

## **SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING**

**HELD ON TUESDAY 27<sup>th</sup> MAY 2014**

**Seil Island Hall**

**PRESENT:** Seumas Anderson, Charles Struthers, Ann Marie Robin, Eileen Colston, John Gordon, Graeme Bruce, Alan MacFadyen, Chris Dugdale, Julie Ferris; Cllr Elaine Robertson, Mr Jim Smith and 16 members of the public

**APOLOGIES:** PC Jeremy Moore, Cllr Duncan MacIntyre

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Graeme Bruce: a notified person re the installation of petrol tank application

#### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were agreed as an accurate record; proposed by Ann Reid, seconded by Stuart Reid.

#### **MATTERS ARISING**

##### **Emergency Planning Preparation**

John Gordon reported that an updated edition of the Directory would soon be available in the shop. Any amendments or additions of people new to the area should be sent to John, who would check if they wish to be included. The front page emergency contacts would be printed separately and distributed free to every house, including holiday homes, on the island. Cllr Elaine Robertson agreed that this was an excellent idea.

The Seil & Easdale Islands Resilience Plan had been sent to Argyll & Bute Council, and feedback was awaited. John Gordon had populated the tables with emergency contacts and equipment, and consideration was being given as to how best to disseminate such information.

Thanks were given to John Gordon for all his work in producing the Resilience Plan.

##### **Scottish Water**

Charles Struthers reported on the outcome of discussions with David Innis of Scottish Water.

It had been formally requested to reduce the height of the fence around the main pumping station to a normal stock fence height. More shrubs would be planted to screen the site, and the top band of the shower unit would be painted to make it less obtrusive. The wooden covers were working well as soundproofing.

The new notice board at the shop was in hand; Charles had suggested the notice board in the car park at Ellenabeich as a suitable design.

Scottish Water would undertake a general tidy and cutting back of verges and attend to any knotweed on their ground.

Thanks were given to Charles for all his hard work in attempting to bring the outstanding issues to a satisfactory conclusion.

## **Roads**

The Chairman introduced Mr Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Amenity Services, to the meeting. Mr Smith spoke about three areas:

### **1. General issues/problems**

The Council were working through ongoing issues such as drainage and potholes, but it was considered that the roads were in generally good condition. Routine maintenance would be carried out within existing budgets, but there was no current provision for additional improvements.

It was noted that the 30mph signs had been damaged and these would be repaired.

There had been an enquiry about delisting part of the Balvicar road. Appropriate consultation had taken place, and a number of objections had been received, so it was proposed to maintain the status quo.

### **2. Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE)**

Legislation was now in place to make static parking offences a civil issue, and the local authority would carry out enforcement. The police would still deal with any obstructive/dangerous parking. Initially, Argyll & Bute Council would issue warning notices, with fines issued from 19<sup>th</sup> June. The scheme was not to generate income, but to ensure better traffic management and turnover of available parking spaces to improve safety and to help the local economy.

### **3. Kilninver Bridge**

During the winter of 2010/11 the spandrel walls had been damaged by the extreme weather. This had led to concern for the integrity of the bridge. Weep holes were introduced, with repointing to the water line and electronic monitoring, initially every two weeks, then every 4-6, and now quarterly. The bridge is now stable and in good condition; the Council is confident there are no short to medium-term concerns over safety. However, the Council is developing a Contingency Plan should the bridge become unavailable. This is at an early draft stage, and a meeting with the Community Councils and the Emergency Services was suggested to take the plan forward.

It was noted that the landowner adjacent to the bridge had offered 50% of the cost to provide a new road alignment and bridge to take Seil-Oban traffic. Mr Smith confirmed that the Council could not take up the offer since there was no concern over the safety of the current bridge for the foreseeable future, and matched funding was not available.

Mr Smith then took a number of questions.

The Chairman asked if improvements to the Cuan Road could be put on A&B Council's "to do" list. Mr Smith agreed to bear this in mind, and confirmed that any opportunity for localised widening would be seized as and when it arose. He would seek guidance from the Planning Department regarding guidelines for planning gain through applications.

Weight limits for the local bridges were suggested. Mr Smith explained that any bridges without limits had been tested for 44 tonne loads. Weight limits on bridges with no alternative route were used only as a last resort. Applications for abnormal loads were considered on the basis of the access route, bridge condition and geometry of the road. The Council works with the police to ensure enforcement of the regulations, with significant penalties for any infringements.

