



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

**Held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

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

**Present:** Janie Meikle Bland (JMB) Interim Vice Chair; Leslie Harkness (LH) Secretary; Alasdair Taylor (AT) Treasurer; Anna Doeser (AD) Communications Officer; Bill Fortune (BF); Vicky McDowell (VMcD)

**Apologies:** Mike Watson (MW) Chair; Alastair Heron (AH) Planning Officer; Andrew Drummond Baxter (ADB); Sandra Davidson (SD); Siobhan Hencher (SH); Duncan McDougall (DMcD) Associate Member; Moira Randall (MR) Associate Member; Councillor Alasdair Majury; Alexander Stuart MSP; Alyn Smith MP; Graham Russell (Chair of Friends of Bridge of Allan); PC Paul Gilliland; PC Ross Barclay

**In attendance:** Councillor Douglas Dodds; Councillor Graham Houston; Councillor Alasdair Tollemache; Councillor Jeremy McDonald; Douglas Nielson (Vice Chair, Friends of Bridge of Allan); Luke Taylor (Event Manager, Classic Run Events)

Abbreviations – Annual General Meeting (AGM), Bridge of Allan (BOA), Community Council (CC), Common Good Fund (CGF), Stirling Council (SC), Wallace Monument Stakeholder Advisory Group (WMSAG)

### **B 2034 Welcome, Apologies and Conflict of Interest (JMB)**

In the absence of MW, JMB took the chair. She opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed all those in attendance. Apologies were recorded as noted above and no conflicts of interest were identified.

### **B 2035 Approval of Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log (JMB/LH)**

The minutes of the February 2022 CC meeting were confirmed; these were approved by AD and seconded by LH.

#### *Matters arising (LH)*

In relation to **Item B 2031** and the road safety concerns, both Councillor Tollemache and Councillor Dodds, (the latter having raised the Cornton Road issue on a previous occasion,) had relayed these concerns to SC. The council responded by indicating that, in relation to the railway crossing, its view was that Network Rail's obstacle recognition technology safeguards vehicles queuing on the crossing, that, in any case, drivers should not enter the crossing unless they are able to exit unhindered, and that the introduction of double yellow lines would remove parking provision for the properties at 21-24 Cornton Road. Regarding the Union Street situation, the double yellow lines will be extended by a further 5 metres in the workplan for the next financial year.

In terms of the problem of cars queuing on the crossing, a local resident had noted that the Stirling Observer had reported that the matter, including the issue of the 'nibs', had been discussed at the CC meeting. The same resident, in a subsequent email, reaffirmed his view that the installation of the "nibs" had served no real purpose and that it had actually created a safety hazard.

*In the discussion which followed, AD indicated that the piece on the crossing which she had written for the website had generated a number of comments, particularly in relation to the safety of children cycling to the primary school, and she suggested that Carlyn Fraser of SC be briefed on the range of comments received. AT voiced some reservations*

*about the crossing system would be designed to be adequately safe for the continuous risk of standing traffic - it is suggested that SC should check this if that is the intended use. Gavin Drummond stressed that the issue would not have arisen had the 'nibs' not been installed. JMB reiterated the value of having another "safe routes" walkabout with SC staff.*

**Action: AD will forward the relevant website comments to Carlyn Fraser of SC.**

**Action: LH will write to Carlyn Fraser to request that she initiate another walkabout**

## **B 2036 Stirling Marathon**

Luke Taylor, Event Manager, Classic Run Events, presented a comprehensive outline of the key implications of the 2022 marathon on Sunday May 15. The marathon will start at 8.30am with a half marathon starting from Kings Park at 9.15 am. A colour coded graphic showing the road closures has been sent to the CC; the closures will begin at 5.00 am with the A.9 closed from 5.00am until 2.30pm, with little likely to happen before 7.30 am, during which time the police would be in control. No residents in Bridge of Allan should be 'locked in' although they could be 'locked out' until the restrictions are lifted. Traffic management systems will be in place on Inverallan Road and Cawdor Road, and also in Dunblane. There will be access arrangements for carers.

