

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 2nd March 2006 In the Inverkip Hotel

Present: Innes Nelson (chairman); Ron Potter (vice chairman); Cliff Lyons (treasurer); Paul Maloney; Hugh Ritchie; Harold McPherson and Lynne Chambers (secretary)

Apologies: none

In attendance: Cllr Eric Forbes; WPCs Lesley Gibson and Alison Taylor; Fran McIntosh; Julia McLellan; Alan Cumming; Brian McArthur; Jim McIntosh and Graham Scott. Also Edward Green and Ceri McGrath of Community Windpower Ltd

3. Police Matters: WPC Gibson was accompanied by WPC Alison Taylor, usually stationed in Greenock West but seconded to assist WPC Gibson to patrol the area that evening. No statistical report was made as it had been agreed at last month's Business Meeting that it would be more meaningful to receive reports on a quarterly basis. Innes Nelson said he'd received reports of crowds of young people hanging about at HMS Dalriada, the church and swing park, hurling abuse at passers-by. WPC Wilson replied the police were aware of this problem and added that a particular feature of their behaviour at this time is the setting of fires causing damage. She had spoken to John Wilson at Ardgowan to enlist co-operation. WPC Gibson also confirmed the young people were local. The police had seized beer and alcohol from the young people and are continuing to clamp down on the problem. Evidently Friday night is the worst night of the week in Inverkip for unruly behaviour, Saturday being relatively quieter. Cliff Lyons reported 2 thefts from Marine Court that afternoon of wood for fence repair and garden seats. WPC Gibson said they'd ended up on a fire. Graham Scott reported bands of youngsters from Skelmorlie hanging about Wemyss Bay. Cllr Forbes said the parents must be held responsible for the actions of their children, but agreed money to tackle anti-social behaviour is not directed to Ward 20. He said Scottish Executive money for this purpose goes to specified areas but declared there is thinking that enough is enough and that some of the cash going east should come west instead. It was agreed the population of Inverkip had expanded hugely in recent years. Fran McIntosh pointed out however there are absolutely no facilities for young people in Inverkip. Cliff Lyons said there was a good neighbourhood watch scheme in Langbank. WPC Gibson said there were several schemes already in existence in Inverkip. Cllr Forbes said the CCTV van is now out and about. Inverkip doesn't have a fixed CCTV system but the van can be called in.

4. Presentation by Edward Green and Ceri McGrath of Community Windpower Ltd: To accompany the presentation and question and answer session, photographs – from various locations in the area - were distributed for inspection. The photographs

show the proposed location for the windfarm on the Leapmoor - first of all as it looks now, and an impression of how it would look if the ten turbines were sited there. If developed they would connect either overground or underground to the existing small sub station. They explained that the bright white of the turbines had been enhanced in the photographs to emphasise their location. Edward Green and Ms McGrath responded to wide-ranging questions about the proposed development and spoke of contributions to the community such as an annual amount of £40,000 to village funds for the duration of the development – expected to be between 20-25 years - and an education officer at Muirshiel Park plus improved access to the area of the windfarm. Also there is the potential for locals to become shareholders in the scheme after a year of operation. They said it was hoped that a full application for the windfarm would be presented to Inverclyde Council around April to May this year. Realistically they thought that allowing for Council deliberations, a possible appeal etc – that, if approved, work would begin around April 2008. Ms McGrath and Mr Wood were thanked for their attendance.

5. Minutes of Business Meeting held on the 2nd of February 2006 – Matters arising:

Seaview Café: A request for information as to whether the café held a music licence had been passed to Cllr Forbes. He asked for more information and said he would need a complaint to be made to pursue it further. Graham Scott attending the meeting said he would make a complaint. Mr Scott said that the café, good in every other way, on a Saturday once a month between 9-11pm held a music night. Mr Scott reported that in his home he could hear the music above the volume of his television. Cllr Forbes will pursue.

Bankfoot roundabout: Following an inquiry as to why there is no white-lining on the roundabout, Cllr Forbes replied that - having followed up the inquiry - the answer from Amey is that the roundabout doesn't need white lines. Cllr Forbes said the roundabout had passed all audit tests on its suitability. He had recently taken part in a drive through of the area with Amey representatives trying to pinpoint problems. Innes Nelson criticised the camber of the roundabout and said also the Community Council had received reports of a slippery surface at the roundabout. Cllr Forbes confirmed he too had received such complaints. The matter will be investigated.

