

LARBERT, STENHOUSEMUIR & TORWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING – 30th MAY 2016 LOWER HALL, LARBERT OLD CHURCH

Attendance Details

Committee:

- Yvonne Weir (YW)
- Denis Shovlin (DS)
- Eric Appelbe (EA)
- Jim Kelly (JK)
- Peter O'Rourke (PO'R)
- Ted Bingham (TB)
- Colleen Hurren (CH)

Also Present:

- Jacquie McArthur, Falkirk Council
- Approx 20 members of the public

Apologies:

- Jim Cowan (JC)
- Charles Gillespie (CG)
- Lauralin Scott (LS)
- Gillian Bellingham (GB)
- PC Clarke, Police Scotland
- Christina Deans, Falkirk Company Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders Battalion Army Cadet Force
- Cllr Carleschi
- Mark Craske, NHS Forth Valley

1. Welcome

- EA welcomed everyone to the May meeting of the Community Council.

2. Police Report

- PC Clarke had submitted his apologies. YW delivered the May Police Report which can be viewed at: <http://lstcommunitycouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/LSTCC-Police-Report-May-2016.pdf>
- PC Clarke had advised of speeding in Union Street, Stenhousemuir. The area has been monitored however is unsuitable for hand held radar detection. The narrow parking has exacerbated issues there.
- There have been further speeding issues on Stirling Road, Larbert near to the ambulance entrance after 6pm. Hand held radar has been completed and several drivers warned. This shall continue.
- Inconsiderate parking and speeding at Graham Avenue, Larbert has also been reported, mainly due to the playgroup building and club nearby. Checks have been made when possible however nothing untoward found as yet.
- The Police have passed the 'dip' near the Gulf petrol station in Larbert for

concerns raised about boy racers around midnight but nothing has been observed.

- On the 10th of this month Police traced a 34-year-old male who had attempted to break into three houses in the Stenhousemuir and Larbert areas. This individual was caught in the early hours and appeared at Falkirk Sheriff court.
- A serious assault was reported at Stenhousemuir Bowling Club on the 7th of this month and a 28-year-old female has been apprehended in relation to this and the matter concluded.
- On the 19th of this month, following a concern report for a young female, Police had cause to speak with a 14-year-old female at Asda in Stenhousemuir. This female thereafter lashed out and kicked/bit Police officers. She is subject of a report to the children's reporter.
- PC Clarke would like to highlight a growing trend of pedal cycle theft in the area with a growing number of children and adult bikes being stolen from gardens and driveways. If bikes can be kept out of view this would greatly reduce the number of stolen bikes.

3. Community Safety Team Update

- There was no Community Safety Team presence at the meeting.

4. Youth Report – Larbert High School

- There was no representation from Larbert High School at the meeting.

5. Stenhousemuir Town Centre – Jacquie McArthur, Falkirk Council

- Jacquie advised that Falkirk Council supports Town Centre Management (also called Falkirk Delivers). They deliver events across this area but this year are subject to a 42% cut to their budget. Falkirk Delivers has been successful in continuing its BID status for a further 5-years to support Falkirk town centre. Through the BID Falkirk businesses pay an additional amount over and above their rates to support town centre activities. Jacquie is meeting Falkirk Delivers to consider how the funding to the organisation provided by Falkirk Council can be used as a support package for the district town centres. Falkirk Council is expecting them to support the districts. Jacquie will provide an update to the Community Council at its next meeting in this regard.
- Jacquie advised that as a result of the cuts, an officer from Town Centre Management who had previously supported district activities had sadly been made redundant.
- Jacquie advised that Love the Lido would continue this year as it had been successful in obtaining external funding.
- Jacquie requested that the minutes of the April meeting be amended on page 5 in the first bullet point. The core team litter pick twice a day. The fortnightly support through Watergems also tests the water quality. The final sentence refers to the fortnightly support and should read: "With current and future budget cuts, this provision could be under threat." The proposed change was approved.

