

INVERKIP AND WEMYSS BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Business Meeting held on Thursday 4th September 2008 at the Inverkip Hotel at 7.30pm

Present: Innes Nelson; Ron Potter; Harold McPherson; Liz Roders and Lynne Chambers

Apologies: Hugh Ritchie; Brian McArthur and Cllr Ciano Rebecchi

In attendance: Cllr Gerry Dorrian; PC Billy Gray; Dawn McDermott; Kevin Hanley; Billy Shearer and Bobby Clow

Innes Nelson welcomed all attending

3. Police Matters

Crimes reported –

8 Thefts

1 Housebreaking

9 acts of Vandalism

1 Wilful Fire-raising – two cars in Wemyss Bay

1 Breach of the Peace

1 act of Littering

1 Road Traffic Accident – Bankfoot Roundabout

There was discussion about accidents at Bankfoot Roundabout and the fact the problem at the roundabout had been accepted by Amey, but no work undertaken. PC Gray said it had been thought speed was the main cause but even experienced officers driving at normal speeds have problems with the camber

PC Gray said that in a Police Traffic car with a new laser speedometer they had targeted speeding motorists in Spey Road, Inverkip. Four offences were recorded committed by three residents and one delivery driver – the top speed being 45 mph.

The exercise will be repeated, he said

He reported officers had visited building sites locally to check on security staff.

Security staff must undertake a training course and hold a licence. The officers found the majority unqualified. Companies can be charged for employing security staff without a licence.

Kevin Hanley asked PC Gray about dog fouling in Inverkip and wondered if there was a strategy to tackle the problem. PC Gray said there was not, and people could only be fined when seen permitting their dog to foul the area. However, he said he would have a word with known persistent offenders if their names and addresses were given to him. It was agreed it was an ongoing problem in the village.

PC Gray was thanked for his attendance

4. Update of flooding in Main Street, Inverkip – Dawn McDermott, Scottish Water's Regional Community Manager was in attendance to answer questions and hear complaints.

There was a long discussion on the continuing problem of flooding – particularly in Main Street, Inverkip - in the event of heavy rain, though there are problems too at the bottom of Langhouse Road. Ms McDermott heard the catalogue of complaints presented to Community Council business meetings, and particularly the recent flooding and raw sewage at the beginning of August. Kevin Hanley, who lives on Main Street, said it was a constant problem. He was particularly badly affected and had regularly to call out Scottish Water teams to rod the pipes. He said he probably had called out Scottish Water around 30 times and that it was a capacity issue.

Ms McDermott said it was part of her job to take the problem forward and she had reported the Inverkip situation to Scottish Water's Regulations team who present these matters to the Scottish Government as part of its consultation on a proposed Flooding Bill due at the end of the year. She said there was work going on in the background between Scottish Water, SEPA and the Scottish Government.

However, she stressed that the Government tells Scottish Water how and where to spend its money. Scottish Water puts projects to the Government, but ultimately it's the Government that decides. In 2006 external flooding projects were presented to the Government but were declined. There will be no money available until 2010 unless the Flooding Bill legislates to put more money into the system.

The question of the housing developments going on in Inverkip was raised and what the sites may contribute to the flooding problems. She said Scottish Water was unable to say 'no' to developers but there were requirements that must be observed. She was told silt is evident in Main Street at times of flooding, and she said she would investigate and give regular updates to the Community Council.

When asked how Scottish Water prioritises remedial work, she said internal flooding always took precedence but accepted external flooding is a major issue.

Billy Shearer complained about the response time of Scottish Water teams to clear up flooding problems. He cited a recent example when the problem continued for two to three days before being fixed. Ms McDermott said response time is usually around two hours but in times of heavy rain there is an inundation of calls and again internal flooding always receives a priority response. But she advised residents to make it clear and be quite specific about the problem when reporting flooding which would help staff to recognise the severity of the problem.

