

Arran Community Council

Meeting held on Tuesday 25th April 2017 at 6pm at North Ayrshire Council Offices

Present: Bill Calderwood (Chair), Chris Atkins (Secretary), Neil Arthur, Cllr John Bruce, Liz Evans, Sergeant Allen Gow, Julie Graham, Gus MacLeod, Ricky McMaster, Peter McMullen, Peter Randell, Marilyn Woods

1. Welcome / Apologies

Apologies received from Jim Henderson, John Lamont, Barry Mochan & Jim Nichols.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 28th March 2017

Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting was proposed by Peter Randell and seconded by Peter McMullen.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Action Record & Status Report

Peter Randell queried the closure of item 11 in relation to non-digital communications. After brief discussion he opted to present a further proposal for consideration at the next meeting. This was agreed.

4. Police Report

Sergeant Gow reported that their ongoing policy with regard to speeding traffic through Arran's villages still favoured "education", which seemed to be working as fewer motorists had received warnings last month. Reports of drink driving were up, but mainly due to increased reporting.

Four additional officers would arrive on the island on 8th May, staying until September. Neil Arthur asked whether this would allow the police office to reopen, but Sgt Gow explained force policy was to keep officers out on patrol, with incoming phone calls and reports being handled by the contact centre on 101. In many cases, crimes such as vandalism would no longer be attended by officers in the first instance. Instead details will be taken over the phone and followed up locally as appropriate. Marilyn Woods thought it would be helpful to publicise this policy to prevent people thinking they were being fobbed off when reporting such crimes.

Peter Randell queried why CalMac were advising that weekend ferry spaces would be restricted. Sgt Gow was aware of a cycle race, but Gus MacLeod advised this was probably due to 600 scouts coming to Arran. Peter Randell asked whether the Police can cope with larger events. Sgt Gow confirmed that they could and that, if deemed necessary, additional officers could be requested, although officers can only be asked to volunteer, since they cannot be forced to stay overnight. There was general agreement that the CC should play its part in raising public awareness of events and to this end NAC should be reminded to keep the CC informed about them.

Bill Calderwood reported several concerns regarding traffic management along Market Road and at the Brodick ferry terminal. Sgt Gow had received complaints from motorists being moved on when causing obstruction. He considered it unreasonable for so many people to expect to drop off passengers at the terminal. He did not favour the three current taxi stances being turned into parking places because he anticipated these would then be permanently occupied. Ricky McMaster asked about creating an ARCAS drop-off. Peter McMullen suggested the spaces be redesignated as disabled parking places. It was agreed that an approach be made to NAC Roads department to reclassify the three taxi bays once the new terminal is open.

Arran Community Council Minutes ~ April 2017

5. Correspondence

5.1 Market Road

Bill Calderwood had received several calls voicing concern regarding the condition of the pavement. Gus MacLeod confirmed that improvements had been made, albeit on a temporary basis.

5.2 Revised Road Plan

The meeting with NAC Roads department on 3rd May was to finalise the works schedule, not to amend it with further wish lists. Gus MacLeod explained that the initial works would be prioritised on the areas of most concern. These have been identified following a condition survey, which takes into account not only the surface state, but drainage and usage. Ricky McMaster, Peter Randell and Peter McMullen were asked to attend the meeting at 9am at the Council offices and to report back to the Secretary for circulation.

5.3 E-mail Correspondence

NAC have been asked to use the new CC e-mail addresses, channelling all future communication via the Secretary or Chair.

5.4 Concessionary Ferry Fares

Neil Arthur asked why these had been increased and how this was notified. Cllr Bruce explained that funding to the twelve contributing councils had been cut, so the increase was to offset the shortfall to SPT. He warned that the concession was at risk of further cuts in the future. He apologised for the late notice, due to an SPT oversight. Ricky McMaster suggested that in an effort to help balance the budget, the age of entitlement might be delayed.

5.5 Disposal of Scrap Vehicles

There is currently only one SEPA-licensed contractor on the island and associated costs of compliance are rising relentlessly, resulting in more expensive vehicle disposal.

6. Reports from Sub-Committees

6.1 Elderly Forum

Peter Randell reported that only five people had attended the recent meeting. Chris Attkins had publicised the forthcoming round-island trip on the Arran Community Forum Facebook page. The eligible age for joining this group is 55.

