

**MINUTES OF CONON BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD IN THE STAFF ROOM AT BEN WYVIS PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ON WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**PRESENT**

Fiona MacKintosh (FM), Jim Attwood (JA), Hazel Bushell (HB), Alistair MacKintosh (AM), Jane Attwood (IJA), Councillor Graham Mackenzie, PC Kevin Taylor (part attendance) and eight members of the public.

**WELCOME**

Fiona MacKintosh welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Apologies**

Councillors Alister MacKinnon and Angela MacLean.

**2. Police Report**

PC Taylor apologised for the absence of interim reports between June and August 2017. He continued with his report for the period from 20 August to 18 September 2017. During this period there were 50 incidents reported for the Conon Bridge area but only 3 of particular note. PC Taylor continued by explaining to the members of the public present how the reporting of incidents was categorised, namely 1.Road Safety, 2.Antisocial behaviour and 3.Alcohol/Drug abuse. A copy of the full report is held with the minutes of the meeting. No questions were raised on the report, however members of the public attending the meeting had various issues that they wanted to make known and seek advice from PC Taylor.

The first item raised was with regard to adults riding cycles on footpaths. A member of the public present at the meeting was concerned that when reversing their car out of their driveway they were in danger of knocking a cyclist over. PC Taylor replied that it was irresponsible behaviour by the cyclist and if the cyclist was known to the complainant, the police should be advised. They would then contact the cyclist concerned and speak with them. Also, children had been noted racing their bikes along the footpath between the village car park and the railway station when the person concerned was walking their dogs. The children were asked to stop racing their bikes as it was likely to cause an accident and either they or the dogs were likely to get hurt.

Another member of the public present raised concerns regarding the speed of heavy goods vehicles and works traffic using School Road. One of the speed bumps had been lowered as it was deemed to be too high, but now that it had been lowered traffic is now able to speed over it. The member of the public present had contacted the police about 2 months previously. The police advised that they would contact Tulloch Homes with regard to this matter but to date no update had been received from the police. PC Taylor advised the member of the public that he would look into the matter and would contact them. The same member of the public also believed that it was an accident waiting to happen and that the speed limit should be reduced to 20 mph along this stretch of road.

The matter of noisy mopeds was also raised again by members of the public present and Community Councillors. PC Taylor had mentioned in his report that he had already spoken to 2 of the drivers concerned and had thought that this was no longer a problem. It was explained that it was not as bad as previously reported but was still an issue throughout the village.

Another member of the public present was very concerned about the verbal abuse that she had received whilst exercising her dog on the village playing field. An elderly man had shouted and yelled at her that he would call the police. The member of the public present had also spoken to another resident of the village who was now too scared to exercise their dog on the playing field having also been verbally abused. PC Taylor stated that if members of the public felt intimidated by verbal abuse they should contact the police and report the matter.

FM thanked PC Taylor for attending the meeting and delivering his report. She also advised that if any of the members of the public wished to leave the meeting at this point they were free to do so.

### **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting was proposed by JA and seconded by AM.

### **4. Matters arising and actions**

- The issue of abandoned vehicles throughout the village was currently being looked at by Councillor MacKinnon and Nell MacDonald-Rolfe (Highland Council Enforcement Officer). FM stated that nothing further should be published on this subject until the matter was rectified. FM also stated that The Highland Council is working with Police Scotland on this issue and they are nearing a resolution to this matter.
- A schedule of grass cutting throughout the area is still not available. Weed killing was carried out about three weeks ago and weeds will be cleared up soon.
- The Jet Patcher has been in the area with School Road having been done, though there are still a few other areas requiring attention.
- A few issues are ongoing with Tulloch Homes including surface water drainage problems. Councillor Mackenzie added that he had been contacted by a resident in Barley Row regarding the height of the houses and drainage behind Barley Row and whether the works had been carried out in accordance with the planning consent that had been granted.
- A grant offer for the Ladies Walk restoration project had been received from Tesco. A project start and completion date was required to be given prior to the grant offer and as such a start date had been given as 21 September 2017 with the completion date being the end of July 2018. Kenny Fraser will be accompanied by John Mackenzie in the near future to mark out the proposed pathways. Upon completion of this survey, work will commence and at this point volunteers would be able to get involved. FM stated that any help given would be greatly appreciated. She then advised the members of the public present of the 3 loops that are proposed for clearance. However one of the loops is not on John Mackenzie's land and until such time as the owner of the other land is contacted, this part will not be cleared. John Mackenzie is currently trying to establish ownership. One of the members of the public present suggested that the Fisheries Trust might also be able to help with the project.

- No further information had been received from West Coast Estates with regard to the vacant retail units beside the Co-op.
- Real time digital information display boards at the bus stops throughout the village would be installed soon. Councillor Mackenzie stated that the programme is now being rolled out and already one such display board has been installed in Dingwall.
- An update on the proposed cycle routes between Muir of Ord and Conon Bridge and Conon Bridge to Corntown was still required. Councillor MacLean would be asked to provide an update.

## **5. Treasurer's Report**

The balance of the account at 28 July was £6,140.64. This includes The Highland Council annual grant for 2017/18 of £1,205.88 for Community Council administrative operating costs. In addition, a 75% payment (£2,250) of the grant from Tesco Bags of Help/Groundwork UK had been credited to the account.

