



MINUTES OF STRATHBLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual General Meeting Monday 6th June 2016 in the primary school Final for approval

Members Present: - Margaret Vass, Alan Hutton, Richard Arnold, Elspeth Neill Julie Hutchison, Sue Rand, Marian Lever, and Willie Oswald.

In attendance: Cllr graham Lambie, Ian Denvir of SC + 2 residents.

*(SC = Stirling Council. CC = Community Council. CDT= Community Development Trust * Denotes an action)*

1. Welcome from the Chair and any apologies – from Margaret Vass

A warm welcome was extended to all and especially to Ian Denvir who will take over from Pam Campbell as our area liaison officer. Apologies had been received from Avril Keen.

2. Minutes of last AGM on 1st June 2015

There were no changes or corrections required and the approval was moved by AH and seconded by ML.

3. Reports from office bearers

a) Chairperson's report: Margaret Vass

This is my 7th and penultimate report! That sounds good!

For the very first time for a long time your community council has all 12 places filled. This is really great in terms of sharing the work load around.

Most of the nitty gritty things that we have been involved with this year in terms of delivering for our community will be covered in the reports from my CC colleagues so I will concentrate on wider issues.

Community Test Sites: the premise here is that communities and the council will work together differently. So far this has involved a number of meetings and not a huge amount else. This community had already demonstrated the benefits of working smarter with the council on the contaminated land issue. That said there is no doubt that there are much closer ties now with Killearn and Balfron CCs as shown by our work on the Strathendrick Care Home. There is also no doubt that if you mention community test site status things do seem to happen! With my SCDT hat on it was impressive that we received test site funding and license agreement within ONE WEEK to improve the drainage of the King George V playing fields.

Working with Stirling Council has improved. We have 6 monthly meetings with Stewart Carruth and Stacey Burlett with good honest and forthright discussions. We have access to the top if needed but so far most things have not required

this. The creation of community link officer posts is also a step in the right direction. I volunteered to be on the interview panel for these new posts. We are really sorry to lose Pam who has gained promotion but we welcome Ian Denvir and have high hopes for building a strong relationship with him. Over the next year it will be interesting to see how the current senior management restructuring affects us with the creation of senior manager for the 4 localities within Stirling area.

Priority Based Budgeting rumbles on with service transformation becoming a reality with waste leading the way.

The Community Empowerment agenda will be ramping up as the new Act is implemented. I have to admit that I have not given it sufficient attention because of the missed opportunity to strengthen CCs. I am grateful to Willie for his continued interest in this. Together with SCDT we need to understand the opportunities that we should be exploring.

Killearn CC is leading on **Broadband** but I do think we need to get better at making sure our community is aware of any progress being made.

Police since my report last year a new community policing regime has been introduced and although we don't see our local officers as much as we would like, the relationships are much improved. Of course we have Sgt McNally back which was an inspired appointment!

The challenge of what our community wants to be or needs to be continues. We get very little feedback when we ask for it. You could say that there is an acceptance of change but I doubt that very much!

I will now ask my colleagues to present their reports.

1) Planning & Licensing – John Gray **Cala Development – Campsie Road**

This development has had input from the Community Council throughout 2014/15 and 2015/16 to ensure that all proposals and agreements had been met. We have pavements on both sides of the road from the new development to the village, and on the opposite side of the road a new pavement from Dunglass View to the village. Road traffic calming has also been put in place, as well the 14 affordable houses that have been built by Cala on behalf of Rural Stirling Housing Assoc. These houses will be allocated throughout June 2016, with residents hopefully moving in between September and October 2016.

Auchenburg house planning application Single dwelling at Mary's Loch

Due to the number of neighbour complaints about the application for a house in the countryside a number of Strathblane Community Council members met with the owner and the neighbours to ascertain their views.

Strathblane Community Council took the decision to have a neutral stance on this planning application because the critical issue for us is the implementation of policy which meant the measurement between the 2 dwellings.