- Jacquie advised that Falkirk Council may look at developing a further Business Improvement District (BID) within the district towns.
- In relation to other events, YW advised the recent Warriors Family Day was very well received and was very busy. Jacquie advised that Denny Community Council is now operating the Denny Gala Day.
- It was agreed that the community would still want to see an event at Christmas Time. A resident present spoke about the popular live nativity event which through the Tryst Community Church takes place every year in the Town Centre. There was concern over the funding received from Falkirk Council for this which helps towards the costs of the event including marquees and safe movement of animals/livestock. A question was raised over whether the Todhill Windfarm could support the Church with this. Jacquie McArthur advised she would speak to Rachel at Foundation Scotland on this.
- Jacquie advised there would still be the Christmas lights and tree in Stenhousemuir and she would push for funding to continue the Aviemore Reindeer as they are very popular.
- In relation to the query from the April meeting about the Plough Hotel car park, Jacquie advised the Hotel had recently been taken over and an action plan is in place.

6. Falkirk Company Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders Battalion Army Cadet Force – Christina Deans

- Apologies were received from Christina Deans. YW advised Jacquie McArthur that she would provide Christina Deans with her contact details.

7. Parking at Forth Valley Royal Hospital – Discussion

- Apologies were received from Mark Craske. Discussion to be carried forward to June meeting.

8. Planning application for a petrol filling station at ASDA in Stenhousemuir

- There was considerable discussion around ASDA's planning application for an unmanned, 3-pump, 6-station petrol filling station within its carpark in Stenhousemuir. The following concerns were discussed:
 - The application is not likely to bring wider economic benefits. It is an unmanned service station and as a result there will be a low number of full-time equivalent jobs created by the facility. There is already a petrol filling station in close proximity. The proposal could impact negatively on this business and the jobs which have been created and sustained by this business. The proposal also only assumes a low number of additional car journeys per day (11) which is unlikely to add any significant economic benefit to surrounding shops.
 - The proposed site is adjacent to shops, the Library and children's play park which gives rise to health and safety concerns. This would be exacerbated further in the event of any emergency or fire at the facility. The layout of the site would not

enable a straightforward evacuation and queries were raised over whether the Scottish Fire and Rescue had been consulted to provide comments in this regard.

- A petrol filling station would not add to the visual amenity or attractiveness of the town centre environment.
- The application will result in the loss of a significant number of parking spaces (34) within the car park. At peak times, this car park is already at capacity and parking has increased recently following the opening of the new gym in Stenhousemuir.
- Hallam Road is already congested with traffic regularly queuing to enter and exit the car parks onto Hallam Road and then onto King Street. Whilst the application only assumes a low number of additional daily visits to the site, the facility would add to this congestion as would fuel delivery vehicles. There are already 4 car park access junctions on Hallam Road along with an exit road for taxis/buses/emergency vehicles onto James Street. This proposal would add a further 2 junctions on this short stretch of road.
- Concerns were also raised about the speed of vehicles on Hallam Road and previously with the Community Council on the safety of the pedestrian crossings.
- There was acknowledgement that the facilities would be convenient and potentially cheaper.
- There was also discussion that the car park should become one-way.
- Following the discussion, it was agreed to object to the application based on the key points discussed. **(Action 1)**

9. Planning application for flats and terraced houses in Kinnaird Village on the site of the proposed family pub/restaurant

- EA advised that the Community Council had consulted on the application through our Facebook page and received a substantial number of comments in opposition to the development. We often get a mixed response from our consultations on Facebook which we reflect in our responses. However, in this case there were only 2 responses in favour of the proposed new build. As a result of the unanimous feelings against the development at the meeting, the Community Council agreed that it would object to the planning application.
- The discussion focused around the following points:
 - The masterplan clearly laid out a vision for the development at Kinnaird which created a “village” setting with associated community facilities. An integral part of the development was to be the village centre, at the hub of the community, providing community amenities and incorporating commercial elements including supermarket, pub/restaurant, care home and assisted living and children’s nursery facilities.
 - Whilst it is appreciated that the recession has impacted the market and that there has been little interest from developers for the development of a family pub/restaurant, the Community Council feels that additional housing will not address the requirement for community facilities and amenities in this area.