In the detailed discussion which followed the presentation, the elected members raised a number of issues, particularly in terms of being mindful of residents. Councillor Dodds indicated that, in the past, since the stewards at the junctions were not local, they were reluctant to let out the residents before the marathon had reached Bridge of Allan, and he stressed the importance of briefing the stewards appropriately. JMB agreed that a sensible degree of flexibility was essential. The councillor also suggested that, in the context of parked vehicles in Henderson Street being uplifted, it would be helpful if Mr Taylor were to walk the route with him. Councillor Houston was in agreement with Councillor Dodds and he emphasised that it was critical that the Dunblane residents were made fully aware of the fact that they could not get back in until the end of the restrictions. He also stressed the importance of carers receiving the passes to allow them to get out when required and he noted that the dispersal of parked vehicles could be problematic in Dunblane. Councillor Houston also suggested that Mr Taylor accompany him on a Dunblane walk similar to that proposed by Councillor Dodds. Councillor Tollemache also expressed a wish to have an onsite walk with Mr Taylor, perhaps accompanied by two CC members. Councillor McDonald indicated he would welcome a similar walkabout opportunity on behalf of the Doune residents. Mr Taylor pointed out that, in the past, stewards had gone from door to door to explain that vehicles could not be parked along the route.

VMcD indicated that, on previous occasions, there had been complaints relating to the fact that the stewards did not appear to be completely familiar with the route, but Mr Taylor emphasised that the teams were organised from within the localities. JMB raised the issue of ensuring communication with local businesses, given that some could have to shut for all or part of the day and given that many of them have had to struggle to survive over the past few years. She asked that the organisers give some consideration to the impact on businesses. Mr Taylor explained that, although hard to quantify, Stirling Council, which had asked for the marathon, believed all the communities involved would derive some benefit from the event.

A key outcome of the discussion was that the CC recommended that Mr Taylor consider the possibility of walking the three relevant routes in Bridge of Allan, Dunblane and Doune with the elected members who had expressed a desire for this.

## **B 2037 Police Report**

There were no instances of **violent crime, antisocial behaviour** or **drug misuse** to report.

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

Between February 19 and 22, an attempt was made to break into retail premises in New Street

#### **ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD TRAFFIC RELATED CRIME**

On February 24, within the grounds of Stirling University, a vehicle was struck by another vehicle, the driver of which failed to stop.

On March 10, a two-vehicle accident occurred at Airthrey Road, with one driver failing to stop.

**MATTERS OF NOTE** - Between February 10 and March 19, there was a total of 96 calls to the Bridge of Allan area which covers part of the Cornton, Causewayhead and Stirling University areas. A breakdown of some of these calls is as follows: 8 were a concern for person type call, 2 calls were drugs/substance related, 2 were neighbour dispute calls, 1 was a disturbance type call, 2 calls were theft related, 4 were domestic related incidents and 14 were road traffic related calls.

#### **Community engagement and reassurance:**

Mobile patrols were carried out in and around Bridge of Allan Primary School with no issues being identified.

#### **Activity for forthcoming month:**

1. Carry out a road traffic operation, date and location to be confirmed
2. In relation to scam awareness, engage with vulnerable members of the community, raise awareness in relation to fraud and offer appropriate crime prevention advice.

#### **Responses from Community Council Members**

LH felt that having two instances of traffic accidents where one of the drivers drove off is a worrying trend.

AD will put some information on the website about the risks from scamming and she noted a current scam involving census-related payments.

#### **B 2038 Community-Led Tourism & Destination Marketing (JMB)**

JMB reported that a business manager was being recruited. The role would involve building web content and promoting businesses, along with other areas of responsibility.

#### **B 2039 Tennis Courts (BF)**

BF reported that a meeting with all the interested parties, scheduled for last week, had had to be cancelled.

The manager of the Sports Club has expressed an interest in becoming involved.

#### **B 2040 Common Good Fund (AT)**

AT reminded the CC that, at our recent development meeting, it was felt that an essential objective would be to speed up the procedure for processing CGF funding applications were the full CC to agree.

### **B 2041 Recruitment (AD)**

AD reported that a nomination form for co-opted membership had been received and was currently being checked by SC, while another potential candidate who had previously expressed an interest was considering submitting a nomination form. If one or both forms are validated by April 5<sup>th</sup>, the CC could vote on co-option at the April meeting, with the successful candidate(s) attending the May meeting.

AD indicated the possibility of having another online poll.

### **B 2040 The Allan Centre (SD)**

In the absence of SD, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

JMB reported that she and MW will attend a meeting of the Allan Centre committee when MW returns from Australia. JMB stressed that the CC is keen to develop this invaluable community asset.

### **B 2041 Planning Report (AH)**

In the absence of AH, JMB gave a summary of his submitted report.

The main item in the report was the notification, in relation to the withdrawn Manse Park application for the planning in principle for the construction of 12 houses, that the applicant is now seeking to vary the Section 75 agreement for the Park of Keir agreement in view of the fact that the Manse Park site is tied to the Park of Keir site.