She was asked if upcoming work took account of further development. Ms McDermott said potential growth is now factored in to all new projects.

She agreed the repairs undertaken in Main Street were short-term measures, and also agreed that as and when new pipes are installed in Inverkip it would be a major project.

Ms McDermott was thanked for her attendance

5. Minutes of Business Meeting held on Thursday 7th August 2008. Matters arising:

Dip in Spey Road: Cllr Dorrian said Inverclyde Council had deemed the standard of the repair unacceptable and Stewart Milne Homes had been instructed to take out the current repair and undertake work to an acceptable standard

Recycling Bins at Sainsbury's, Inverkip: Cllr Dorrian reported Inverclyde Council Cleansing Department would monitor the situation and that residents should phone when the bins are full. Uplifts may be considered twice a week instead of once. Angela Hughes, one of the Waste Strategy officers, is keen to receive feedback from the public and emails can also be sent to Inverclyde Council's website. Ms Hughes' number is 715905

New theatre for Inverclyde: the secretary said a representative would make a presentation at October's business meeting. Also ideas were being sought from the local community as to what they would like to see in the new theatre. The secretary said she would request ideas via noticeboards and websites

Clyde Mental Health Services: Following Cllr Rebecchi's advice at August's business meeting, the Community Council had written to Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS to say they supported the retention of all mental health services in Inverclyde

First Bus service 901 via Lomond Road, Wemyss Bay:

Following complaints from Wemyss Bay the secretary wrote to First Bus and to Fraser Williamson, Inverclyde Council's Head of Planning, Transportation and Housing. First Bus has acknowledged the request for information but has not as yet replied. Fraser Williamson replied that he understood this was a recently registered route. He said the operator had introduced the latest in high capacity buses being fully DDA compliant with the latest generation of low emission noise. He understands too the service was introduced initially to be seasonal and from 29th September it is to be curtailed to operate weekends and public holidays with Lomond Road only being used in one direction. He said there was no record of accidents to pedestrians in the last three years but he had requested the police give attention to the area and the alleged speed of buses. The registering of routes is a matter for the SPT. The minutes were proposed as accurate by Innes Nelson, and seconded by Ron Potter

Secretary's Report and Correspondence:

From Inverclyde Forum of Community Councils, notice of their AGM

Also from the Forum – their report to the four Community Planning Thematic Partnerships

From Inverclyde Council – from their annual return to the Scottish Government on the condition of schools, Inverkip Primary was deemed 'satisfactory' and Wemyss Bay Primary 'poor'

Email from the Community Council to the Information Commission's Notification Department with a request for a template for a Data Protection return

Correspondence with First ScotRail re the Community Council and the community taking on the upkeep of planters at Wemyss Bay station. The secretary will write to say the matter will be considered next spring

Letter from Waterwatch Scotland re their forum on charging and affordability of water and wastewater services to be held in Greenock on the 8th of September

An invitation from the Involving People Committee to attend one of their Our Health events – this time Mental Health – on Wednesday 1st October in Glasgow

Newsletter from Save Your Regional Park Campaign saying there is an urgent need for objections to be sent to North Ayrshire council re the proposed erection of turbines, access roads, quarries etc on Kaim Hill, Fairlie. Objection forms were

passed to those interested, and in line with the Community Council's opposition to windfarms within Muirshiel Regional Park, a letter of objection will be sent. In its newsletter the Campaign contained a form for the renewal of subscriptions. It was agreed by the Community Council they would approach the Campaign to take out a subscription of approximately £15 per annum

Letter from Neil Graham of Inverclyde Council informing the Community Council of preparatory work for the issue of tenders was due to take place at the proposed footbridge at Inverkip Station. The Council thanked Mr Graham for the information and asked that they be kept informed of similar matters which he agreed to do

Letter from Inverclyde Council re on-street parking places without charges. Any objections should be made by 10th September

Letter from the Association of Scottish Community Councils seeking an area representative. Passed to Ron Potter

