

Woodhill Residents Group

Minutes of Meeting held at St Ninian's High School Monday 16 February 2009

PRESENT (Alphabetical order)

June Grey
Charlie Griffiths
Betty Logan
Jim Logan
Robert Lowe
Donald Macdonald (Chairman)

Anne Mullin
Jackie Mullin (Vice Chairman)
Dominic Notarangelo
Tom Russell
Jack Scott
Wilma Scott

APOLOGIES (Alphabetical order)

Councillor Gordan Low
Rosaleen McDowell

Alan Moir

Welcome

Donald opened the meeting by welcoming those present and in particular Jane Grey a local resident, attending in connection with the Snack Van licence application.

Minutes

Acceptance of the previous minutes was proposed by Robert and Jack.

Before proceeding with the business of the meeting, Dominic drew attention to an error regarding his name which had occurred in the previous minutes. Wilma noted the error and apologised accordingly.

Donald asked if there were any items to be raised under AOCB. Jack intimated that he wished to raise the recurring problem he and his neighbour were experiencing regarding flooding. Donald said that he would include this item under the heading of "Bishopbriggs Academy". Jackie raised the continuing problems experienced in Kirriemuir Gardens. Donald also intimated his wish to include an item on "Buckfast" bottles.

Chair's Report

Donald began by saying that there was nothing to report under this heading that would not be covered later in the meeting.

Bishopbriggs Academy

The main thing to report regarding the new Academy was the problem of drainage and consequent flooding on to properties in Ochil Road.

Over the last several days e-mails had passed between Donald and Dominic with Nigel Hooper, Planning and Sandy McGarvey, Head of Resources, Planning and Improvement for Children of East Dunbartonshire Council regarding this problem. The crux of the matter is that at present water is being drained through the property at 5 Ochil Road resulting in damage not only to this property, but to the property at 3 Ochil Road also. To alleviate this, last year a track had been dug from the school, across the pavement so that the water could exit onto the road through two holes cut into the kerb. Apart from the fact that this proved useless and the water continued to come through No 5, it would appear that to exit water on to a road was in fact illegal. Regrettably there was now evidence of damage to a wall

between the two properties, damage to plants in both gardens with the added problem of possible soil erosion to the property itself.

Adequate drainage to properties bordering on the Academy site had been one of the 46 planning conditions set out regarding the construction of the Academy. It was intended that this should be achieved by a SUDS (Sustainable Drainage System). However this was subsequently replaced by an attenuation tank. (For information Donald had requested a copy of any hydrologist reports associated with fulfilling Planning Conditions 6 – 13 and it is understood that these are available to view on request at Council Offices in The Triangle, Bishopbriggs.)

Following on correspondence sent to the Council officers, the three elected members of the South Ward and the Luddon Construction Ltd who carried out work behind the properties in recent months, it is understood that a meeting will take place on Wednesday 18 February in an attempt to find a satisfactory solution and it was hoped to report further on this at the next meeting.

In the meantime, it was suggested that this matter should be raised at the forthcoming Community Council meeting and Donald agreed to do this.

Snack Van Licence

Dominic informed the Group that he had attended the meeting of the Civic Government Appeals Board held on Monday 16 February in Tom Johnston House, Kirkintilloch. At the meeting the opportunity had been afforded to himself, Wilma and several residents from the Angus Avenue locale to put forward their objections to the granting of the licence. Also in attendance had been representatives from the Roads and Education Departments within Council. Although the applicant was able to put forward her case, several compelling arguments against granting the licence were also put forward and at the conclusion of the meeting the decision was taken by the Board to refuse the granting of the licence.

A lengthy discussion followed within the Group during which it was suggested that there should be “exclusion zone” around schools. Such a scheme is currently in operation in at least one other council close to the boundary with Glasgow. It was suggested that approaches should be made to Councillors Hannah, Low and O’Donnell, Jo Swinson MP and David Whitten MSP to ask for the consideration to be given to implementing such a scheme. It was agreed that this matter should be reported further at the next meeting. Wilma was asked to write to Councillors Hannah, Low and O’Donnell. Robert would approach Jo Swinson MP and Donald would contact David Whitten MSP.

It was acknowledged that ice cream vans may also wish to include Bishopbriggs Academy as part of its route. Donald also agreed to contact Gordon Currie, Director of Education and Gerard McCormack, Community Planning Co-ordinator of East Dunbartonshire Council with regard to the need for planning permission being required for “semi permanent” trading and would report further on this at the next meeting.