Rather than housing, alternative community amenity options should be explored further. The area is becoming overcrowded with housing and there is little to no space for children to play and very few amenities for residents plus the school is at capacity. It was recognized it would be advantageous to do something on the site rather than leave it vacant.

- It was discussed that it is difficult to make an economic case now that the site would not be used for the purposes set out in the masterplan following the completion of the remaining houses and the market further recovers from the recession.
- There are ongoing issues with ant-social behaviour in the area/
- Concerns have also been raised with us over insufficient parking in the area. It was acknowledged this may also have been an issue with a pub/restaurant at the site.
- There was also concerned discussion about the potential loss of the historic façade of the building.
- It was agreed that the objection would focus on the vision set out in the masterplan and the lack of amenities in the local area. **Action 2: Objection to be submitted.**

10. The Proposed Closure of Larbert Old Church

- Given a potential conflict of interests, EA stepped down as Chair of the meeting for this item and joined the floor. JK took over as Chair of the meeting.
- The background to the decision to close one of the churches was given. The Falkirk Presbytery had identified the need to reduce the number of ministers by 1. Initially it had been agreed following a decision of a Steering Group made up of 6 representatives from each Church who considered the options that Larbert West would be closed. However, this was not then subsequently ratified by the Trustees at Larbert West Church and an Arbiter was appointed by the Presbytery.. The Panel of Arbiters concluded that Larbert West Church would be used as the place of worship by the united congregations of Larbert Old and Larbert West. It was noted there is no right of appeal for this decision. Larbert Old is due to close in 9-week's time.
- The Community Council agreed that like many others within the community it was surprised and confused by the decision of the Panel of the Arbiters. The following summarises the key points discussed:
- The historical importance and significance of Larbert Old Church and its Graveyard. Larbert Old is a Grade B listed building and the graveyard is Grade A listed. The graveyard is of significant historical importance to the local area particularly with its links to the Carron Works and other sites of industrial heritage locally. Strong protection of these facilities is required to maintain and build on this historical importance. The history of the site dates back to the 11th century and there is a serious risk this could be lost as a consequence of the decision.
- Visual amenity - Larbert Old is a key focal point for the local community given its prominent position within the area. It is visible from many points across the

community and is a local landmark.

- Concerns over the long term were discussed with no options on alternative uses for the Larbert Old site. It was agreed this is of major concern to the local community as the closure leaves the future of the land and buildings at risk.
- Hall facilities – It was noted that the halls at Larbert Old Church are used extensively by a range of local community groups. The groups who will be displaced from the Larbert Old Halls will be required to find alternative premises which are at a premium in the local area in terms of price and availability. A resident noted that 24,000 per year use the halls at Larbert Old. The 4 available halls at Larbert Old Church provide a range of versatile sizes with disabled access to 3 of the 4 halls. Larbert West Church does not offer the same degree and flexibility of halls available for wider community use.
- Car parking – It was noted that Larbert Old Church offers significant parking and disabled parking facilities that are in an enclosed safe environment adjacent to both the church and halls. Larbert West does not have bespoke parking facilities. The main parking for Larbert West is on-street which causes congestion on Carronvale Road, Main Street and surrounding streets when activities are taking place at the Church. Furthermore, when there are activities on in the Dobbie Hall or St Bernadette's Church, it was noted that this stretch of road is very congested with parked cars. The proposal to create additional parking facilities in the former caravan storage area in the opposite petrol station were discussed but this requires the site not to be sold or leased for alternative business uses. It was discussed that this proposal would require those who park there to walk across a busy petrol station forecourt and to then cross a busy main road which has no safe crossing places at that location. This raises safety concerns particularly for younger and older users along with those with mobility issues. A resident also advised that the parking facilities at Larbert Old Church are used by the scouts in the hall opposite the church who do not have their own parking facilities.
- Disabled Access – it was argued that Larbert Old Church offers significantly better disabled access to its church and halls than Larbert West Church. It was noted that with ageing populations, the provision of suitable access facilities is essential moving forward. It was agreed that Capability Scotland would be contacted in relation to concerns over this aspect. DS advised that Larbert West whilst offering access via the back of the Church does not offer easy smooth access for those with wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and other mobility aids etc.
- Open Space – It was noted that Larbert Old Church has an area of open space which is used for activities by groups which use the hall facilities including the uniformed groups such as brownies and guides. It is also used by the summer clubs and playgroups that utilise the halls. Larbert West has no similar facilities. It was advised that Larbert Old has 7 ¼ acres of land including the former Glebe.
- It was advised that a resident has started a petition to keep Larbert Old Church open.
- Given the above points discussed and concerns raised, it was agreed that the Community Council would write to the Falkirk Presbytery, Church of Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland and Capacity Scotland to seek that a full review of this decision is undertaken and the wider implications taken into account for the