6.2 Ferries

Bill Calderwood confirmed that the new boat build is on schedule and internal layouts are now being finalised. All decks will have lift access. Low windows will enable seated views, with full-length windows in the observation lounge. Completion of build is targeted at summer 2018, with final fit-out, crew familiarisation and sea trials to follow. No date has been confirmed for its introduction to service. Marilyn Woods asked whether the new ticketing arrangements would include concessions. Bill Calderwood explained that this will not be the case while the interim, print-at-home system applies although it is included in the next phase.

6.3 Forestry

Bill Calderwood stated that in the light of recent press coverage indicating overwhelming opposition to local timber extraction, several Brodick, Shiskine and Machrie residents who have no objection, feel unrepresented. Now that so much of the island is involved with timber movements, he asked whether it might be appropriate to have wider representation on the sub-committee? Ricky McMaster favoured this, but Neil Arthur thought it would over-complicate matters. Gus MacLeod pointed out that there was already a representative from each district involved. Peter McMullen and Peter Randell warned that over-involvement with other committees risked diluting CC credibility. Referring to inaccurate claims being made in support of cases, Bill Calderwood highlighted the Community Council's responsibility to drive through the best scheme for the island. Discussion followed about the best way to

Arran Community Council Minutes ~ April 2017

communicate with the wider community. On balance it was thought appropriate to await submission of the planning application before reconsidering CC representation.

7. The Community Council's Role in NAC — is it valued?

Recent unsatisfactory experience of dealings with NAC had prompted this agenda item. The example of planning decisions was raised by Peter McMullen, who gave several examples where complaints had previously been lodged regarding delegated powers and planning call-ins. He related that a highland community council had resorted to threatening to cease participating in the scheme to highlight their dissatisfaction, which had resulted in them being taken more seriously. Bill Calderwood explained that this had already been brought up with NAC and discussions are ongoing.

Peter Randell expressed disappointment that at the previous evening's hustings, the Community Council was never mentioned. He thought this demonstrated a lack of appreciation of the work undertaken by the CC. Few people had any idea of the vast amount of effort that had been invested in the ongoing public toilets debacle. Bill Calderwood was less concerned about public appreciation than effective, direct communication with NAC. He stressed the importance of the CC being recognised and respected by NAC. To be instructed to work via the Locality Forum was considered impractical.

Peter Randell asked why one third of North Ayrshire's CCs were defunct. Gus MacLeod opined that Arran was more of a community, with greater determination to see matters dealt with. Cllr Bruce agreed. He also mentioned the difficulties caused by many NAC personnel shifting, with only senior people being committed to outcomes. In response to the specific question, "Do you feel valued by NAC," members were generally negative, some stating that they felt used. Further discussion about the lack of respect and response from NAC culminated in agreement that no-one felt valued. Bill Calderwood announced that Dr Audrey Sutton, Head of Service for Connected Communities, had offered to meet with the officers to discuss these concerns. Cllr Bruce spoke in favour of Audrey Sutton, whom he considered committed to supporting the endeavours of CCs. Peter Randell proposed that Audrey Sutton be invited to meet with the full Community Council. This was agreed unanimously.

8. NAC Councillor's Report

Cllr Bruce wished everyone all success for the future, pointing out that challenging times lay ahead. He considered the Islands Bill would bring the opportunity for greater influence. He offered to forward a list of useful contacts to the Secretary. In his parting remarks he urged members to be courteous, respectful and persistent towards achieving their objectives. He wished his successor well and was presented with a token of appreciation from the CC.

9. AOCB — NAC Representative's Report

Gus MacLeod relayed that as a result of signage at the Kinloch Hotel, David McKay had been receiving numerous phone calls about the lack of public toilets at Blackwaterfoot. He suggested that it would be better for complaints to be routed to the general number. Neil Arthur was asked to update the Kinloch. Bill Calderwood pointed out that David McKay had been one of NAC's designated points of contact and reiterated that communications with NAC regarding the toilets were still ongoing, with numerous matters outstanding, such as the transfer of assets, signage, facilities upgrades, chemical disposal, relocation, and an application allegedly lost in NAC's internal process.

10. Proposed Date of Next Meeting — 29th May 2017