Recycling points: It was observed, following previous discussions about the mess created by plastic bags around the recycling area and the suggestion that bins should be provided, that the point on the Bruceacre slip road was looking pretty tidy at the moment. Harold McPherson said three bins appear to have been stolen from the Wemyss Bay recycling site.

6. Report by Ron Potter on Inverclyde Community Council Forum: Deferred.

7. Buses: It was decided that the impasse reached on long distance buses having no formal pulling-in places on the A78 at Inverkip had to be addressed. However time constraints meant this discussion had to be deferred.

8. Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

Residents' parking on A78 at Wemyss Bay: The secretary said she'd received an answer from Transport Scotland's Trunk Road Network Management saying it must be recognised that the priority for the trunk road is to maintain the safety for pedestrians and facilitate the free flow of traffic – it does not exist to provide parking facilities. It was necessary, the letter said, to revise existing parking arrangements to accommodate the new pedestrian crossing and relocation of the bus stop. The parking requirements were examined in detail and concluded that the time-limited controlled parking scheme represented the best compromise – it would minimise the impact on other road users and ensure the successful continuance of the commercial outlets in the area. While the comparison with other areas was noted, the strategy adopted at Wemyss Bay followed detailed study reflecting local conditions and the best reconciliation of parking demands. Transport Scotland has therefore no plans to issue parking permits to residents. Graham Scott of Wemyss Bay produced photocopied extracts from the Largs and Millport Weekly News of February 10th 2006, indicating that proposals, among others – subject to consultation – in the Largs Management Traffic Plan, include parking restrictions in the town centre to prevent all day parking except for residents - who will have parking permits which will give them exemption from time restrictions. North Ayrshire Council is proposing one permit per household. And in the newspaper of February 17th it quotes a spokesman for North Ayrshire Council saying that parking spaces on the A78 along Main Street and Gallowgate Street are proposed with 30 minute restrictions, and the other on-street parking spaces around the town centre would have 60 minute restrictions along with exemptions for resident parking permit holders. Cllr Forbes said it will not happen in Largs. Graham Scott said all of the flatted developments in Skelmorlie will bring more cars into Wemyss Bay. He said that on his way to the meeting there were 12 cars parked – 3 residents and 9 from Bute. Cllr Forbes said he had no control over police or warden patrolling. He said there is to be a feasibility study for public car parking in Wemyss Bay, the results to be completed by approximately the end of June. Graham Scott asked was there no chance then that 7 of the residents could get parking permits – not always assuring them of parking places but so they would be exempt from the time restrictions. Cllr Forbes said there was no chance – he was not going to change the Scottish Executive's attitude to trunk road parking.

Letter received from the Scottish Executive Development Department re their Planning Advice Note on Community Engagement. They are seeking examples of community involvement in any aspect of the land use planning process. Members thought that a submission should be made and will consider their response.

Letter received from the Helpline Officer of Inverclyde Council's Problem Solving Unit/Antisocial Behaviour Helpline wondering whether the Community Council would be interested in a presentation. It would – the Secretary to write to invite the Officer to attend April's Business Meeting.

Email received from Brian Purdie of Inverclyde Council seeking more details about the £150 paid to the entertainer who performed in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay on the evening of the Christmas trees switch-on and shown in the Treasurer's report. The secretary sent further information which proved satisfactory.

Letter received from Head of Planning at Inverclyde Council confirming that all letters of representation submitted in respect of an earlier application re the proposed residential development at Hill Farm will be carried across to the current application. Letter from Head of Planning at Inverclyde Council confirming that Inverclyde Council had adopted the Inverclyde Local Plan (2005) on the 31st of January 2006. Further to a letter sent by the Community Council to First Scotrail following a complaint by Graham Scott of Wemyss Bay about vandalism at Wemyss Bay Station a letter was received from First Scotrail saying an inquiry had been initiated into the problem. A phone call was received by the secretary from Sgt Calum Weir of the Transport Police saying he'd received no complaints about vandalism and there were no CCTV cameras at the station because it is staffed. Sgt Weir's phone number was passed to Graham Scott.

Letter received from Mark Ritch of Inverclyde Council's Community Support Services wondering if he could attend a Business Meeting to make a short presentation outlining Inverclyde Council's Community Engagement Strategy. Mark Ritch will be invited to attend the May meeting.

Email received from Iain Logan of Argyll Windfarms attaching a petition – requesting signatures – re the increasing number of windfarm applications in areas which contain sensitive habitats and populations of birds and other wildlife. Secretary to forward the email to members for consideration.

Letter from Brian Purdie of Inverclyde Council with the Council's response to the Scottish Executive Discussion Paper on Community Councils.

