

PORT OF MENTEITH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Port of Menteith Community Council held in the Port Hall on Monday, 20th June, 2022 commencing at 8.00pm

Present : Peter Stewart, Chair
Sheena Makgill-Crichton, Vice-Chair & Secretary
Jim Riach
Matthew Woods

In Attendance : Councillor Elaine Watterson
Nicci Wallace, Senior Area Officer, Roads Services (part)
Robert Fleming, Team Leader, Roads Services (part)
Valerie Graham, Minutes Secretary

1. Members Present and Apologies for Absence

Apologies from Alison Forrester and Willie Nisbet were noted.

Peter Stewart also advised members that he had received a letter from Penny McCoull notifying him of her intended resignation from the Community Council and despite efforts to get her to reconsider, these had not been successful. In the ensuing discussion, members agreed to begin the procedure to co-opt a new member.

2. Declarations of Interest in the Items of Business

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of the Draft Minutes of the General Meeting held on 25th April, 2022

The adoption of the draft Minutes of the General Meeting held on 25th April, 2022 was proposed by Sheena Makgill-Crichton, seconded by Peter Stewart and agreed by members.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2022

4.1 Port of Menteith Church & Cemetery

4.2 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration

4.2.1 Church Service of Celebration

This had been well attended by both local members and members of Aberfoyle Church and much enjoyed.

4.2.2 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Bletcher

Valerie Graham reported that welcomed by Alan Simpson in full uniform as Lord-Lieutenant for Stirling & Falkirk, who also judged the school-children's poster competition, approximately 70 people and children together with visitors from Aberfoyle Church, enjoyed a range of various cakes, tray-bakes together with a variety of sandwiches generously provided by volunteers. Of particular satisfaction, was the number of people fairly new to the community who had attended.

4.3 Broadband

Ian McCoull's report had been circulated prior to the meeting for which members were grateful, however, it was not known if this was the final one. Alison Forrester had said that she would be interested to hear from the Scottish Government source about the R100SBV Scheme as she has not been made aware of it and wonders if the owners of the other 33 premises had heard anything.

4.4 Force 9 Community Benefit Scheme

Members were advised that following Councillor Earl's meeting with Force 9, nothing further had been heard from the company.

4.5 Doune the Rabbit Hole : 2022

Valerie Graham reported that the application for a Temporary Entertainment Licence for Doune the Rabbit Hole, including the request for an increase in capacity to 15,000, is still being processed. It was noted that Councillor Watterson is a member of the Licensing Panel.

5.1 Roads & Scottish Strategic Timber Transport Fund

Following a request from the Community Council, Nicci Wallace, Senior Area Officer and Robert Fleming, Team Leader, both from Roads Services, attended the meeting to listen to members' concerns regarding the poor condition of local road surfaces and verges, and to explain the relevance of the Strategic Timber Transport Fund to local timber lorry routes.

There was a lengthy discussion during which Members expressed their concern about the dreadful condition of local road surfaces but both Stirling Council Officers said that there is insufficient money in the current Roads Services budget to make substantial improvement to the road surfaces. In fact, at present it is only possible to maintain what is already there although Stirling Council has commissioned a survey of all its roads by an independent company.

There were also complaints from Members about the current policy of having 'soft verges' which are constantly being damaged particularly by heavy vehicles such as timber lorries due to the limited width of the roads. In response to a suggestion that road surfaces should be made wider, members were advised that the width of all roads is limited by government to a maximum of 2.4m. Equally, it was stated that there are no plans to strengthen the verges with large stones as it is considered that this would just encourage drivers to use them.

With regard to the Scottish Strategic Timber Transport fund which provides funding for the upkeep of timber transport routes, it was confirmed that Stirling Council will shortly be submitting a participatory bid.

In response to a separate question as to why some sections of the B8034 does not have a central white line, Members were told that as the recently re-surfaced sections have white line edgings, there is insufficient road width to also have an additional middle line.

In a subsequent discussion, it was agreed to request a copy of the road survey and to encourage residents to continue to lodge complaints about the conditions of the local roads and verges. **Action : VG**

5.2 Cardross Bridge & Weight Restriction Warning Signs

Members were advised that no further information regarding the situation with the Cardross Bridge had been received. However, the large Bridge weight-limit warning sign on the A811 at Arnprior had at last been replaced.

6. Financial Statement

6.1 Statement

Members noted the statement of accounts for the period ending 31st May which had been previously circulated.

6.2 Defibrillator Fundraising Raffle

Members were delighted to hear that the raffle to raise funds for the defibrillator held during the Jubilee Bletcher had achieved £400. It was explained that this would be used to replace the battery and pads etc., when required in the future.

6.3 Payment to Port Hall for Meetings

This item was not discussed and will be carried forward to the agenda for the next meeting.

7. Correspondence

7.1 General Correspondence Received

Members noted the list of general correspondence which had been previously circulated.

