AM to investigate.
- Following up on an action he took from September's meeting to engage with Jim Boyle regarding the CGF, Alasdair confirmed that he has had no response to date. GH advised that workload is unprecedented due to COVID, however he will investigate whether a member of Jim's team might be able to respond.

**B 1844 Date of Next Meeting**

Next meeting will be 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021.