Email sent to Cllr Forbes requesting information on various issues as he was unable to attend the previous Business Meeting. (See also section 5 referring to the Seaview Café) Cllr Forbes was able to confirm that all outstanding work at the Londis site in Inverkip had been completed to Inverclyde Council's satisfaction. He reported – following an inquiry about the external green lighting of the Londis building – that the proprietor said he'd received complaints about the stark, white lighting previously illuminating the building and that the green lighting was seen as more welcoming – especially as there is an ATM located there. Cllr Forbes also said there were no objections by the planning department to the lighting.

Letter sent by the Community Council to Brian Purdie of Inverclyde Council further to his letter of 23rd September 2005 outlining its reasons for its continued wish to make a donation to each of the village newsletters.

Letter to the Scottish Executive with the Community Council's response to the Discussion Paper on Community Councils – the response copied to Brian Purdie.

9. Treasurer's report: The Treasurer reported a balance of £454. Cliff Lyons hopes to hear further about expenses submitted and the new grant

10. Planning Matters: Letter received from Inverclyde Council saying the application for 4 dwellinghouses on land to the west of Leven Road in Wemyss Bay – the subject of a submission by the Community Council - has been refused. Notification that the Tree Preservation Order served on the above property by Inverclyde Council is the subject of an appeal to Scottish Ministers.

Discussion took place about a Greenock Telegraph article featuring Cllr Jim Hunter claiming that the cleared site at Leven Road was attracting more midges than ever,

and supporting the development. Innes Nelson said a Mr McCreadie had informed him that since the trees had been felled there were fewer midges!

An appeal has been made to Scottish Ministers against Inverclyde Council's refusal of planning permission for the erection of 28 houses at Bridgend, Inverkip

13 Burns Drive, Wemyss Bay – erection of boundary walls (in retrospect)

42 Glen Crescent, Inverkip – erection of extension

Cameron Place, Main Street, Inverkip – alterations to form a new window in former shop premises.

Hugh Ritchie, seconded by Innes Nelson, said Inverclyde Council should be applauded for turning down the planning application for the demolition of the Ramada Jarvis Hotel in Gourock to be replaced by flats. The hotel is considered an asset to the area.

11. Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 6th of April 2006

12. Any other business: The introduction of a 30 mph speed limit on the A78 starting on the slope above Wemyss Bay was discussed. Cllr Forbes said that following approaches by residents and with the proposed development of houses at Cardell and the new Lighthouse flats in Wemyss Bay it was felt traffic should be slowed before entering the village and the sign moved further out. And no, as Inverkip had no houses fronting on to the A78 there would be no reduction in the speed limit on the trunk road passing the village.

Hugh Ritchie asked Cllr Forbes about litter on the A78 particularly from Bankfoot roundabout to Londis. Cllr Forbes explained the health and safety requirements for litter pickers.

Cllr Forbes confirmed to Hugh Ritchie that Inverclyde Council would not salt unadopted roads at the Marina development.

Ron Potter reminded Cllr Forbes of the graffiti in the Brueacre slip road area. Cllr Forbes will follow up.

Innes Nelson asked Cllr Forbes about a meeting held with Fraser Williamson, Inverclyde's Head of Planning Services and with Cllrs Blair, Roche and Forbes attending re the proposed bridge over the railway at Inverkip station. Cllr Forbes said there were several options and certain issues to be decided away from the planning committee. Cllr Forbes had seen the bridge plans and some of his concerns had not been removed – that feeling to be conveyed to Stewart Milne's architects. The planning application had to demonstrate the bridge was DDA compliant. The planning application may be considered in April. If the bridge is built and if Inverclyde Council takes ownership after time, they may have to maintain the bridge – a decision to be made by another committee. The Reporter at the Public Local Inquiry said it was up to Inverclyde Council to decide – the Local Plan said the proposed Hill Farm development was 'conditional' on the bridge being built. Jim McIntosh asked if Cllr Forbes had seen where the down ramp landed – Cllr Forbes replied that was between Stewart Milne and the landowner – and reiterated that all has to be right with the application. It was decided that the proposed bridge would be on next month's agenda.

Paul Maloney told the meeting the previous evening sewage had run down Finnockbog Road and into his garden – from there to the Daff Burn and then the Marina. The Water Board arrived and fixed the problem. However, they didn't know

what the cause of the problem was. Paul Maloney asked Cllr Forbes if the system couldn't cope now what effect would the proposed development of 200 odd houses have on the sewage system. Cllr Forbes replied that any developer has to show on his planning application the drainage system for the proposed development. He will follow up the incident.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.40pm