

Airth Parish Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held in Airth Primary School on Wednesday 21st February 2018

Members Present : **Jon Anslow (Convenor)**
 Aileen Amos (Secretary / Treasurer)
 Robert Smith (Assistant Secretary)
 James Toal (Vice Convenor)
 Stephen Sloper (Community Councillor)
 Murat Dilek (Community Councillor)

Also Present : **Rev. James Todd**
 Jacqueline Hogg, Co-opted Member(Airth Parish Church)
 Cllr. Laura Murtagh; Cllr. Jim Flynn;
 Police Constable Craig Stevenson (for part)
 George Russell; Margaret Penn; Annette Duff;
 Dorothy MacKinlay; Tom Sloper; Carol Dick;
 William Dick (local residents);
 Lockhart Bruce; Ronald Martin; Charley Turner;
 Fiona Turner (Bothkennar residents)
 David Anderson; Yvonne Boles (representing RSPB)
 Jane Rae (Minute Taker)

1. Apologies : **Councillor Joan Coombes.**

2. Police Report

PC Craig Stevenson presented PC Morrison's report in his absence.

The period covered was from 17th January to 21st February 2018 and identified 11 reported crimes / offences in the area. These included 6 road traffic matters, the remainder were breach of bail, fraud, domestic incidents, a road rage incident and theft of a motorbike (of which there is a positive line of enquiry). There were 61 calls to Police from Airth in this period, the majority of which related to road traffic matters, and also to neighbour disputes, fires, sheep on the road, concerns for persons and domestic

incidents. Earlier this month PC Morrison held a street surgery in Airth to allow members of the public to meet their Community Police Officer and highlight any concerns or complaints.

Any intelligence relating to drug misuse in the area should be reported to Police.

PC Stevenson provided information of the website called "Your View Counts" which can also be used by the community.

Jon Anslow informed PC Stevenson of recent large group of cyclists, numbering approx 50/60, who recently passed South Alloa and voiced his concern regarding the safety of cyclists, motorists and pedestrians when events of this size occur. PC Stevenson undertook to update PC Morrison and investigate with local cycling clubs. Cllr Murtagh added that she was also made aware of this.

Robert Smith updated on a recent accident involving a deer and a member of the CC (Murat Dilek). Robert's collected stats show that this is the 12th such incident since April 2017, which does not correspond with numbers kept by Falkirk Council. PC Stevenson would compare figures with what the community police unit hold.

PC Stevenson was thanked for his contribution to the meeting and he left at this point.

3. Previous Minutes :

The previous minute of 17/1/18 was accepted as correct and approved by Aileen Amos, seconded by Jon Anslow.

4. Matters Arising

- **Murat's Membership** : Aileen had contacted Falkirk Council and Murat is now a full member of the community council.
- **Lighting at Cemetery Brae** : Cllr Murtagh had asked if FC would consider reinstating the lights all the way up this stretch of road but this had been refused. Cllr Murtagh will ask the question again.
- **Road Repairs** : Some of these had been done as a result of intervention by Cllr Flynn but already some have started to disintegrate due to faulty sealing. Cllr Flynn undertook to investigate further, although Cllr Murtagh added that it appeared they were already on FC's repair programme. Some work has already been carried out - bottom of Station Road had been done today. Margaret Penn still unhappy about general state of roads and pavements. Cllr Murtagh informed meeting that FC seem to be responding fairly quickly to any complaints etc. made by councillors. Robert Smith wondered if a survey by the community council would be advantageous. Cllr Murtagh of opinion that this would merely duplicate what FC were doing.

- **Ownership of sluice pond at Dunmore** : This had been raised by James Toal at the last meeting. Apparently the person responsible has been identified as owner of Riverbank Cottage and the Village Association decided not to take this further as the owner had already been informed of their responsibility.

