

PORT OF MENTEITH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Meeting of the Port of Menteith Community Council held in the Port Hall on Monday, 22nd August, 2022 commencing at 7.00pm

Present : Peter Stewart, Chair
Alison Forrester
Jim Riach
Councillor Martin Earl
David Mackie, NPA

In Attendance : Claire Outterside
Valerie Graham, Minutes Secretary

1. Members Present and Apologies for Absence

Apologies from Sheena Makgill-Crichton and Matthew Woods were noted.

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 20th June, 2022

Subject to the following amendment – Item 16.1 *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*, the adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Peter Stewart and seconded by Jim Riach.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th June, 2022

4.1 Port of Menteith Church & Cemetery

4.1.1 The report of the situation regarding the future of the Church following the Church of Scotland's audit had been circulated previously.

4.1.2 Sheena Makgill-Crichton had reported that the poor condition of the cemetery remained unchanged. However, Councillor Earl reported that the previous Cemetery Officer had left or was leaving and a replacement would shortly be in post.

4.2 Force 9 Community Benefit Scheme

Following the meeting that Councillor Earl had with representatives of Force 9 and Liberty 1 with regard to Port of Menteith & Thornhill Community Councils receiving a financial benefit from the Shelloch Windfarm project, he was subsequently advised that this would not be possible. However, Councillor Earl said that he would continue to pursue the matter.

4.3 Boundaries for Thornhill Community Trust & Place Plan

Peter Stewart reported that he had not heard anything more about this and would follow it up for the next meeting. **Action : PS**

However, a discussion about the value of Local Place Plans followed during which, David Mackie was advised that Members had given the production of a LPP for Port of Menteith full consideration, including taking advice from Joyce Kelly of Strathard Community Council, but had eventually concluded that the Community Council did not have the resources to do so.

4.4 Proposed Gartrenich-Gartur Cycle Path

Members were advised that subject to the necessary consents and relevant permissions being granted and grant-funding being available for the construction of the track, Cardross Estate would be supportive of the project in principle. However, from an update from

Strathard Community Trust, it would appear that there has not been any progress made in the interim and the proposal is still very much at the 'potential' stage.

4.5 "Doune the Rabbit Hole" Event

Although this year's event had eventually appeared to have gone relatively smoothly with little or no complaints about noise from local residents, Councillor Earl advised that due to difficulties with the organisers, the Temporary Entertainment Licence for the event was not issued until 9.00pm on the evening prior to the opening and then, only after two emergency meetings of the Licensing Board and site visits. The final licenced attendance figure was for 12,000 but it is generally estimated that the total number of visitors over the weekend was nearer 10,000.

5. Roads & Other Issues

5.1 Cardross Bridge

Members were advised that following a request for an update in time for the meeting regarding the current situation with the Bridge, the Bridge Officer had responded to say that she would do this when she had more information. However, she had said that she shared the concern of CC members and the wider community regarding the report of overweight coaches and a double-decker bus going across Cardross Bridge during the "Doune The Rabbit Hole" event and that she expressed the hope that Police Scotland would be able to take enforcement action.

5.2 Closure of the A873

There was discussion regarding the lack of advance notification from the Roads Department of the closure of the A873 and it was only due to intervention by Councillor Earl that the Community Council had received the full details which were then circulated to the local community.

5.3 Following the discussion at the previous meeting about the condition of the verges on local roads, Councillor Earl advised members that Councillor Watterson was still investigating the matter.

6. Financial Statement

6.1 Statement to 20th August, 2022

The financial statement, which had been produced by Penny McCoull, had been previously circulated. The adoption of the Statement was proposed by Peter Stewart and seconded by Alison Forrester.

6.2 CC Administration Grant

Members were advised that payment of the annual Administration Grant was still awaited.

6.3 Contribution to the hire charges of the Port Hall for CC Meetings

Following discussion, it was agreed to make a contribution of £100 towards the hire of the Port Hall for 2022-2023. Valerie Graham was asked to arrange for a Bank transfer to the Port Hall Committee to be made.

Action : VG

7. Correspondence

7.1 General Correspondence Received

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

7.2 It was agreed to write to Willie Nisbet to thank him for his support over the past 16 years.

Action : VG

8. Planning & Licensing Issues

8.1 New Planning Applications

8.1.1 22/00416/FUL : Addition of Air Source Heat Pumps at East facing gable walls and small timber lean-to to accommodate plant for the heating system, and provide secure storage to the 2 No. holiday-let bothies etc., at Shandon Wood, Ruskie, Thornhill.

8.1.2 22/00466/FUL : Erection of agricultural building at Keirhead Cottage, Thornhill.

These planning applications had been received after the previous meeting but had been circulated to members for their comments and a response on their behalf had been submitted to the Planning Officer.