community as a whole and not just the congregations of both churches. (**Action 3.**)

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- EA resumed the Chair

11. Matters from the Floor

• Anti-Social Behaviour

- Vandalism at the Dams/Carron Nature Reserve – Fraser Johnston advised there had been damage done to the signs recently put in by CATCA for the Carron Loop project and also the interpretation board in the dams.
- A resident advised that there had also been a theft from the Strathcarron Hospice shop in Stenhousemuir.
- It was agreed given the perceived significant increases in anti-social behaviour, that Inspector Kellet/Sgt Goldie would be invited to attend the next Community Council meeting. (**Action: 4**)

• McCowan's Factory

- It was noted that there had been no up-date from Falkirk Council or otherwise on the proposals. It was agreed to seek an update from John Milne (**Action: 5**)
- YW advised that Cllr Carleschi had provided the transport assessments for both planning applications. These recognise concerns over goods vehicles using Gladstone Road and the proposed junction and impact on traffic flows in the area.
- YW advised that correspondence had been received which confirmed that the site owner had employed a Facilities Management Company to control the Vermin and also clean up the Pigeon guano. As well as this the Developer employed a Contractor who immediately prior to demolition undertook a cull of Pigeon and other vermin remaining within the Building. The Japanese Knotweed has been removed from the site by a Specialist Contractor. Further information on the full excavation of the Japanese Knotweed can be found within the Site Investigation Report on the planning portal. CH advised that she had taken photos of new shoots of Japanese Knotweed outwith the treated area adjacent to houses on Jamieson Avenue. It was agreed YW would write to the developers with copies of the photos. (**Action: 6**)

• Street Cleansing

- JK advised that Main Street was filthy. It was recognized that due to budget cuts there would have been reductions in frequency. However, it was agreed that Main Street should be prioritised for cleansing. YW to write to Falkirk Council to ask for their itinerary for street cleansing. (**Action: 7**)

12. Todhill Windfarm Fund Update & Consideration of Microgrant Fund Applications

- EA sought agreement that the microgrant applications should be discussed in an

open forum. It was agreed this should be the case. However, where there is a contentious application, agreement would be sought on a case by case basis.

- YW advised that only 1 application had been received by the 1st pre-meeting deadline set. This had been circulated around the Community Councillors. Following discussion, it was agreed that the first Community Council Micro-Grant of £180 would be awarded to Fraser Johnston to enable him to undertake a cycling qualification which will benefit the coaching and training he offers to young people in the local community. It was agreed that YW would contact the Falkirk Herald to do a piece on the handing over of the first cheque. **(Action: 8)**
- It was also agreed that further publicity of the grant scheme is required.

13. Approval of Previous Minutes

- The minutes were proposed and seconded by DS & JK subject to the alterations requested by Jacquie McArthur.