5. Correspondence :

- email from Robert to PC Morrison regarding the incident experienced by Murat when he collided with a deer on stretch of road between Dunmore and Murrays Caravans.
- email correspondence between Aileen Amos, Robert Smith and Stuart Murray of FC Governance Unit regarding Murat Dilek becoming a member of Community Council.
- information regarding removal of 2 disabled parking spaces at 12/13 Letham Cottages.
- copy of Robert's letter to Julie Seidel of Falkirk Council regarding comments made by Community Council on planning application for flats at Shore Road, Airth, in particular about the shortage of parking spaces.
- Community Safety Team report for 1 - 31/1/18. Continue to monitor and have investigated re dog fouling as they have received multiple complaints. Appealing to public to come forward with any intelligence.
- email with information of Xmas Lights Switch On in the village. Planned for Friday 7th December 2018.
- email from Scottish Health Council regarding a budget consultation by Clacks & Stirling Health and Social Care Partnership. To respond by 27th February.
- email from Scottish Health Council regarding National Safer Internet Day, which was 6th February 2018.
- email from PC Morrison with information of his second street surgery which was held in Airth on 13th February 2018.
- email trail involving Aileen, Robert and David Anderson of RSPB, who wish to make a short presentation to community council members regarding their application for the Skinflats Managed Realignment project.
- email of apology for tonight's meeting from Cllr Coombes. A short discussion followed regarding Cllr Coombes' part in researching a 20mph scheme across Falkirk Council area. Cllr Murtagh reiterated that this is a decision, following due process, that must be made at Council level and would require a change of policy and it must be demonstrated that it could be enforced. Robert Smith reminded the meeting that dialogue has been ongoing between Transport Scotland and the Community Council

for a long period of time and it would appear that some areas of the dialogue is open to interpretation.

- Cllr Coombes also mentioned in her email that she was in the process of identifying a venue for future surgeries, perhaps a day-time surgery, and asking for suggestions. Meeting felt this should be Cllr Coombes decision.
- copy of letter which Robert had drafted to be sent to Scottish Government regarding non availability of allowance for minute secretary, and how finance could be accessed. Members agreed that Robert should go ahead and send it.
- email regarding launch of public consultation on Noise Action Plan by Edinburgh Airport. Closing date is 2nd April 2018.

6. Round the Parish :

South Alloa : Jon still working on provision of notice board State of roads at Dunmore was also brought to the attention of the meeting.

Letham : nothing to report.

Airth : Aileen Amos mentioned that some of the bollards on the main road in Airth were lit and some were not. It appears that some of these are temporary. The Police had been asked to enforce parking on this stretch of road.

Dunmore : James Toal reported that villagers had been informed by BT that they have been connected to fibre broadband at Box No 3 in Airth. Seeking clarification as to what this means. Cllr Murtagh to attempt to find out.

James also seeking clarification on an item which was discussed at last meeting regarding tractors not being driven in vicinity of school during school hours - who had enforced this and who had agreed to it. An NFU rep who was asked said there was no national agreement. Jon Anslow believes this was an informal agreement made with local farmer(s) not to use vicinity of school while pupils were coming or going only. It is not something that the Community Council has powers to legislate against, it was merely a case of asking politely. Jon undertook to make further enquiries. William Dick (a local farmer) who was present at the meeting added that he knew nothing of this agreement.

7. Treasurer's Report :

Aileen Amos informed the meeting that there is £56.76 in the admin account . A temporary transfer of £150 has been made to the admin a/c from Christmas Lights a/c which will be repaid when we receive the annual admin budget from Falkirk Council. £2921.24 is in the Christmas Lights account, a first bill of £1993.75 has already been

paid. Robert has received another couple of donations, one for Christmas Lights fund, the other for a history book.

8. Planning Issues :

(a) Three small planning applications for signposts and info boards; and storage container : made by Inner Forth Landscape Initiative. These would highlight history of area and would be located at Higginsneuk and at the RSPB Reserve at Powfoulis. Community Council had no objections to these applications.

(b) Managed Realignment of Forth Estuary at Bothkennar : David Anderson and Yvonne Boles of RSPB were in attendance at tonight's meeting to talk to this application. The planning application has now been submitted and was validated by Falkirk Council on 14th February 2018.

