

# AIRTH PARISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## **Minutes of the general meeting held on 20th May 2015 in Airth Primary School**

**Members present.** Domini Grant, Robert Smith, Aileen Amos, Ginny Sutherland, Willie Watson, Jon Anslow and Paul Barrett.

**Also present.** Larbert and Denny Community Constables Donna Connor and Chris Morrison, Councillors Stephen Bird and Craig Martin, Ann Ramsay, Tracy Campbell and John Campbell.

**Minute Secretary.** As there has still been no response to our advertisement for a minute secretary, Robert Smith agreed to take notes and compile minutes for this meeting. We will continue to try and recruit a minute secretary through the press and notice board.

**1. Apologies** Apologies for absence were received from Ian Penman, Jim Flynn and Maria Crawford.

### **2. Approval of April 22nd minutes**

With the removal of the word “vice” in the last paragraph, the minutes were proposed as correct by Aileen and seconded by Domini.

### **3. Matters arising.**

Due to work commitments this past month, Domini has been unable to do the poster and notice regarding the broadband questionnaire or arrange for a visit from a BT rep. Robert will assist her in getting this done and a notice posted in the Falkirk Herald. She has also been unable to contact George Russell directly regarding the dirt on the road at the Waterslap infill site although she had asked her husband to speak to him about it. We have not heard from Francis Binnie regarding the broadband at Bowtrees and Airth Castle.

The approved March minutes were sent to Brian Pirie for inclusion in the council website. It was noted that the missing minutes have now been included on the website as is Paul Barrett on the list of members.

There has been no notification from Ineos of a date or venue for the public consultation in Airth on shale gas development.

Robert and Aileen both attended the Ineos consultation at Kilsyth and noted that there was a bit of hostility towards the proposals from some members of the public. Some raised concerns about the high number of old mine workings in the area. Leaflets were obtained and a set passed on to Domini and Ginny. Aileen and Robert also have a set if others wish to read over them.

The date of the joint litter pick has been agreed with the school as Saturday

30<sup>th</sup> May. The school have informed parents of this by letter.

The consultation exercise regarding the provision of a bench at the cenotaph has been carried out.

As requested, R.Smith e mailed Maria Crawford with information about the fly tipping at Powfoulis and deer coursing.

R.Smith has contacted Margaret Keir from the Castle Drive Residents group regarding the provision of a pelican crossing at the south end of the village.

While she is willing to arrange a meeting with us to discuss the issue, she does not see the need for the new crossing and is totally against any suggestion of creating a new opening in their wall.

Cllr Martin has had council engineers inspect the Basin and culvert at Dunmore but are still trying to determine ownership/responsibility for it.

The website is now active.

R.Smith has booked the Barbershop choir for the Christmas lights event on 4<sup>th</sup> December. They have agreed to do this free of charge as it is for the community but would make a charge if we used them at fundraising events.

As repeatedly requested, R.Smith has provided a letter of resignation from the post of secretary for the files.

**4. Police report.** As our own community constable was unavailable, community constables Donna Connor and Chris Morrison attended and delivered the police report for the period from 22<sup>nd</sup> April to the 20<sup>th</sup> May. There were 6 road traffic offences detected in the area and include speeding, not wearing a seat belt, driving when using a hand held device and careless driving.

During this period there were 33 calls made from the Airth parish area.

23 calls related to advice/assistance/information. These included abandoned/broken down vehicles, sheep on the road, injured swan and neighbour issues.

1 call relating to anti social behaviour.

2 calls relating to possible poaching and shooting of birds of prey. Both investigated and confirmed that authorised persons were carrying out pigeon shooting for crop protection and the area searched but no evidence of illegal shooting found.

3 calls relating to complaints of noise from The Parsonage. PC Crawford is liaising with Falkirk Council on this issue.

4 calls relating to other matters, 1 fuel drive off from Bowtrees, theft by finding at Bowtrees, theft from outbuildings at South Alloa, and possession of a class B drug, cannabis.

PC Crawford is aware of the on going issues relating to noise from the Parsonage, illegal hare and deer coursing and fly tipping and routine patrols in

the area have been stepped up.

Tracy Campbell complained that the alarm in the health centre frequently activated for no reason and she did not know who to complain to. This is not a police issue, and Domini said that she would try and contact the doctors regarding this. John Campbell asked what to do if he witnessed illegal coursing underway and was advised to phone 999 for an immediate response.

Ginny said that following advice from the police she has erected gates and signs at Dunmore estate to prevent unauthorised vehicular access because of issues with flytipping, illegal coursing and blocked access for agricultural vehicles.

