

Appendix 3

RHU & SHANDON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CONVENOR'S REPORT FOR AGM, 14 JUNE 2017

I am pleased to report that the Rhu & Shandon Community Council has been active throughout the past year dealing with a number of issues on behalf of the local residents.

During the year R&S CC has continued to make representations to Argyll & Bute Council (A&BC) for improvements to roads and drainage around the villages. Active interest continued in the control of Japanese Knotweed along the lochside with encouragement of local organisations, including A&BC, Luss Estates, the MOD and Rhu Marina Developments Ltd to spray and clear infestations.

Faster Broadband, which it was hoped would be delivered throughout the community by the end of 2016, proves to be as elusive as ever. Some residents in parts of Rhu have reported an improvement in service but we continue to await an overall improvement. Despite the CC's best efforts, obtaining reliable information is proving impossible.

Planning applications are a key part of the CC's work and several of a minor nature has been discussed. Meaningful feedback from Argyll & Bute Council about restricting unapproved work at the Peace Camp has been non-existent although some of the structures have been removed and replaced with others! However the bottom line is that there has been no meaningful change on the ground. The inability of A&BC to deal satisfactorily with this issue is a source of disappointment to the CC.

It is understood that further developments at Rhu Marina await the absorption of the Crown estates organisation into the Scottish Government.

The Bowling Club continues to deteriorate and although the CC is open to discussions with the remaining Trustees contact has been limited.

It is understood that the application by the Navy/MOD to convert the Ardenconnel rugby pitch to a 3G surface and to install floodlights and fencing, which was approved by the A&BC Planning Committee, is on hold whilst the Navy/MOD explore some other options.

An application for two wind turbines at Laigh Balernock Farm was considered carefully but eventually an objection was lodged as it was felt to be contrary to A&BC own policy on wind turbines and it also impacted some archaeological sites. The application, which was recommended by Planning Officers, is to go to a Public Hearing.

Towards the end of the year Persimmon submitted an application to build 78 houses on the former Dobbies site. Although outside our CC boundary the significant increase in the number of planned homes over the LDP allocation causes us concern and possibly sets a precedent for departing from LDP recommendations. The CC is considering a submission.

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Other planning matters of interest were the improvements to the houses at the corner of Gareloch Rd and Manse Brae and continuing encouragement of A&BC to have a metal container removed from Ardenconnel Woods.

Comments were returned on a number of consultations including the identification of main issues stage of the Local Development Plan revision (LDP2).

Members of the CC have assisted with Beach Cleans and maintenance of the Barge Memorial Garden. A grant from “Seachange” was used to buy banners and tools to support beach cleans.

With no progress with a Conservation Area Appraisal for Rhu village by A&BC, whose responsibility it is, the sub-committee applied for and has received a grant towards the cost of employing a consultant to do the work. Sources are now being sought for the balance of the funds required.

A draft Key Environmental Features document was prepared and circulated for comment. A planned discussion with A&BC Planners had to be postponed and then fell foul of “purdah” rules around the local election time.

The Rhu Post Office has continued to provide a service following the arrangement between Post Office and Jas Judge and his niece. The CC will continue to monitor the plans for the local office.

The R&S CC website, which is an excellent source of local news and information, has continued to show improvement within the past year due undoubtedly to the dedicated work of our secretary and the small sub-group dealing with communications.

As Convenor my role has been made much easier by the tremendous support and work done by all members of the Community Council. It is appreciated that everyone is a volunteer and gives freely of their time to serve the community but without the energy and commitment given by the individual members we would achieve much less. A big thank you to everyone.

Jack Rudram, Convenor
Rhu & Shandon Community Council
8 June 2017