David Anderson introduced himself and provided an overview of the proposed project, its aims and potential outcomes. The area is very important for wildlife and areas of habitat had been lost through land claim and the added dangers from climate change and increasing sea levels have created more pressure. Previous attempts at realigning in this area had not been successful but to leave the area as it is would lead to its deterioration through time.

Yvonne Boles informed those present of how data had been collected which informed this application. Various methods were used including aerial survey by drone and use of a 3D model of the Forth, which SEPA gave permission to use. Discussions had been held with a flood assessment expert and a detailed report also made to Falkirk Council. This enabled them to identify variables and outcomes between going ahead with scheme or not. The next step in the process would be inviting tenders to carry out the work. A further public meeting is due to be held within Airth Castle on Tuesday 27th February from 4 - 8pm.

David and Yvonne invited questions from the meeting.

A detailed and at times heated discussion followed with various queries asked of the RSPB representatives, including -

(Jon Anslow) what the benefits would be to Airth and Skinflats if this project goes ahead -
very important wildlife area and the scheme will improve and enhance the habitat and be a benefit for the local community. RSPB will not be promoting it as a site of interest because of the access issues and proximity to dwelling houses.

(Lockhart Bruce) why Lidar data used to inform the application was not the most recent available and could the RSPB reps give the meeting a precise figure of improvement to flood risk in the area between having the work done and not -
RSPB reps believed that the most recently available Lidar data could not be accessed, however Mr Bruce

was of the opinion that this is available to everyone who has the relevant software to read it. Meanwhile Yvonne of RSPB would identify the precise figure of improvement to flood risk and attempt to have this information available for Tuesday's meeting. It was also agreed that the Falkirk councillors present would pursue with FC why the data used was deemed acceptable by them and SEPA, which enabled them to publish figures of the possible improvements.

(Fiona Turner) changes to rights of way and paths that local walkers and dog walkers have followed for years which are now no longer accessible, in particular the Old Drove Road, which is not owned by the RSPB - the embankment was recognised as an alternative pathway, although it was agreed that this might not be suitable for everyone. It was agreed that access requires improvement.

(Stephen Sloper) where are the materials coming from that will build the defences - materials that exist in the area will be used.

9. Proposed Clean Up of Plastics : In response to an email plea from 'Keep Britain Tidy' to register to help clean up the country, Robert Smith spoke of the high level of plastic that exists on our stretch of the foreshore. He felt that given the high profile that plastic rubbish is being given at the moment this would be a worthwhile project to initiate and be involved in. The Bothkennar residents and RSPB reps present at the meeting expressed their willingness to be involved in this clean up. Robert undertook to organise and felt that the probable date for starting this would be around the beginning of April.

10. Flooding at Letham : Cllr Murtagh spoke of flooding at the entrance from the main road to Letham Terraces, which has been ongoing for many years. In addition flooding has also occurred to the lower levels of the Woodland Walk over the last few years. At times the road has to be closed because of this. A further complication seems to be that flooding to the Scottish Water pumping chamber causes it to fail and allows the discharge of raw sewage into the surrounding area. Cllr Murtagh attended a meeting within the Council recently and gained information on the history of the problem and what had been done to alleviate it previously. Scottish Water have presented Falkirk Council with a solution to their part of the problem, this is to replace the pipe but follow a different course. Plans are at an advanced stage but not final yet. It would seem sensible for Falkirk Council to combine forces with Scottish Water and fix the whole problem. Cllr Murtagh showed the meeting a map of the proposed solution and undertook to work closely with Scottish Water and Falkirk Council to come to an agreement.

A discussion followed between those present, especially residents of the area affected, of possible solutions and the need for a solution that works for everyone. A query was raised regarding available budget to carry out this work. It would appear that Scottish Water and Falkirk Council both acknowledge responsibility and budgets will be available.

11. AOCB : Stephen Sloper spoke of his concern at gunshots coming in direction of Castle from Higginsneuk and of a high number of spent cartridge shells found on the shoreline. Cllr Murtagh added that if cartridges are found below water line this is against the law. Jon Anslow encouraged Stephen to phone PC Morrison if he has concerns again.

No further business.

Jon Anslow concluded that there was no further business and therefore closed the meeting.