Robert Smith stated that he was the person engaged in shooting woodpigeons for crop protection at the request of the farmer and had been called on his mobile then visited by the police who checked that what he was doing was legal and safe. He was advised to contact police Scotland on 101 when going out shooting in that area again to avoid any recurrence. He also said that the person who reported the alleged shooting of a buzzard was totally mistaken as only woodpigeons were shot. The police had checked out the area and only woodpigeon feathers were found. He had concerns that the call may have been made maliciously by a disgruntled dog walker who has now been denied access to illegal parking in the estate. Ginny said that she had not been contacted about complaints. She also said that walks and paths advertised on websites had not been agreed with her.

Regarding deer coursing, Willie Watson said that he had been speaking to two people (unnamed) who had met two men from Cowie with lurcher type dogs in the vicinity of Dunmore Estate and they had been shown a video clip by the men of their dogs coursing a deer. The police took note of this.

## **5. Correspondence.** As listed below.

1. E mail from Cllr. Bird regarding the granting of retrospective planning to the parsonage.
2. Invitation to attend a meeting with the BBC Audience Council on 8<sup>th</sup> June in the Park hotel, Falkirk.
3. Notice from Maria Montinaro of a play in Stirling called "What the Frack"
4. Invitation from Scottish Womens Convention to a roadshow on 21<sup>st</sup> May.
5. Notice from Councillor Bird regarding the public consultation on the proposals for the new council H.Q. in Falkirk.
6. Letter of Resignation from his post as secretary from Robert Smith.
7. E mail from Jim Flynn regarding the charging of companies for being listed on our website and his proxy vote on this issue.
8. E mail from R.Smith noting that our minutes of 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March and the

addition of Paul Barrett on our list of members had not been posted on the council website. We have been criticised for this in the past, but it is Brian Pirie of Falkirk Council who arranges this.

9. Cenotaph bench consultations produced by Aileen.

10. E.mail from R. Smith regarding the Castle Avenue Residents views on a new Pelican crossing.

11. Fitness leaflet.

12. Newsletter from John Wilson Independent MSP.

13. E mail from C.C.o.F. regarding a meeting with local farmers about "fracking".

14. E mail from R. Smith to Maria Crawford regarding the dead deer and the dumping of rubble near Powfoulis.

15. E mail from R. Smith regarding the litter pick.

16. E mail from R.Smith confirming the booking of the Barber Shop Choir for the Christmas Lights event. There will be no charge for this.

17. E mail from R. Smith with additional information for the website.

18. E mail from Calum with confirmation from Weebly that our website is in operation.

19. E mail from Ian Penman confirming that there is a sign at the bottom of Letham Terrace.

## **6. Round the parish report.**

Letham .

Aileen noted that there is a sign at the bottom of Letham Terraces.

South Alloa.

Jon has not yet contacted Falkirk Council about a notice board.

Dunmore.

Willie Watson informed us that following the complaints about the noise from The Parsonage there was to be a meeting with the owners and the Environmental Health Department to try and resolve the issue. He noted that he has not heard the noise but others on the opposite side of the village are frequently disturbed by it. Aileen commented that because marquees are used for functions, there was nothing to buffer the noise. The number to telephone with complaints about noise is 01324503050.

Ginny informed us that following police advice, locked gates have been installed at the entrance to Dunmore Estate to prevent unauthorised vehicular access although normal foot traffic would still have access.

Airth.

Domini informed us that there have been several reports of rats within parts of

the village. As she keeps chickens in her back garden she has been visited by the environmental health officers who confirmed that they were not the source of the problem and that rats tend to move around more at this time of year. It was noted that the current trend to build raised decking and provide bird feeders in gardens has led to an increase in the rat population. Householders are advised not to leave food on the ground and to use traps and poison baits safely and responsibly. The Community Council notice board in Airth needs to be varnished.

## **7. Planning issues.**

McInally Associates have given a Pre Application Notice for the development of the escarpment above the church. The public consultation will take place in Airth Welfare Hall on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June from 9.30 am until 7 pm. We will display the notice regarding this on the notice board. It was noted that this proposal relates to the areas of ground already zoned for housing development for around 115 homes. John Campbell asked if this would impact on the school, but this development has already been taken into consideration by the education authorities. The developers will be required to make a contribution to the education budget.

Application to convert the Parsonage at Dunmore to a hotel has been approved as was the application for an extension to and roughcasting of the Airth Bakers building. A listed building application for a gas flue to a house at 44 Paul Drive has been made. We have no comment to make on this.