*LH felt he would welcome more clarification on the precise linkage of the two sites. Councillor Tollemache indicated that SC was considering the legal ramifications of the application.*

AH's report indicated that the Blairforkie application had now generated 280 objections and two letters of support.

In his report, AH suggested that, since the absence of hotel accommodation in the town was having an inimical impact on the income generated for local businesses, the CC might wish to consider having a view on planning application matters relating to the Royal Hotel site.

AH confirmed that while Ruby Tuesday would be closing in June, there was strong interest in the site

### **B 2042 Chair's Report (JMB)**

Reporting on Bridge of Allan's response to the Ukraine crisis, JMB emphasised the phenomenal scale of the response of many residents. A legacy of this response had been the forming of a working group of volunteers and a small committee overseeing the packing and storage of donated items. She also indicated that 65 WhatsApp individuals had volunteered to assist with storage. Councillor Tollemache confirmed that, at one stage, no fewer than 45 volunteers were in the church, and that a small proportion of the donated supplies had now gone off to Poland. The councillor indicated that there were two options regarding the stored material, namely sending more to Eastern Europe or using it for refugees coming to the UK.

*JMB invited comment on the effectiveness of the Flood Alleviation exercise and this precipitated a range of comments. VMcD indicated there had been a degree of confusion arising from the fact that the SC representatives appeared to be unaware of the Community Resilience Group formed by Councillor Dodds. While she felt it was beneficial to have the consultation so accessible, she suggested it would have been helpful if CC members, operating on a rota basis, had been present. One resident who had logged on to the online consultation felt that, while SC had 'ticked all the boxes,' the presentation had been excessively complex; she also felt that the overall consultation was not as rigorous as it could have been. Councillor McDonald pointed out that a number of the 8 options were already discounted. AT recalled the relative effectiveness of the Network Rail/ScotRail consultation exhibition.*

*A resident who lives in Allan Walk reminded the CC of his previous concern about the riverbank erosion and*

*he reported that he had secured photographic evidence of a recent near flood, although his concerns about this had not been noted; in his view, it was important to go beyond Bridge of Allan and consider what is happening elsewhere. Another resident reinforced this view by stressing that it was vital to take into account what was happening upstream in Blairforkie. Councillor Tollemache noted that SC had responded to the riverbank erosion issue. AD pointed out that the flood team had given a well-received presentation to the allotment holders and that a display had been established in the Library; she explained that the CC is now canvassing for more options to be added to the long list with March 20<sup>th</sup> the closing date for this. Gavin Drummond reported that he had attended the Provost's Park event and his impression was that there were too many options, given that the strategies adopted will ultimately depend on finance; in his view, it was preferable to go for something that was achievable, for example raising the height of the existing walls. Councillor McDonald emphasised that the engagement was just one stage and that there would be further consultation in later stages; he stressed it was important to establish the timing of funding deadlines.*

*Councillor Dodds underlined the fact that the Community Resilience Group embraces more than simply flooding risks. He indicated that the group was ready to go and that it intended to replenish the containers at the Fire Station.*

**Action : LH will write to Maria Lucey to express our interest in learning of the outcomes of the engagement exercise and to obtain her interim reflection on the range of issues raised at the CC meeting**

## **B 2043 Secretary's Report (LH)**

### ***Communications from Councillors***

Councillor Tollemache sent details of two blocked gullies he had reported to SC; the blockage between the drains has now been cleared. He also forwarded SC's response to the concerns about the speeding in Pullar Avenue; in that response it was indicated that, while traffic calming measures would not be introduced to address the speeding of a minority of road users, speed surveys for Pullar Avenue would be included in the next financial year's workplan. Councillor Tollemache has recently forwarded details of Scotrail's ticket office public consultation feedback and also the Scotland Loves Local Gift Webinar. In addition, the councillor raised with SC the matter of a displaced road closed sign and also complaints of aggressive dogs in Haws Park.

In relation to dogs, Councillor Tollemache referred to a resident's complaint that the MUGA area in Keir Street was being used as a dog exercise area and that there is no council signage advising against this. Both Councillor Tollemache and Councillor Dodds have been pressing for more signage and Councillor Dodds recently met with the relevant council officer and it was agreed to propose that more explicit A3 signage be used. On this matter, one resident wrote to point out the advantages of having a secure dog area, possibly as part of the non-MUGA area.