7.2 The Scottish Health Research Register and Biobank

Members discussed a request for help to promote **SHARE** by displaying a poster or distributing information postcards but it was finally agreed that it would be more effective to circulate the information about the organisation by using the Community Council's email list.

Action : VG

8. Planning & Licensing Issues

8.1 New Planning Applications

Members were advised that there were no new planning applications for consideration.

8.2 Planning Update

- The previous applications for an extension & car port at Oakmore, Port of Menteith and for an extension at Tamnafalloch House, Ruskie had both been approved;
- A decision on the application for changes of approval & use at Newton Farmhouse, Port of Menteith had been delayed;
- That the notification of the construction of a road for forestry purposes east of Craig of Monievreckie, Port of Menteith had now been approved.

9. Forestry

9.1 Forest & Land Scotland : Communities Strategy for Scotland's National Forests and Land Draft for Consultation.

During the discussion of this item, Members agreed that the proposed strategy should ideally include increased access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders to Forest and Scotland Land.

Action : VG

10. Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

11.1 Loch Lomond Byelaws Review 2022

In considering this item, members did not have any comments to make at this stage but will welcome the opportunity to participate in the forthcoming public consultation on them later in the year.

Action : VG

11. Countryside Trust

As members regularly receive the Trust's newsletters as they are issued, Jim Riach had nothing additional to report.

12. Strathard & Trossachs Place Based Visitor Management Group

Jim Riach reported that on 17th June, he and Matt Woods, as Chair of the Port Hall, met with consultants, Ironside Farrar, which is compiling a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan for the National Park. Prior to the meeting, the 2021 Port of Menteith Visitor Management report had been shared with them.

At the meeting, the issues and opportunities facing the local community were highlighted and it was reinforced that as Port of Menteith is a key gateway into the Park, signage should reflect that. Also, that the Port Hall is the principle asset that the community has influence over so should also be central to any discussions, and that for Port of Menteith as a Place, connectivity with the surrounding communities is important for service provision and to live well locally.

The consultants will now compile a draft report for inclusion in the Strathard and Trossachs STID.

13. Proposed Gartrenich-Gartur Cycle Path

13.1 Strathard Community Trust

Members were advised that Strathard Community Trust is considering a potential to explore the feasibility of extending a cycle path route between the Strathard and Port of Menteith community areas from Gartrenich to Gartur and is intending to explore this further by contacting Forestry and Land Scotland to seek agreement in principle, feasibility funding and engaging with specific landowners, e.g. Cardross. After discussion, Members agreed to support the proposal in principle. **Action : VG**

14. Boundaries for Thornhill Community Trust & Place Plan

In the lengthy discussion about this item, some concern was expressed that the map indicated that the proposed area of operation for the Thornhill Community Trust encroached on part of the Port of Menteith Community Council's area. Eventually, it was agreed that Peter Stewart would contact Mr. Yates again for further information. **Action : PS**

15. Reports

15.1 Councillor's Report

Councillor Watterson advised members that the first full Stirling Council meeting since the recent election would be taking place later in the week and she anticipated that it would be a very long day.

15.2 NPA Report

In Willie Nisbet's absence, there was no report

15.3 Carse of Stirling Project Group Report

Jim Riach reported that the COSP trustees continue to make progress and are currently exploring funding opportunities for a development officer position to help make more progress on key projects.

'Paths, Pollinators and the Past' continues as a theme for project development and recently COSP received funding to undertake a project to connect local schoolchildren with pollinators. This became "Buzz on the Moss" and was co-ordinated by Trustee and artist, Jessica Langford, where school children visited the Moss and created paintings of pollinators.

15.4 Port Hall Committee Report

Matthew Woods reported that with a new Hall Committee, there were plans to hold the first of a new session of "Sunday Blethers" in September. Much more use is to be made of social media to promote the use of the Hall and a regular cleaner had now been appointed.

15.5 School Report

Peter Stewart reported that the annual end of term BBQ had been held at the end of the previous week, which Mrs. Millar had attended.

15.6 Police Report

In considering the Police Report which had been circulated prior to the meeting, there was general dissatisfaction and a lack of confidence in its contents. In particular, to the report that speed monitoring had been carried out in the Port of Menteith over the period, but there had been no offences – as an example, while the whole meeting had been disturbed by motor cyclists roaring past at extremely high speeds, there hadn't been any sign of police in the area. It was agreed to write to Inspector Bushell, the Inspector for Stirling Rural who is based in Callander.

16. Any Other Competent Business

16.1 Ward Councillors' Attendance at CC Meetings and Local Surgeries

During a discussion about the attendance of Ward Councillors at Community Council meetings and the resumption of Councillors' surgeries, Councillor Watterson said that it was more likely that people wishing to speak to a Councillor would have to make a request for a meeting as there had in the past been very little demand, no surgeries would be reinstated at this time.

17. Date of Next Scheduled Meeting : Monday, 22nd August, 2022