Letter from the Royal Navy inviting representatives of the Council to attend an awareness presentation in Greenock on the 1st of October

The Community Council's response to the Scottish Executive Consultation on Community Councils

From Inverclyde Council's Regeneration Committee – their response to the Community Council consultation

From Inverclyde Council – consultation documents on marches and parades

Letter of objection to Inverclyde Council re the Draft Core Paths plan

8. Planning Matters:

Inverkip – 5 Hebrides Grove – erection of rear extension

Inverkip – Burnside, Main Street – formation of patio doors and installation of external flue

Wemyss Bay – 30 Burns Drive – erection of wall (in retrospect)

Inverkip – 5 Beatock Place – erection of replacement garage and store

Passed to the Community Council by Cllr Dorrian – application for installation of telecommunications base station site at IBM Greenock – passed to Innes Nelson

Inverkip – 5 Langhouse Place – erection of telescopic mast to support amateur radio antennae – the recommendation to the Planning Board meeting on the 3rd of September was the application should be granted subject to conditions

Wemyss Bay – land to the south of 38 Leapmoor Drive – erection of a dwellinghouse – the recommendation to the Planning Board meeting on the 3rd of September was that the application be refused

Letter from Cllr David Wilson – one of the recipients of a letter of objection to the lift at Inverkip Station sent by the Community Council to Inverclyde Council – saying the Community Council would know the Planning Board had approved the lift but acknowledged the efforts of the Community Council throughout the whole process and that their observations were given consideration

In June 2008, Inverclyde Council's Corporate Director of Environment and Community Protection, Neil Graham, compiled a report to advise Council members of the proposed changes to the system of processing planning appeals in Scotland and to advise them also on the response submitted on behalf of Inverclyde Council.

The secretary wrote to Neil Graham saying the matter was of much interest to the Community Council and asked to be kept informed. He will try to keep all Community Councils informed

9. Date and time of next meeting – Thursday 2nd October 2008

10. Any other business:

Ron Potter asked Cllr Dorrian if there was any law or by-law that would prevent estate agents strapping 'For Sale' placards to street signs. Cllr Dorrian thought the Planning Department could make them remove the sign and will ask them. Ron Potter said he'd spoken to the estate agents but the sign remained. He also thought the van outside Sainsbury's high pressure washing cars was a business being conducted on a main street. Cllr Dorrian will investigate

Ron Potter brought up the issue of buses parking on Spey Road and on the run-on at the Brueacre junction.

Ron Potter said the Inverclyde Forum of Community Councils wish two members of each Council to attend their meetings. Ron Potter and Innes Nelson plan to attend their AGM

Cllr Dorrian said Duncan McNeil MSP had written to the Roads Minister in June about the problems faced at the junction from Inverkip on to the A78, backed by a list of accidents. The Minister was contacted again in August. Consideration has been given to a roundabout or traffic lights. However, Amey has declared the cost of a roundabout prohibitive. The Scottish Accident Prevention Council supports traffic lights as the most successful solution and a more affordable option. There was discussion – some members of the Community Council supported a 40mph speed limit on that stretch of the A78, and others saw no need for a speed limit or traffic lights. Innes Nelson said accidents happened when motorists pulled out as traffic was turning in to the village and said the solution was to move the slip road further in so drivers could have a better sight of the road.

Cllr Dorrian observed that traffic lights would mean drivers had to stop.

In the meantime householders in Inverkip have received from Stuart McMillan MSP a survey on Inverkip Road Junction and Signage. The secretary contacted the MSP's office for a form for the Community Council to consider. She was asked to invite the MSP to the next meeting for a discussion on the issue.

It was noted – following an article in The Herald dated 9th August 2008- that there are new rules on how the Scottish Government counts population. Changes have been made to Wemyss Bay and Skelmorlie – run by separate local authorities – the two former rural settlements, divided only by a burn, have been reclassified as one small town.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.