

AIRTH PARISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the general meeting held on 18th January 2017 in Airth Primary School.

Members present. Jon Anslow, Robert Smith, Aileen Amos, Willie Watson, and Ginny Sutherland.

Also present. Cllr. Craig Martin and Laura Murtaugh.

Minute Secretary. As we do not have a minute secretary at this time, 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 received from Rev. Jim Todd.

2. Approval of December minutes The December minutes were approved and seconded by Ginny and Jon. As a result of an e mail from Morag Carson, the November minutes, which were approved at our December meeting, have been altered to clarify a statement made by her regarding funding and special needs provision for Airth Primary School. The amendment was agreed and a copy of the amended minute was passed to Laura Murtaugh to give to Mrs Carson.

3. Police Report.

There was no police presence at the meeting and no report had been received.

4. Matters arising.

Robert has been unable to contact Mervyn McGregor of S.E.P.A. regarding the source of the raw sewage in the basin at Dunmore. Robert will try to contact him again for an update on progress.

The overgrown garden at Graham Terrace has not yet been tidied up despite the owner saying that he would do so before the winter. Robert agreed to try and contact him again.

The Christmas Lights have been removed and it was noted that some had been damaged and dislodged by the high winds. Robert had concerns about the fixing securing the lights and agreed to try and speak to Lightways technical people regarding this as there is a possible safety issue with them.

As a result of the warnings about a storm surge and flooding along the North Sea coast we checked the SEPA site and our area was not included although we were vigilant and checked tidal levels during the period.

Ginny voiced her concerns over the flooding of farmland as potential flood relief areas and for creating wetland habitat for birds.

5. Correspondence. As listed below.

1. E. mailed report from the community safety team.
2. Our letter to F.C. planning department with comments on the escarpment proposals.
3. Our e mail to Vivian Murchison regarding her request for a public meeting.
4. E mail regarding a planning consultation by the Scottish Government. This closes on the 14th April
5. Invitation to a Planning Democracy event in Edinburgh on 19th January.
6. E mail from F.C. planning regarding the non provision of paper copies of drawings relating to planning applications.
7. Letter from Falkirk Council acknowledging receipt of our letter regarding the proposed escarpment development.
8. E mail from Brian Pirie regarding operating grants for Community Councils and additional funding for minute secretary. Aileen passed the e mail regarding funding for a minute secretary to Cllr. Martin.
9. E mail from Craig Martin regarding social housing provision for Airth.
10. E mail from Morag Carson regarding amendments to the November minutes.
11. E mail from Carolyn Stuart of F.C. regarding the Christmas lights invoice from Lightways.
12. There appears to be a problem with the way that minutes are being formatted as not everyone can access them.

6. Round the parish report.

South Alloa. No progress has been made on provision of a notice board .

Letham. Nothing reported.

Airth. Cllr martin informed us that he had received a letter from an 8 year old girl regarding the state of the headless cross at Bruce Gate. It appears to be overgrown with moss. He will try and contact the Community Enhancement group to see if they are able to help. It was pointed out that there is a "Private" sign at that location.

Dunmore. Willie Watson informed us that the blockage at the basin had been cleared. Cllr. Martin said that he was still trying to source funding to have the necessary repairs carried out to the stone basin

7. Treasurers Report.

Aileen Amos informed us that we had £308.90 in our admin. account and £5116.34 in the Christmas Lights account. The cost of providing the lights this year is expected to be £3163.90. We expect to be reimbursed for the cost of one new light and 2 year`s installation and removal costs from the fund set up in memory of Ethan Ritchie.

8. Planning issues.

The recent planning applications by Site Sealants at Airth Mill has been withdrawn.

Three other planning applications relating to our area have been made this month.

These are for 5 houses at the Crown Hotel site, a new house and a temporary accommodation building at Letham farm and an application by Falkirk Council to alter and upgrade council owned properties at Letham Cottages which is a conservation area.

It was agreed that while we had no objections to the development of the Crown Hotel site, we have concerns regarding the car parking provision, the visibility and access from the car parking area on to Shore Road which is a very busy road and has almost no provision for off road parking. Also the design of the windows on the houses facing Shore Road, is not in keeping with the style of windows in the majority of properties in the street, some of which are listed buildings within a conservation area. It was agreed to write to the planners with these comments.

While we had no objections to the proposals for Letham farm, we agreed to write to the planners with our concerns regarding the increase in traffic using Letham Terraces for access to the site during the construction period and to ask for restricted times for access.

Cllr. Martin explained that the upgrading of council homes in Letham cottages would cost £25,000 per house and entailed re roofing, replacing windows and installing internal wall insulation. This is an application we fully support.

We discussed the current position regarding the escarpment application by Lochay Homes and Cllr. Martin gave us the following update.

The provision of affordable homes on the site appears to be the stumbling block and discussions are on going between the council and the developer.

Registered Social Landlords are not interested in taking on board the proposal for 5 amenity houses.

Falkirk Council say that the provision should be for 25% of the homes to be affordable or for rental, however they are prepared to be flexible in the way this may be achieved. This could be done in one of 3 ways or a combination of

them.

Their first and preferred option is for the developer to build the required number of homes on the site.

The other options are for land to be donated to F.C. to build on or for funds allocated to build affordable homes elsewhere in the area. This is put at £500,000 by the district valuer.

It was pointed out that there is a need in Airth for 1 bedroom accommodation suitable for older people and this could free up larger homes for families.

However it is acknowledged that people cannot be forced to move from their homes. Also, it would not be possible to discriminate against people from outwith Airth who might apply for these homes. The planners also had concerns over the location of the proposed amenity houses.

These issues will be discussed with the developers and their architects.

The breakdown of the £750,000 education contribution required from the developer was given as £300k for Airth Primary School, £300k for Larbert High, £100k for St. Mungo's High and £50k for St. Bernadette's Primary

Cllr. Martin pointed out that local authority and RSL housing must be built to special standards which can make them more expensive than equivalent sized homes built for sale. Falkirk Council have actually bought back around 1000 former council properties when they have become available for sale and the cost of a four in a block flat is currently around £65,000. The average cost of a new council house is around £150,000.

9. Christmas Lights

The sub committee will meet in the spring to start arranging fund raising events for this year.

10. Public consultation on CBM and fracking.

Jon Anslow had discussed our position on this issue with Brian Pirie who told him that it was up to ourselves to decide. We agreed to wait on the public consultation by the Scottish government to be announced so that we can see what it entails before we get embroiled in public meetings. Aileen will inform Vivien of our decision.

11. A.O.C.B.

There was no other business.

12. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on 15th February 2017 in Airth Primary School. The convenor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