The community council took the view that once the measurement had been established and the application was **not** in line with the council's policy of houses within a "cluster" in the countryside the application should be opposed. The community council attended a planning panel to put the community views forward to have council planning policy implemented, which resulted in the development being refused.

West Arlehaven static caravan – West Highland Way

This was an application for a static caravan for the purposes of running a cafe on the West Highland Way. The Community Council Chair and Planning Correspondent discussed this with the applicants. Following a Local Review Board where the application was rejected, there was a proposal put forward that was more in keeping with the site that the CC were in favour of supporting. This was implemented on a temporary basis earlier this year and is now up and running.

Ardunan Lodge House

A previous planning application by a previous owner of this property had convinced the council that the existing Lodge House was not fit for purpose and was beyond restoration. This allowed the previous owner to gain planning consent for a new build property as long as the existing lodge was demolished on completion of the new build property. The owner then sold the property, and the new owner approached the council and community council to gain their support to save the existing lodge house, stating that he had investigated the matter and the Lodge could be saved. The Community Council supported the Lodge being kept due to its historical value, along with the development of a new build on the site. This was taken to a full Planning Panel Meeting, where the application was granted.

Local Development Plan

The Community Council gave comments on behalf of the community on the Main Issues Report. This included the site at the devil's elbow, which the council were proposing the release of this site for development. The community council's comments did not support any other site for development other than the one at the entrance of Strathblane (Devils Elbow). The community council also supported the implementation of clusters being reduced in measurements to 52 meters. We expect the draft LDP to come out for consultation shortly.

Westpoint Homes - Devils Elbow Development Site

Westpoint Homes attended the Community Council in March 2016 to give a presentation on their initial thoughts. The CC agreed to set up a community panel with Westpoint and RSHA. There are no firm proposals to present to the community at present, however once these have been made available we will ask Westpoint Homes and RSHA to attend and give a further presentation.

Kirkhouse Inn – Application for 3 Dwelling Houses

The new owners of the Kirkhouse Inn submitted a planning application to develop 3 dwelling houses at the end of the car park. This met opposition from a number of neighbours. The application was withdrawn, with discussions ongoing between the owners of the Kirkhouse Inn and the Council.

2) Roads – Julie Hutchison

The roads maintenance programme agreed by Stirling Council in May 2015 identified 2 areas in the village for an upgrade.

The first was the next section of the A81 from the Edmonstone Hall to Wood Place. In view of the disruption caused by the 24 hour closure in 2014 and the financial damage to local businesses, the Council agreed to close the road from 9am-5pm on the 10th August for 2 weeks. Also as part of this work would be a repair to the damaged surface from the previous year's upgrade from Wood Place down to the entrance to Netherblane. The job went well apart from having to come back and alter the access to a driveway below the shops. As requested by residents, we tried to solve the problem for pedestrians caused by some

dangerous parking outside the shops. The idea of bollards placed at either end of the parking bay was tried. Unfortunately this was not successful. However as of last week as part of the road markings job {finally after 3 years} we now have a parking bay clearly marked. There seems to have been some confusion over this bay and hopefully this will be cleared up in the next edition of the B.V.B.

The second job was resurfacing on the B821 at Carbeth Loch between the 9th-13th November.

Following the submission of our petition about the safety of the A809, Margaret and I had a site visit with Roads about various issues around the junction of Cuilt Road and Stockiemuir Road. A major problem was lack of line of sight when turning right out of Cuilt Road. I think most people who use that road will agree that removing a large section of soil and rock and forming a new path has made a difference. There will also be a 40mph on this section of road which should also help.

We still have the wiggly lines on the A81. Roads are aware of this so hopefully we should see that issue resolved.