## **6. Communication and Consultation**

JA expressed concern with regard to the lack of communication from Ward Members to the Community Council. He had sent 3 emails in June 2017 to one of the Ward Members and to date had not received replies. Further, JA had received a copy of an email dated 26 July 2017 from a resident to all 4 Ward Members. As the resident had not received a reply, the resident had sent a 2nd email to the Ward Members. Councillor Mackenzie responded that he had been on holiday at the time of the 1<sup>st</sup> email and had subsequently contacted the resident and had offered to meet him to discuss his concerns. These concerns concurred with an article JA had published on the Community Council website regarding growth in housing in Conon Bridge without any apparent consideration being given to an increase in classroom provision at the school, increased traffic flow at the junction of the A835 and B9163 and lack of facilities at the Leanaig Community Centre. Councillor Mackenzie advised the meeting that Councillor MacLean had a seat on the North Area Planning Committee. Additional classrooms which had been proposed for completion by August 2018 would have to be funded by the Scottish Government. FM read out the text of an email she had received from Councillor MacLean with an update on the situation with regard to future requirements at the school. Options were currently being considered by Highland Council staff. It was considered by those present at the meeting that additional canteen facilities would also be required and 3 or 4 additional classrooms might be insufficient given the planning consents that had already been granted for housing. Concern was also expressed when it was mentioned that the additional accommodation could be of a modular design. Councillor Mackenzie further stated that only high priority capital works would be carried out as it was anticipated that the Capital Budget would be significantly reduced. The same resident was also of the opinion that a hold should be put on further house building until the school was able to accommodate an increased roll and further planning consent for house building should not be granted until the appropriate infrastructure was in place. With regard to the B9163 to A835 junction, Councillor MacKinnon will be contacting Transport Scotland to have a meeting with them as a result of a recent accident. However a roundabout would not be considered. A longer slip road from the A835 turning into the village and possibly a slip road leading on to the A835 from the village were considered to be reasonable options.

JA advised the meeting that he had already contacted Transport Scotland regarding this matter but he had been advised that this junction was not considered to be an accident black spot.

## **7. AOCB**

HB advised the meeting that a road sign outside her property was almost completely obliterated by a laurel bush that was growing in her garden. The road sign advised traffic of pedestrians crossing at the road narrows area. HB requested that The Highland Council either arrange for the bush to be trimmed or have the sign moved to where it can be better seen. IJA believed that the sign was situated in the wrong place as it is not giving motorists sufficient warning to slow down for people crossing.

FM advised the meeting that the bus stop sign in Leanaig Road was also covered by vegetation and new bus drivers on the route weren't stopping for passengers to get on as they were unaware of the bus stop. Councillor Mackenzie advised the meeting that he would make enquiries and deal with both these matters.

HB had also received a complaint from one of the residents in Wyvis Crescent with regard to the new LED lighting in that area. The complainant stated that the lights only gave off a circle of light directly beneath the lamp post and there were now dark spots between the lamp posts. Councillor Mackenzie stated that all lamp posts were being replaced by LED energy efficient lighting which was much cheaper to run.

A member of the public present at the meeting expressed concern with the operatives who had been strimming the area at the memorial garden in the school grounds as they had damaged some of the plants. Councillor Mackenzie noted the member of the public's concerns and stated that he would contact the department who dealt with grass cutting.

JA mentioned the Fields in Trust email that had been received by the Community Council whereby War Memorials and Memorial Gardens could be registered as protected sites. It was agreed that this was worthwhile. **JA** would take this forward.

JA advised the meeting that he would not be able to attend this year's Remembrance Service and lay the wreath on behalf of the Community Council. It was agreed that HB would represent the community on this occasion. It was also agreed that a poppy wreath be supplied to Tony Innes for him to place on behalf of the "Conon Bridge Community" at the memorial garden in the school grounds. Both wreaths will be procured by JA and paid for by the Community Council.

FM intimated that the Badminton Club were looking for new members.

A member of the public present at the meeting asked about the current status of Ferintosh House. Councillor Mackenzie replied that the Dingwall Players and the Highlands Supports Refugees will have the use of Ferintosh House up to the end of this financial year and then it will probably be demolished. FM offered to provide the surveyors report that the Community Council had obtained but Councillor Mackenzie didn't think that would be required.

The meeting closed at 20.40 and FM thanked the members of the public who had attended. She also asked that they might consider joining the Community Council as 2 members could

still be co-opted onto the Community Council. She could be contacted if they were interested and an item could be put on the Agenda for the next meeting.

## **7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 15 November 2017 at 7.30pm

### **MEETING DATES FOR NEXT YEAR**

17 January 2018

21 March 2018

16 May 2018

20 June 2018

### **ACTIONS**

1. Councillor MacLean to provide an update on the proposed cycle routes
2. Councillor MacKinnon to contact Transport Scotland regarding the B9163/A835 junction
3. Councillor Mackenzie to follow up on vegetation obscuring road signs
4. Councillor Mackenzie to contact the department responsible for grass cutting in the school grounds regarding damage to shrubs at the memorial garden
5. JA to register interest in the Fields in Trust scheme
6. JA to procure poppy wreaths