

Tarbat Community Council

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 21st August 2013 (Not yet approved)

1. Present: Steve Carroll, Helen Fleming, Jock Munro, Neil Ross, Janet Wilson, Billie Wood. **In attendance:** Moira Aitken, Kathleen Andrew, Jim Kerr, Alistair MacLean, George Terry, Muriel Vass, P.C.s A. Smith & A. Smith. **Apologies:** were received from Hamish MacKenzie, Cllr. Alastair Rhind, Cllr. Fiona Robertson.

2. Police Report P.C. A. Smith reported that there had been 34 incidents logged in the past 2 months but the majority were calls for advice and there were only 2 crimes, a theft and an alleged domestic assault. Helen Fleming asked for advice regarding the 20mph speed limits on the road to Tain. She was told that that the police would not enforce these limits. Alistair MacLean asked what action the Police take with cyclists who travel two abreast on the A9 and hold up motor vehicles. He was told that Police will stop such cyclists and advise the to travel in single file. Billie Wood thanked the Police for their attendance at the meeting.

3. Minutes of last Meeting The Minutes amended to reflect two naming errors, and were proposed for acceptance by Billie Wood, and seconded by Janet Wilson.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

4.1 Playpark. Billie Wood reported that there was new furniture in the playpark, which had been resurfaced and appeared to be well-used. Muriel Vass stated that the gates do not close properly and that dogs have been seen to enter the playpark. It was decided to contact the Council to ask for this problem to be rectified. **ACTION Steve** The poor drainage at the steps beside the Playpark was discussed. It was decide to ask R.D. Fraser for a quotation. **ACTION Jock.**

4.2 Road Repairs A reply had been received from Campbell Stewart stating that he shared our concerns about the state of the road between Inver and Tarrel. He was hopeful that he would be in a position to undertake further remedial work this year. Neil Ross stated that the road was dangerous and that he had recently had to replace a damaged car tyre due to the state of the road. It was decided to write again to Campbell Stewart, pointing out the dangers of this road. **ACTION Steve**

4.3 Portmahomack Playing Field Billie Wood reported that the litter bin at the field has been emptied once since the last meeting. Concern was expressed about the frequency of emptying the bin at Tarbat Ness Car Park. It was decided to ask Cllr. Rhind for assistance in this matter **ACTION Steve**

4.4 Jean Bridgeford Memorial and Well Renovation Project Arrangements were made to deliver a cheque for £1500 to Tarbat Hall Community Group

4.5 Dog Fouling continues to be a problem in the area. It was stated that there did not appear to be any new Dog Fouling signs since the last meeting. It was agreed to ask Cllr. Rhind to ask if the Dog Warden had visited Portmahomack. **ACTION Steve**

4.6 Provision of activities for young people in the area Steve has put a notice on the Community Noticeboard publicising Balintore Scout Group. Muriel Vass stated that she spoke for several mothers in Portmahomack who deplored the lack of play facilities for young people in Portmahomack and called for the establishment of a Skate Park in the village. After discussion, it

was decided to contact Rob Parkes to enable communication between him and the mothers.

ACTION Steve

4.7 Rockfield It was decided to ask Cllr. Rhind for assistance in asking the Council to remove stones from the grass verge in Rockfield Village. **ACTION Steve**

4.8 The Fountain Alistair MacLean has renovated the Fountain steps at the Community Council's expense. Alistair stated that the steps would probably require painting on an annual basis. Steve had been unable to obtain a quotation for rust treatment at the fountain. Alistair stated that the Gala Committee are likely to contribute to this project. It was decided to ask James Cameron, Knockshortie for a quotation. **ACTION Steve**

5 Councillor's Report None was possible in the absence of a Councillor.

6 Treasurer's Report Janet Wilson reported ca. £1600 in the Project Account (less £1500 payable to Tarbat Hall Community Group). The Current Account presently stands at £3019.55 as the Annual Grant had recently been received.