Jamie Wright and Gordon McLaughlin from Roads attended our May meeting to explain what the roads maintenance programme would be for 2016-17. They spoke about two possible parts of the A81. The first would be as you leave the village heading for Killearn and the second, from the roundabout at the Kirkhouse Inn up to the Devil's elbow. They both said this was their preferred option. They explained how they arrived at this decision using surveying techniques. Also financially it makes sense. It was agreed to go ahead with the second option. The other part of the village due for attention this year is Kirkhouse Road.

3) Environment – Elspeth Neill **Environment Report – June 2016**

We are fortunate to live in such an attractive area and the need to maintain – or even to enhance – our surroundings is our ongoing challenge. Happily there are always volunteers to lend their energy and expertise when needed.

Our floral tubs seemed particularly successful last year....Begonias; lobelia; petunias and nasturtiums all flourishing. Our spring displays this year of primulas; tulips and tete-a-tetes were, in contrast, a little less spectacular. The tubs have now been cleared and in the coming week will be re-planted.

Oakwood Garden Centre has again supplied all of our requirements for these displays and my thanks go to them for their assistance.

I would mention that several of our tubs are starting to disintegrate and will require replacement at some stage in the near future.

Last year Stirling Council introduced wild flower planting along the verges to the main road through the village. This has not been an initial success but, hopefully this year will see better results.

Progress has been made on our local path network, thanks mainly to the SCDT path development group. The John Muir Trail will bring many new walkers to the village. The old railway path upgrade was been completed and the finalisation of the work on the steps at Danny's Brae and the link track up to the Gowk Stane will add to our community.

The village Christmas Tree was again a welcome feature. This year the tree was donated – and erected – by Edenmill Farm. I wish to record our thanks for this generosity

Looking back over the years I realise that this is my twelfth report as Environmental Correspondent. In that time we seem to have almost overcome the battle with dog fouling, litter and graffiti. We must all take some credit for that. Long may it continue.

To the many who have helped and supported me over that time – you know who you are! Thank you.

4)Health and Wellbeing

The main task I have been undertaking for the Community Council is to monitor the development of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Integration Board. Integration of health and social care is the Scottish Government's programme of reform to improve services for people who use adult health and social care services and the Joint Board has been live since April this year. I have attended many meetings both to listen so that I can report to the community on how the Joint Boards plans have been developed and to speak on issues relating to planned provision in rural areas.

The major campaign undertaken in concert with all the local Community Councils has been to argue against the closure of Strathendrick Care Home. Its sale was proposed as part of the financial support for the planned Care Village in Stirling. Whilst the idea of an intermediate care facility is a good one we argued that it should not be at the expense of what are already fairly sparse resources in the Rural South West. This was also strongly resisted by our local councillors and I can now confirm that it has been decided to develop the Home as an intermediate care facility for the local area. No current resident will be forced to move but as beds become available they will be used for step up/step down care and for respite care. Over the winter four beds were used for intermediate care and one for respite. There is now an active community group discussing how this development can be taken forward in what are financially challenging times and my main arguments now are about not raising too many unrealistic expectations about what is possible. I have been ably assisted in this task by fellow community council members especially at the beginning of this year when I had other priorities for a while.

Other issues raised have been difficulties with Ambulance response times on occasions and delays with discharge from Glasgow Hospitals. There were also issues with the local surgery being able to refer local residents needing urgent admission to hospital with Greater Glasgow hospitals and Larbert playing postcode games. With the help of our local MSP the issue was clarified by the Health Secretary and we are entitled to be referred to Glasgow Royal Hospital. Finally we also had issues with home nursing services for patients needing continuing home nursing care. I will continue to raise these issues with appropriate authorities as they arise.

I worked with Richard Begg in planning the successful launch of the Dementia Care Day held in the Kirk Rooms on 30 April 2016. I will continue to serve on the steering group who will work to continue the links between local organisations and statutory bodies to improve care of older people in our community and to report back to the community.

Finally I have continued my support for the defibrillator. I organised replacement batteries and pads for our defibrillator this year. Thanks are due to a local resident who contributed towards the cost. They will next need renewal in mid

February 2019. Our defibrillator is serviced monthly by local first responders of Trossachs Search and Rescue who also continue to offer Heart Start courses.