Concern was expressed that if capital is used to augment revenue expenditure there would be no opportunity for significant capital improvements. Mr Smith explained that capital expenditure is used to maintain and enhance existing assets. The road network is surveyed annually to give a numerical value known as the Road Condition Index (RCI). Modelling software is then used to show the outcomes and implications for the RCI of different budget inputs. Any concerns can be fed back through the A&B Councillors, and can be raised with the Scottish Government.

It was suggested that tarring and chipping was ineffective and creates road noise. Mr Smith explained that tarring is used to waterproof the surface.

It was agreed that the white lines on road edges are effective, but get masked by overgrowing vegetation. A&B Council carries out verge cutting on a prioritised basis, and can pursue landowners where necessary to ensure vegetation is cut back to give safe sightlines. Any concerns regarding visibility splays should be reported to the Council.

A question was asked about a causeway to Easdale Island. Mr Smith replied that discussions were ongoing regarding various fixed link proposals, and that any decisions would be at governmental level.

It was suggested that Oban needs more parking spaces, not fewer as through the proposed Stafford Street development. A&B Council would review the parking situation after the implementation of DPE, which should result in better turn round of spaces.

It was confirmed that misuse of Blue Badge disabled spaces would be given high priority for enforcement.

The Chairman thanked Mr Smith for his time, and for the very interesting information regarding the maintenance and development of our road network. Cllr Elaine Robertson noted that the roads infrastructure is crucial to the economic development of Argyll and Bute, and that our lifestyles depend on it.

## **Health**

### ***Defibrillators***

The defibrillator had been installed outside Seil Island Hall. People were now to be invited to sign up for training. The first session would be at 3pm on 8<sup>th</sup> June in Seil Island Hall.

Cllr Elaine Robertson suggested the Community Council invite Shaun Davidson, lead in the project reshaping care for older people, to attend a future meeting to update the community on the proposed model of care.

### **Police Report**

The need for continued vigilance against online, telephone and postal scams was stressed again. Everyone was also reminded to keep their properties locked.

### **Planning**

#### **Erection of shed and fence and formation of hardstanding area (retrospective)**

##### **The Old Inn, Ellenabeich**

Ref No 14/000324/PP Received: Fri 31 Jan 2014

Status: Application Permitted

#### **Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage with residential accommodation at first floor level.**

Land West of Dunearn House, Ellenabeich

Ref No 14/00402/PP Received: Thu 06 Feb 2014

Status: Application Permitted

#### **Erection of dwellinghouse and formation of vehicular access**

Land Adjacent to Braeview, Balvicar

Ref No 14/00618/PP Received: Wed 12 Mar 2014

Status: Application Permitted

### ***Still pending***

#### **Site for the erection of 20 dwellinghouses**

Land South East of Oban Seil Farm Clachan Seil Isle of Seil Oban PA34 4TN

Ref No:14/00180/PPP Received Monday 20 January 2014 Status: Pending Consideration

The Community Council would comment once more detailed plans were submitted.

#### **Change of use of land for the siting of timber shed, installation of petrol storage tank and erection of associated fencing**

Land Adjacent to Public Car Park Ellenabeich Isle of Seil

Ref No:14/00914/PP Received: Monday 7 April 2014 Status: Pending Consideration

The original application had been withdrawn and replaced by the above. The Chair reported that the Community Council had requested an extension to respond to the amended application following this meeting.

There was considerable discussion of the application. Particular concerns raised were that there should be stringent conditions of use and a robust emergency plan, that the Conservation Officer reassess the visual aspects of the proposal, and that the Roads Department have a closer look at how pinch points might impede traffic flow. Concerns were also expressed about drainage and the possibility of water back-up and flooding. Mr Hill stated that the application was going through due process, and he would provide a statement regarding issues raised at the previous meeting (Appendix A).

### ***New applications since last SECC meeting***

#### **Installation of electronic barriers (retrospective) Highland Arts Ellenabeich**

Ref No 13/02604/PP Received Mon 11 Nov 2013 Validated Wed 07 May 2014

Status: Pending Consideration

It was noted that the long service bus cannot now turn in the car park, as had been the previous practice (although it is recognised this was not an official arrangement). Further consequences are that fewer cars now use the Highland Arts car park and sometimes block the kayak launch point and the service bus parking stance. It was suggested the parking stance markings on the road be renewed, and that the sign to the public car park be moved/enhanced to make its location clearer.