Junction Woodhill/Auchinairn Roads

Donald reported that following the last meeting, via Gerry Cornes, Chief Executive of East Dunbartonshire Council, he had contacted Derek Cunningham, Head of Roads, Property Maintenance and Waste Management stating the concern of residents at the ongoing problem of congestion at the junction of Auchinairn and Woodhill Roads. He had also indicated the Group’s concern that this congestion brought with it the risk of accidents and the problem of “rat runs” being created to avoid this junction. In conclusion he had asked if it would be possible to investigate what options are available to resolve this situation. Unfortunately it would appear that this request was passed to Martin Cunningham who referred Donald to the contents of e-mails which had passed between him and Donald in June of last year and in this regard were irrelevant. Donald has asked him to review the original request. It is hoped that he will reply and that this item can be reported on further at the next meeting.

Bishopbriggs Academy Travel Plan

Donald informed the Group that he was still awaiting a copy of the Travel Plan for inclusion on the Group's website so that the residents of Woodhill could view this "wishful thinking" plan which, it is hoped, will address the anticipated high volume of traffic in the area. Donald intimated that he would persist in this regard.

Bus Turning Circle

There was nothing further to report on this item.

Damage to Grass Verge

Following the last meeting Donald had contacted Sandy McGarvey, Head of Resources, Planning and Improvement for Children within Council informing him that by parking on the grass rather than on nearby streets the contractors working on the new Academy site have been damaging the verge at the junction of West Cleddens Road and Angus Avenue. He asked for confirmation that the ground would be re-instated by the contractors at their cost and not from monies which could more usefully spent improvement, for example, play area in Woodhill.

Sandy has confirmed that the area will be re-instated and at a cost to the contractors. At a recent meeting on another matter, Donald took the opportunity to confirm this with Pat Muldownie of AMEC.

Ward Committee Spending

After the last Community Council meeting during which Ward Committee spend came up Bishopbriggs and Kirkintilloch Herald ran a story which implied that the Community Council was critical of the way in which the money had been spent and, in particular, in the South Ward.

The three councillors jointly responded to criticise the Secretary of the Community Council and affirming that the Ward Committee money had been properly spent and in an efficient manner. In response to this, a letter from had been published from Donald in which among other things, he had he had commented on the non-attendance of Councillors at Community Council meetings: this was referring to Councillors Hannah and O'Donnell during their tenure with the previous council, which ended in 2006.

Regrettably Council Low had taken exception to Donald's remarks which in no way had been directed at him. Consequently he responded somewhat critically of Donald in his position within the Community Council and his place within the Group.

Donald felt he had to set the record straight and wrote to the Bishopbriggs Herald, in the knowledge that his letter may not be published, and the record would not be put straight as far as Councillor Low was concerned. To ensure that Councillor Low had sight of the letter, a copy was sent directly to him. It was hoped that this would lay the matter to rest but Donald will report further on this item at the next meeting.

With regard to the Ward Committee purse, Donald hoped that this would be retained and disbursed on annual basis. He went on to suggest that rather than a fixed sum being allocated, this "spend" could take the form of one fifth of one percent of the total council budget. Therefore it would vary in amount from year to year.

Dominic suggested that this should be raised at the Community Council meeting under AOCB. This was unanimously agreed and Donald agreed to speak to this at the meeting if time allowed.

Sports Hall

Donald understands a meeting has been planned between Academy Community Trust (ACT) and councillors in the near future. He hoped to report further on the outcome of this at the next meeting.

Lowmoss Prison

Donald report that following a request to Asda on Kirkintilloch Road, permission had been granted to the Group to collect signatures against the naming of the prison to be located at Lowmoss. Commitments of the Executive Group permitting, it was hoped to do this over the next two weeks and certainly before the next meeting at which time this item would be discussed further.

It should ne noted, however, that efforts continue to be made at local and central government levels, as well as within the Scottish Parliament itself.

Any other Business

Kirriemuir Road and Gardens – Traffic

A brief discussion took place on the continuing problems experienced by residents in both Kirriemuir Road and Kirriemuir Gardens. It was suggested that a “survey” should be carried out on the traffic which exit Kirriemuir Road for, say, one week. Betty and Jim agreed to do this and to report further at the next meeting.

Buckfast

Donald report that some three weeks ago a glass Buckfast bottle had been thrown at his kitchen window. Although the outer glass was damaged, double glazing had prevented the bottle going through the window completely. Nevertheless this was a very unpleasant and frightening experience. He had contacted the agents who act for the producers of Buckfast suggesting that it be put into plastic bottles. This would prevent many of the injuries sustained by humans and animals when the glass bottles are thrown. There seems to be reluctance on their part to consider this idea, but Donald intends to persevere with this and to bring it to the attention of the Community Council at the meeting to be held the following night. This would be under the general heading of “Youth Disorder”.

Tea Dance World Record and Canal Festival

Due to lack of time, these items were carried over to the next meeting.

Cleddens Nursery

Donald confirmed that Wilma had attended the recent meeting of the Cleddens Nursery Eco Committee. Jackie intimated that he was in communication with the Nursery and hoped to become involved with a springtime project. Both members would report further if and when appropriate.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Group would be held on **Monday 16 March 2009** in **St Ninian’s High School**.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.