7 Dissolution of the Community Association Steve stated that the Community Association had agreed to terminate its existence and had agreed to disperse its assets to various good causes in the village. However, the annual responsibility of disbursing approximately £62 to the deserving poor would now fall to the Community Council. A discussion arose on how best to use this money, with the possibility of putting it into a "Emergency Fund". **NO ACTION was sanctioned.**

8 Handrail at War Memorial The Community Council have been asked to support a request for a handrail at the war memorial steps. It was stated that the railing surrounding the war memorial are rusty. It is believed that the Council have a fund for maintenance of war memorials. It was decided to ask Cllr. Rhind for assistance in this matter. **ACTION Steve**

9. Broadband Steve gave a report on a meeting hosted by Community Broadband Scotland in Tain in June. Approximately 90% of the Scottish population will see a significant improvement in broadband services by the end of 2014. Portmahomack and other rural areas will not see any such improvement, however. Community Broadband Scotland has been set up to enable rural communities to set up local schemes to improve broadband speeds. CBS will offer technical advice and partial funding for such schemes. In order to qualify for assistance from CBS, a community will have to demonstrate (1) a low average broadband speed (2) significant support in the community for improvement in broadband speed (3) a satisfactory Business Plan which includes financial and technical details. Steve also reported that Ken McMorran had done a survey of broadband speeds several weeks ago, showing an average download speed on just under 2 Mbps. However, only about 20 people had responded and this is insufficient to demonstrate strong local support for improvement. After discussion, it was decided that the best plan would be for the committee to "doorstep" the entire village. Muriel Vass, Billie Wood and Helen Fleming volunteered to go round the village. Steve was asked to prepare an information sheet/questionnaire for doorstep volunteers. **ACTION Steve**

10 Correspondence Steve Carroll reported on a number of items:

- Notice of consultation regarding the Scottish Rural Development Program and associated roadshows from the Agriculture and Rural Development Division, Edinburgh

- Notice of consultation regarding a strategy Towards a Litter-Free Scotland from the Highland Council and an associated event in Edinburgh. Responses are invited by 27th September.
- Winter Resilience - Assistance to Communities, from the Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services. After discussion, it was decided not to volunteer for services which are the responsibility of the Highland Council.
- Notice of a review by Police Scotland of the provision of Traffic Wardens and Public Service and Opening Hours at Police Offices.
- Notice of an Open Day of the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust on 27th September in Inverness.
- Hamish MacKenzie has written to the Planning Department objecting to the proposed wind turbine at North Tarrel. A Planning Review Body will carry out a site visit at 10am on 27th August. After discussion, the Community Council confirmed its objection to the proposed development but could find no new grounds for objection, the current grounds being judged to be adequate for refusal.
- Notice of publication of the results of the Community Council Evaluation has been received. The publication does not appear to have taken account of our submission. Steve will arrange for distribution of copies of the report in due course. **ACTION Steve**

11 AOCB

11.1 The Community Council stall at the Gala failed to happen but it was agreed that it remains a good idea to raise the profile of the Community Council. Alistair MacLean stated that there were several local businesses who would like to display their produce at a sale of work but who could not attend. Alistair suggested that the Community Council could man such a stall and also promote the Council at the same time. **ACTION Alistair**

11.2 Jim Kerr asked why the Community Council had done nothing about his request for replacement of the handrail on the steps from Chapelhill to Bank Street and whether the Council backed his request. It was decided to obtain an estimate for a new handrail from Bruce Begg, Fearn. **ACTION Jock**

11.3 Kathleen Andrew raised the question of the new fence erected around the School playing field. Many residents of Tarbatness Road found the new fence unsightly and suffered a loss of amenity. Muriel Vass stated that parents of schoolchildren had requested greater security at the school. After discussion, it was decided to write to the Education Department expressing our views and asking why there was no consultation before the fence was erected. **ACTION Steve**

11.4 Steve reported that Bruce Edwards had expressed concern at the dangerous state of the informal path from the "Recycling" Car Park to the beach. Apparently erosion has led to a steep and rocky descent to the beach. It was agreed to erect a sign suggesting alternative access to the beach. **ACTION Steve and Alistair**

11.5 George Terry expressed concern at the lack of spare capacity at Portmahomack Cemetery.

11.6 Moira Aitken gave a report on behalf of the Tarbat Hall Community Group.

- Work on the Jean Bridgeford Memorial Terrace and Well project was expected to commence before the next meeting.

- Grass cutting on the bank between the Hall and Castle Street was proving to be costly but necessary.
- Free WiFi access would continue to be provided at the Cafe.
- There was considerable damage due to ingress of water at the conservatory in the cafe. Repairs may prove to be expensive and entail temporary closure of the cafe.
- The village Christmas lights will be switched on earlier this year on a Saturday, with a Nativity Scene on Jean's Terrace and involvement with local children.

The Meeting closed at 9.55 pm Next Meeting Wednesday 2nd October 2013