14. Matters Arising from April 2016 meeting

No.	Action	Action Taken	Outcome/Next Steps
1	Police Scotland to look into cones at Carmill Dance Studio	No update	Update to be sought.
2	Police Scotland to look into incident at Sainsbury's in Kinnaird	PC Clarke reviewed the CCTV footage from last night. No crimes or offences were committed but having spoken to staff they are becoming increasingly frustrated at the number of youths causing annoyance in the store. Images have been obtained and will be passed to the local school based officer for identification. The youths will thereafter be warned regarding their conduct.	Update to be sought
2a	Police Scotland to look into parking issues on Graham Avenue	Checks have been made when possible however nothing untoward found as yet.	Watching brief to be kept.
3	Jacquie McArthur to return to May meeting of LSTCC to discuss Lido/Stenhousemuir Town Centre	Invitation sent and accepted	Jacquie to attend May meeting
4	Jacquie McArthur to look into maintenance of car park at Plough Hotel	Update to be sought at May meeting	Action to be taken by new owners.
5	Microgrant Fund – to be publicised	E-mail sent, info on website, FB, Twitter, Instagram, info put into library & one stop shop	Further publicity required each month.
6	Mark Craske from NHS Forth Valley to be invited to May meeting	Invitation sent & accepted but canceled due to family reasons	To be carried forward to June meeting
7	Update on flooding to be sought from Falkirk Council at Spar Shop, Tryst Road and Bellsdyke Road	Not done	To be carried forward
8	Meeting with Falkirk Community Trust to discuss playing fields	Took place on 10 th May	See feedback below,.
9	Contact Falkirk Council for	E-mailed Falkirk Council	Falkirk Council

	update on no waiting signage on Main St nr Muirhall Road		checking with sign operator for timescales
10	Kinnaird pharmacy application	E-mail received looking for dates to meet to discuss process	GB advised dates available for meeting
11	Funding for community schools from FVRH development	Response received 21/4/2016 from Richard Teed – planning is looking into funds due before they give us a clear assessment on how it will be spent or retained for future risks. LHS most pressing requirement for Carrongrange expansion post August 2017.	Awaiting further update from Falkirk Council
12	PAN Consultation meeting 10/5/2016 for Falkirk Quarry	YW attended – the application is awaiting a decision from Falkirk Council over whether a planning application is required so site owner can re-commence work with SEPA's permission to infill the site to agricultural use. YW had circulated a note of meeting in advance.	Awaiting submission of planning application.
13	Write to Falkirk Council about the ownership of the verge in case of future issues with advertising signs on North Broomage Roundabout	Not done	To be done
14	Invite Falkirk Council to August meeting to discuss changes to bins	Email issued and invitation accepted by Robin Baird	Robin Baird will attend August meeting
15	Litter picking posters to be distributed	Not done	To be done (Action 9)
16	Chase Falkirk Council re additional bins on Tryst Road	Response received - Street Cleansing are reluctant to install any more bins at present, as they believe there are already an adequate amount nearby.	Given savings – no further action at present.
17	Quote for Community Enterprise website	Quote issued	No further action
18	Notice of Public Procession – Loyal Orange Institution of Scotland Falkirk District 26 – 25th June 830am and 345pm to be publicised	Posted on Facebook	No further action required.
19	Contact Falkirk Council re rat infestation at McCowans factory and seek update on pigeons and Japanese knotweed	Response received advising issues had been resolved	CH advises Japanese Knotweed still present. Discussed. Letter to be issued (Action 6)
20	Cllr Carleschi to seek update on state of South Alloa Road/Moss Road with Falkirk Council	Awaiting update	Awaiting update
21	Advertise Police Scotland Survey: www.scotland.police.uk/youviewcounts	Posted on FB & Twitter	No further action
22	Write to Falkirk Council re concerns received about tree works in the Larbert area (Larbert House and adjacent to Kinnaird Primary School)	YW advised that an update had been received from resident prior to any correspondence being drafted as agreed – Falkirk Council has responded to resident's issues	Agreed no further action required at present.
23	Look at location plan for P/16/0160/FUL for the erection of a dwelling house	Update provided at May meeting – the plan was reviewed. POR will contact the Woodland Group to see if any further	POR to contact the woodland group (Action

	on the land to the North of Castlewood on Glen Road in Torwood.	action is required	10)
24	Write to CSGN with suggestion of naming goats path on completion of works	CSGN agreed would support this and may be able to assist with funding	See feedback below
25	Write to Falkirk Council re issues with queues at Roughmure recycling centre	Not done	To be carried forward