It was also noted that there was no planning permission for the signs associated with the barriers.

#### **Alterations and erection of single storey rear extension**

38 Back Street Ellenabeich Ref No 14/00693/PP Received Monday 17 Mar 2014

Status: Application Permitted

#### **Erection of wind turbine (34.4 metres to blade tip) and formation of association access**

track Land North East of the Coach House Dunmor, Ellenabeich Ref No 14/00799/PP Received Fri 28 March 2014

Status: Pending Consideration

There were no comments on this application.

#### **Proposed telecommunications installation Land South of Cnoc Fennaig House, Balvicar**

Ref No 14/01014/TELNOT Received Fri 11 April 2014

Prior Notification – no objection

### **Any Other Competent Business**

There was none.

### **Tabled papers**

None.

### **Date and time of next meeting**

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2014, 19.00, Seil Island Hall

## Appendix A

### Statement from Mr Tony Hill

At the previous Seil CC meeting questions were asked and statements made of Seafari which without full information or clarification I was unable to address in a proper manner. Having gained this information I am able to share this with the meeting. I am conscious every word spoken by Seafari at Seil CC meetings is recorded and has been used against us hence the caution.

I recall 4 distinct issues raised and address them in no particular order.

1. Brochure tabled by Mr Odling reference a fuel pontoon available for purchase and a brochure presented to the meeting. Taylor Fuel Solutions do produce a floating petrol pontoon/barge. This 5 to 10 thousand litre pontoon barge when purchased comes complete with a full stability booklet for the vessel. It is towed by certified tugs. Apart from the implications of Seafari operating a tug the pontoon is restricted to decategorised waters The current barge in operation is restricted between Gravesend and Richmond Bridge on the River Thames. I contacted MCA Clyde. They replied by e mail that under current legislation neither a towable pontoon nor a dedicated boat with tank would be allowed transporting petrol from Ellenabeich Pier to Easdale. No exceptions can be made for the short distance.

2. Statement – we don't want a petrol tank exploding and destroying an ancient monument. The proposed fuel station carries both Trading Standards and UK Petroleum Office Approval. There are over 250 such stations around the UK, some in the centre of major cities. Some tanks are placed in schools in central London and Edinburgh. To date there have been no known incidents involving these tanks. The Health and Safety Executive do monitor issues and welcome comment from competent persons. They suggest those that have concerns and evidence to support such statements regarding the potential explosion risk he should share this information or knowledge with them immediately.

3. There are a considerable number of e mails in circulation from objectors regarding Seafari's operational practices and totally unrelated to this planning application. Seafari wishes to state it does not as claimed operate 'under the radar of planners' Seafari are co operating with each agency's investigating officers in turn viewing the procedure as a means of audit. I met with Stephen Fair, Team Leader Planning and Andrew Barrie Enforcement Officer both of Argyll and Bute Council. The specific question for multiple occupancy and change of use as at the last meeting was discussed. The conclusion drawn by Mr Fair was Seafari was not in breach of these regulations. To ensure clarity on this matter he will offer Seafari written guidance ensuring clarity for all parties..

4 A general cause of concern at the last Community Council meeting was the lack of job opportunity within the Seil Community. Seafari was accused of not advertising or employing locally. Seafari is a group of companies who employ short, medium and long term staff. Team Seafari 2013 consisted of 23 persons. 8 persons are direct Seil ratepayers, 3 university students with parents who are Seil ratepayers, 3 attended Oban High School with parents Seil ratepayers. A further 4 more 'permanent'

seasonal staff lived on Easdale Island for 8 months. These are young active people. The meeting 10 mins earlier had been trying to attract such persons to the area.

Seafari advertises these latter posts on the internet. We are an internet based company. The skill set within this year's group of 'longer term seasonal' staff includes a graduate marine biologist specialising in cetaceans and ornithology, a fine arts graduate specialising in photography and video. Our ticket office is managed by someone who previously managed 19 complexes with a major leisure company and speaks three languages. Seafari welcomes applications from residents of Seil. Whilst we will advertise again in February we are happy for anyone to leave their CV with us at the Ticket Office.