Councillor Dodds forwarded details of the opening times and booking arrangements for the Allan Centre along with a copy of the booking form. He also informed the CC that he has raised with SC the fact that the Provost Park's public toilets were out of order and closed and that the stretch of the A9 from Lecropt Nursery to the Inverallan Road junction requires fresh white lining along with a prior clean. *Councillor Dodds confirmed that SC would be undertaking the clean and would be putting the lining out to tender. He also reported that more signage will be installed, although the access will not be subject to padlocking.*

### ***Communications from Stirling Council***

All CCs received a reminder that all enquiries should be sent to the CC Enquiries Co-ordinator and not directly to council officers.

Maria Lucey sent the CC an outline of its proposed community engagement strategy for SC's flood alleviation scheme for Bridge of Allan.

Forth Valley and Lomond Local Action Group sent details of its next Shared Learning event.

### ***General Communications***

In relation to the Manse Park application, Dunblane Community Council forwarded a copy of its objection to the application for modification of the Section 75 agreement relating to Park of Keir. The CC also received today a copy of the objection from RAGE.

Bridget Clark of the Glen Road project forwarded a copy of a communication she had sent to SC planners outlining her concerns about the Blairforkie application and including a copy of the 2020 Glen Road Users Survey.

SBG sent the CC a series of updates on the number of objections to the Blairforkie development and it also encouraged the ongoing submission of these.

Scottish Rural Action sent a copy of its March 2022 newsletter.

### ***Communications from Residents***

A regular correspondent has reiterated his view that the tennis courts should be sold and relocated

### **B 2044 Treasurer's Report (AT)**

AT spoke to his report, distributed earlier to CC members. He confirmed that there had been very little movement since last month, with the balance virtually unchanged.

He confirmed that the balance in the SC Administration Fund was £54.14, the Unrestricted Fund balance was £2,391.81, the Larder Fund was £5,167.61 and the Bank balance, at 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2022, stood at £12,585.15. In relation to the reduction in the Administration Fund, He explained that this was a function of the Zoom costs. AT also emphasised that the CC is currently considering establishing an agreed future funding strategy for the Christmas lights

*Councillor Dodds indicated that there were some outstanding bills for the Larder. Gavin Drummond agreed to review the annual accounts once again. Councillor McDonald indicated that he would take up with SC the need to address the issue of costs facing those community councils who were using Zoom.*

### **B 2045 Residents' Voice**

Gavin Drummond raised the matter of the closed toilets in the Provost's Park and the fact that no reason had been given for their closure.

AD, in the context of website comments, asked the elected members if SC had given any thought to circulating briefing guidance in terms of arriving Ukrainian refugees. Councillor Tollemache indicated that councils required more information on what their role and responsibilities in this area would be.

### **B 2046 Common Good Fund - Scouts Application (AT)**

AT reiterated that it was the CC's intention to "up its game" by speeding up the processing of CGF applications and he highlighted the difficulty applicants had in relation to knowing when to submit applications. Councillor Houston suggested that it was important to educate the applicants themselves, given that there are no set dates for meetings of the Civic Panel and that meetings will be arranged when applications come forward, although a potential difficulty was that Civic Panel members' diaries were often full. When AD asked if an application sent immediately would trigger a meeting, Councillor Houston confirmed that it was not unusual to have a meeting to discuss a single application.

After some discussion, AT asked the CC to vote on the current application from the 11<sup>th</sup> Bridge of Allan Scout Group. The unanimous decision of those present was to recommend to the Civic Panel that the full amount requested, £3,828.45, be approved.

It was also agreed that a request be made to the Civic Panel to hold a meeting before the May elections so that any funding allocation would allow the Scout Group to order what they require in time for the forthcoming summer camps.

In response to AT, LH confirmed that he had not, as yet, received a response from the Well House project group to his letter asking for more detail about future intentions, particularly in relation to the option of having information boards.

**Action: LH will write immediately to the Civic Panel to convey the CC's recommendation and to request that a meeting of the Civic Panel be held before the May elections.**

### **B 2047 AOCB**

Councillor McDonald stated that this would be his final CC meeting as he would be stepping down as a councillor. He stressed that he had enjoyed participating in the meetings and that he hoped that his contribution had been of value.

He indicated that he would wish to suggest that the CC could give some consideration to two future options after the May elections. The first was to draw up a priority list of local issues for the newly elected councillors.

The second, given that community councils could be overly concerned about abstract issues, was to have a walking meeting.

JMB warmly thanked him for giving a disproportionate amount of his time to the CC despite his relatively marginal responsibility and she wished him well for the future.

### **B 2048 Date of Next Meeting**

**The meeting closed at 9.14 pm**

**The date of the next meeting is Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022.**

**LH ( March 2022 )**