5) The Blane Valley Bulletin Report 2015/16 – Alan Hutton

Background

Community Councils have a statutory place bridging the gap between local authorities (and other planning partners) and community members. Our core role is to determine, co-ordinate and express local needs, interests and opinion. But what we do (often in co-operation with the SCDT) extends beyond that in several directions to try to improve the quality of life and peoples' sense of belonging in our community.

Aims

In all of that three-way communication is vital: SCC → citizens; citizens → SCC; and citizens ↔ citizens. To help serve these needs — complementing the noticeboards, website, local papers and Park Life — the SCC established a monthly newsheet early in 2012. By April 2016 the Blane Valley Bulletin (BVB), had completed four years publication with its twentieth issue – ten monthly issues a year (omitting December and July).

The Model

In a crowded four A4 pages each issue centres on concerns that the SCC is currently engaged with or will be engaged with in the near future; reports on projects undertaken through the SCDT, and the activities and upcoming events of a range of community organizations and groups – together with a back page *Community Calendar* and contact details for Community Councilors and a range of public authorities and services.

Copy

The BVB has no editorial line other than to highlight issues and developments that the CC feels are important and require some engagement and expression of views throughout the community. We carry a report from the SCDT and, increasingly, items from a wide range of community organizations covering their events and activities.

Printing

The BVB is printed at Purple Edge in Bearsden who have provided us with an excellent flexible service – with a very quick turnaround.

Distribution

We continue to rely on a team of willing volunteers to deliver to every household in the village 'envelope' and that process is supported through the stalwart efforts of Sandra Sim. For those living outwith the villages copies can be picked up in the library or in local shops or can be downloaded from the strathblanefield.or.uk site, from the BVB's own website (at blanevalleybulletin.wordpress.com) or (soon) from the new SCC website.

Finance

We continue to have a good response from individuals, local businesses and the SCDT in sponsoring issues. We have also taken significant number of flyers included flyers in the BVB (charging a small fee for commercial concerns but free of charge for voluntary or community organizations). Over the four years the BVB has just about covered its costs, making minimal demands on SCC reserves.

Future Development

Whilst the present model of the BVB works relatively well by this time next year our new website and Facebook Page will be well established and the present BVB editor will be five months away from retirement from the SCC and it seems essential that before our 2017 AGM we should review what we do and plan for the future. This might be a continuation of the present format or, as has been suggested in the past 'offering more reports and pictures (in colour) of community events and perhaps some interest pieces—an expansion would require an increase in the editorial team and additional funding

Acknowledgements

Getting the BVB out has been a real community effort involving a large number of people. We can only apologise if anyone has been omitted from the lists below. We rely on the increasing number of local individuals and organizations who volunteer copy, and information for the Calendar, on local events and activities — and who sponsor individual issues.

In addition to the vital co-ordination of our distribution by **Sandra Sim** we must acknowledge the equally important work of proof reading by Margaret Vass, Keith Vass and Alma Hutton; and to Sue Rand for sorting out our somewhat informal financial transactions. And then there is the long list of **deliverers** below – some of whom have done nearly every month whilst others have filled in at holiday times:

Dick Arnold Jude Gregor Val McNulty, Gordon Ash Ian Hamilton Elspeth Neill, Lorna Ash Alan Hutton Willie Oswald Anne Balfour Alma Hutton Jim Rand Mary Brailey Julie Hutchison Sue Rand Rob Davies Lynne James Alan Sim Robert Davy Susan Kelly George Thom John Gray Marian Lever Margaret Vass Sally Gray Mike McNulty Keith Vass Neil Watson

b) Secretary – Richard Arnold

I repeat what I have said in past years. Much of my work as **secretary** is in the background, preparing and distributing minutes of meetings, receiving and distributing mail and other communications. This includes looking after the notice board in Strathblane and at the Co-op while Margaret does likewise for the Blanefield board. If you need notices placed just get in touch.