8.2 Planning Updates

8.2.1 22/00160/FUL : Change of use of one bedroom ancillary accommodation to allow for holiday letting at Newton Farmhouse, Port of Menteith.

Members were advised that the above planning application had now been approved.

8.3 Planning Notifications

Members were advised that notification had been received at the beginning of July that Force 9 had submitted an application to Stirling Council for a second temporary Meteorological Mast for the Shelloch Wind Farm.

9. Forestry

9.1 Felling Permission Application from Rednock Estate for Cardross Forest and Diamond Jubilee Wood.

Peter Stewart said that he understood that felling permission had now been granted and proposed that the Estate Manager be invited to a future Community Council meeting to discuss the stocking plan when re-planting of the areas is under consideration.

9.2 Forestry & Land Scotland Local Activities Report

Members were advised that the recently received monthly F&LS report had included information that haulage from previous work in Letter Forest was expected to finish in September but at Achray Forest, there would be some continuing timber haulage on the road network until October and users were being asked to obey any on-site signage and advice from operators.

10. Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

10.1 Loch Lomond Byelaws Review Consultation 2022

In discussion, the problems being experienced with visitors to the Lake of Menteith resulting from the Byelaw restrictions in other parts of the National Park and the failure for the Lake of Menteith to be included in the joint NPS/Stirling Council water safety policy, as requested by the Community Council, were highlighted. Jim Riach agreed to forward a copy of the local Visitor Management plan produced last year to David Mackie. **Action : JR**

11. Countryside Trust

There was nothing new to report.

12. Strathard & Trossachs Place Based Visitor Management Group

Jim Riach had nothing to report.

13. Reports

13.1 Councillor's Report

Martin Earl reported that the first full Council meeting to take place since the recent election had lasted 6½ hours. However, it had been agreed to have a review and consultation of the current waste collection policy. He also advised that there would be a strike affecting the bin collections on 26th/29th August and 7th/10th of September if the disagreement is not resolved.

13.2 NPA Report

David Mackie said that he was delighted to have been appointed to represent the NPA in the area and was looking forward to working with the Port of Menteith Community Council. Peter Stewart raised the issue of the lack of the Park entry sign, which had still not been erected close to the A81/A873 junction, as originally planned. Mr. Mackie promised raise all these issues with the NPA staff. **Action : DM**

13.3 Carse of Stirling Project Group Report

Jim reported that a COSP Trustee's meeting had been held on the 15th August and key items discussed were that:

- COSP is to consider an application to 'Smarter Choices, Smarter Places' for an active travel project based around the Tour de Carse leaflet;
- The Pollinator project run in conjunction with Nature Scot was considered a success;
- A project working with the Forth Rivers Trust and looking at an engagement project around the "Forgotten Fish" (the eel) is currently being developed for the Goodie;
- The development of a larger interpretation project for the Carse of Stirling and Flanders Moss as an internationally significant site is being developed.

13.4 Port Hall Committee Report

In Matthew Woods' absence, Claire Outterside provided a brief report which included information about the recent work to extend the car-park at the Port Hall and news that the first of the new season of "Sunday Blethers" would take place on 11th September.

13.5 School Report

Peter Stewart reported that with the start of the new term, the School Roll is now 12 but despite a concerted effort to promote the School, there is concern that parents of children approaching school age, would register them elsewhere because of the low numbers. He also reported that thanks to the Parent Council, the School now has a new website.

13.6 Police Report

Sheena Makgill-Crichton had proposed that a police presence should be requested for the next Community Council meeting as the problem of speeding in Port of Menteith is simply not being addressed. Recently, as she and a number of other drivers slowed down on approaching the 30mph sign at the entrance to the Village, they had been overtaken by a car doing at least 60mph which then had to swerve to avoid another car coming in the opposite direction causing everyone to brake hard.

Other examples of the lack of police in the area is the recent increase in the number of motorbikes with extremely loud exhausts speeding through the Village all the way from the Rob Roy roundabout, and the weight limit over the Cardross Bridge not being enforced by the police.

These matters have been raised continually at Community Council meetings and Sheena suggested that it would be preferable not to have what in her opinion is a useless police report but to have an hour of police time with a speed gun in the Village on a Saturday afternoon.

In the ensuing discussion, Councillor Earl recommended that Members should write to Chief Superintendent Alan Gibson, who is Police Scotland's Divisional Commander, at Police HQ in Stirling.

Action : SMC

14. Any Other Competent Business

In the absence of Matthew Woods, the intention to adopt him as a full member of the Community Council and to co-opt Claire Outterside did not take place. Instead it was agreed to organise a separate meeting for this purpose.

15. Date of Next Scheduled Meeting : Monday, 3rd October, 2022