- Item 8** – POR, EA & LS along with a local resident met Falkirk Community Tryst. EA provided the background to the meeting and advised that it was a good meeting. There is £75K of the original £100K left. It must be spent this year and cannot be accrued again. The meeting looked at various facilities and prioritized them. The meeting agreed that the initial focus for investment would be at Stewartfield. This currently has an 11-aside pitch. There is a need to put in new goal posts and turf the area. However, to develop it further, there is an option for 2 7-aside pitches with room for a potential 4a side pitch at a future date. The facilities would be free and non-bookable. It was agreed that the Community Council would undertake an initial quick consultation to gauge reaction to this on Facebook to gather views. **(Action: 11)** Other options included Greengates, draining resurfacing at the Lido and drainage/levelling at Stenhousemuir Sports Centre.
- Item 24**– YW advised that Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) had been keen to support the naming of the path and could potentially help with signage. DS advised there were a number of suggested names: Goats Way, Goat Walk, Ochilview Path, The Tryst Path, The Provan Path (after a former Community Councillor) or Warriors Way. It was agreed that YW would contact the Head Teacher of Stenhousemuir Primary School to explore options for a school naming competition with the Community Council providing a prize. **(Action: 12)**

15. Correspondence Report – Items for discussion not covered elsewhere:

Date of Item	Item	Action Taken/Required
27/4/2016	LHS – Invitation to Larbert High School Sports Awards - Tuesday 7th June	POR to attend (Action 13)
27/4/2016	Cllr Carleschi - Next Round of Local Planning Review Committees Thursday 9 June and Monday 13 June 2016	Noted
29/4/2016	Proposal of Application Notice: Torwood Quarry, Glen Road, Torwood – 23 June 2016- likely to be Scout Hall – to be advertised in Falkirk Herald	Awaiting notification of venue/time etc. CH to attend (Action 14)
10/5/2016	Foundation Scotland – update on decisions made at 1 st Panel meeting and thoughts on microgrant fund	Noted
10&16/5/2016	Resident re parking on Logie Drive – quieter than normal and survey being undertaken	Fwd to Mark Craske at FVRH (Action 15)
11/5/2016	TCSC – Consultation on outdoor gym - https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/JH78SRN	To be completed by all
12/5/2016	CATCA – 1 st of 5 interpretation panels put in place. NB one vandalised at Carron Dams 28/29 May.	Noted and also vandalism to signs
13/5/2016	Resident concerned re decision by panel to grant funding for shelter at bike pump track project – previously opposed at a LSTCC meeting	This was discussed and YW advised she had provided details on the decision making process.

		No further action agreed.
16/5/2016	M80 Extension scheme evaluation - request for stakeholder feedback	EA to complete (Action 16)
17/5/2016	Resident on FB – concerned about parking on Elizabeth Ave esp with activities in churches and Dobbie Hall	Discussed. The main issue is there is no place for the displaced parking to go if parking ceased in that area. Need more concerns from residents to take action.
19/5/2016	Local Energy Scotland – seeking 10-minute interview re grant process	EA to complete
25/5/2016	Resident re parking issues at hospital for attending appointments	Discussed and agreed to forward comments to Mark Craske (Action: 15) _
25/5/2016	Torwood Woodland Group – seeking a letter of support for signage and path improvements for Torwood Broch	Agreed – letter to be issued (Action: 17)
26/5/2016	Scottish Boundary Commission – update on 5 th review of electoral arrangements	Noted – no big impact on LSTCC

16. Treasurer's Report

- GB had submitted apologies but had reported that the current balance is £5159.89 including micro fund.

17. Planning Report

- Other than the applications previously discussed, there were no further issues with the planning report.
- It was noted that there appears to be an increase in individuals applying to purchase garden ground.

18. Other Reports

- None

19. AOCB

- None

20. Date of Next Meeting - Monday 27th June 2016