Arranging hall bookings and looking after availability/condition of equipment such as the projector and screen also falls within my remit. I said last year that the decision had been made to purchase an additional smaller projector screen as the present one, though still serviceable, is rather heavy and cumbersome to handle. Following a partial rebuild of the old one I delayed taking action. I will probably suggest going ahead this year with the new purchase.

The main workload throughout the year is taking and typing up the minutes. This year we had no minute secretary assistance, but would be pleased to hear from a volunteer.

I mentioned last year that I was working on a grant application to raise funding to upgrade our war memorial and its surrounds. This took much longer than expected, but in the end we were successful in obtaining funding and the work was carried out last month. I have to say that I am very pleased with the outcome. The difference between before and after is striking. I also must express my appreciation of the help given by Stirling Council circumventing contractual restrictions on the CC so that an order could be placed.

c) Financial Report 2016 – Sue Rand.

The overall financial figures for the year which ended 31st March 2016 show a surplus of £181.

The total income received was £2,162. This figure reflects a most generous donation of £800 from the Bottomley Trust and £131 which was raised at the Christmas Light switch on.

The Administration Grant from Stirling Council was £574. Insurance cover of £65 was deducted by Stirling Council from the Grant. A further £90 was paid for Secretarial support. The SCC also received a grant of £488 to help towards the cost of a new website.

The Bank balances at 31st March 2016 were £4,616.

The Blane Valley Bulletin cost £1,284 in this financial year. Sponsorship and donations raised £1,066. Alan Hutton continues enthusiastically to recruit Sponsors.

We spent £386 on plants for the Village tubs.

£372 was spent on Electrical work at the Village Club which will secure public safety when the Christmas Tree lights are on.

The Community Council continues to recognise all the financial support we receive which enables us to contribute to Village life.

On behalf of the Community Council may I thank Eric Strachan for his role of external examiner of the accounts.

Signatories for the Accounts 2016 are Sue Rand, Margaret Vass, Alan Hutton and Willie Oswald

Acceptance of the accounts was unanimous, but this was formally moved by WO and seconded by RD.

Final comments from the chairperson

Succession planning for the future of your community council is becoming critical and is one of the key tasks for the coming year. CC elections are due in November 2017 we will be losing at least half of the current members. Willie, Alan, Elspeth, Dick, Sue and I have all confirmed that we are not standing again. We need a minimum of 7 people elected in 2017 to have a viable CC. There is a real danger that we will not have a CC so every single one of us will be focussed on demonstrating the value of what can be achieved and what we have helped to deliver for this community. As the agenda for community empowerment and engagement increases having a strong community council will be increasingly important.

As ever I must thank my CC colleagues for their help and support throughout the year. We are a team working on behalf of this wonderful community.

4. Election of office bearers

Office bearers for the coming year were elected as follows:

		Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairperson	MV	WO	JG
Vice chair	AH	JH	WO
Secretary	GE	MV	ML
Treasurer	SR	MV	ML
Planning and Licencing	AK	MV	ML

MV thanked RA for his hard work as secretary during his tenure.

5. Allocation of other responsibilities (approved by all)

Roads	JH
Environment	EN
Health	ML
Editor BVB	AH

6. Planning group membership

The following offered to serve on the planning group: MV+AK+JH+ML+EN and JG

Moved by WO and seconded by JH

7. SCC representatives on other groups in the village.

Community Development Trust	MV
Village Club	JG appointed
Mugdock Mgt Committee rep	JH

8. Cheque signatories.

The following would be authorized for the coming year: SR+MV+AH+WO+RA

9. Date of next meeting – to be decided, but will be in June 2017

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Contact us at cc@strathblanefield.org.uk . Telephone numbers for Community Councillors are on the notice boards, in the library and in the Blane Valley Bulletin.