## **8. Code of conduct.**

The proposals for the code of conduct relating to community councillors had been circulated for information and are still under discussion. Various options for dealing with disciplinary action relating to the actions and behaviour of community councillors have been tabled. It was pointed out that there are proposals to make the rules apply to co-opted members as well as elected and nominated members. This has still to be ratified. Aileen enquired what procedures could be introduced to deal with abusive behaviour by members of the public. Jon Anslow suggested that the convenor could ask them to leave. It is also noted that the proposals included meetings in private to discuss issues relating to the code of conduct.

## **9. Website and payments from companies.**

Jim Flynn had suggested that we make a charge from businesses we mention on our website, but since our website is intended as an information site and many of them already donate to our Christmas lights fund, it was unanimously

agreed not to implement this suggestion.

The sale of our history book is to be included in the website and Robert will obtain postage costs for inclusion in the advertisement.

### **10. Bench Consultation.**

Robert delivered 44 letters to homes at Kirkway, The Path, Graham Terrace, The Old Police house and the Old Schoolmasters house regarding the proposals for a bench at the Cenotaph. Aileen had collected most of them and the majority had no objections to this suggestion. Tracy Campbell and Ann Ramsay had been unaware that we were consulting with residents in the area of the cenotaph and had carried out a separate consultation and said that 52 residents supported their initiative.

They expressed concern that they had not been kept informed about the community council's involvement in this issue and our meetings with Arthur Berg of F.E.T. but it was pointed out that our meetings are always advertised and open to all residents. Aileen also pointed out that she and Tracy had arranged to meet with Arthur Berg but Tracy had been unable to attend the meeting. Tracy and Ann told us that their plan is to raise enough funds to install 2 benches and a plaque at the cenotaph and are planning fundraising events for this. The cost of each bench is given as £535 + vat delivered. We do not have installation costs. Tracy has contacted Harry Foster of Falkirk Council regarding the necessary permissions for this. Robert Smith will contact Arthur Berg to see if there is any money left over from the grant received for the installation of the flag poles which could go towards the provision of benches. Aileen noted that the flags were flying at the cenotaph and asked if it was for a special occasion and Tracy indicated that the intention is to have them flying most of the time except in the winter.

### **11. Fund raising (choir).**

Proposals for fundraising for the Christmas lights funds were made and included suggestions for a ceilidh in the community centre, a musical evening with the Barber shop Choir and a quiz night. These are to be discussed at our next meeting.

### **12 Garden competition.**

R. Smith suggested that we contact John McNally, our new Westminster M.P. to judge the gardens this year. Stephen Bird agreed to contact him on our behalf.

### **13. Adoption of orphan land.**

Suggestions for the adoption of “orphan land” which the community could take charge of and improve and maintain included Shore Road, North Greens and Cemetery Brae. It was agreed to meet at 7pm on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May to have a walk round and look at possible sites as well as identifying hot spots for the litter pick.

### **14 A.O.C.B.**

It was agreed to co-ordinate relevant works and meetings with the Cenotaph improvement group. Domini reminded us that we had not been contacting Tracy about this issue when we became aware that she was having a difficult time due to serious health issues relating to her granddaughter.

The school had left a note relating to gardening assistance from August, but we were unsure if they wanted our assistance or were offering assistance. Domini and Ann Ramsay will try and clarify this with the school.

Aileen raised the issue of the culvert at Dunmore and Cllr. Martin said that he had asked for it to be included on the agenda. He stated that council engineers had inspected it and do not consider it to be dangerous but will require on going monitoring. The council may do some repairs if it was considered dangerous. Willie Watson confirmed that he owned all the land round the basin but ownership of and responsibility for the basin is unknown. The council are still trying to find this information. They are working with the D.V.A. on this issue.

John Anslow pointed out that Falkirk Council were now charging £15 for special uplifts from domestic premises.

The litter pick is planned for Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May meeting at 9.30 outside the Community Centre. Greggs the Bakers are supporting it this year and the Stenhousemuir branch will supply cakes for the participants.

Robert indicated that the next period of high tides in the region of 6.0 metres will be on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> August.

To avoid conflicts with other activities and events, he also suggested that we inform the school and church that the date of the Christmas lights switch on event is Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December. It was suggested that this be put on the website.

It was noted that our next meeting in June will be our last until the A.G.M. in September.

A new bin is required at the Wilderness.

**Treasurer`s report.**

Aileen indicated that we had £266.25 in our operating account and £2365.93 in the Christmas lights fund.

There being no further business, the convenor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Date of the next meeting will 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015.