

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Public Meeting held in the Seil Island Hall at 7 p.m. on Tuesday 25th November 2008

Present: Seumas Anderson Chairman
Jean Campbell Vice Chairman
Alasdair MacFadyen Treasurer
Stuart Reid Secretary
Tina Jordan
Mike Shaw
Donald Melville

Apologies for absence: Cllr MacDonald

Also present: Chief Inspector Fred Hall, PC Andrew Simpson, Cllr Elaine Robertson and 12 members of the public

1 **The Minutes** of the meeting held on Tuesday 23rd September 2008 were distributed, read and proposed as correct by Tina Jordan and seconded by Ann Reid.

2 **Matters Arising:-**

- a) **STAG Appraisal** The Chairman read an e-mail from Mr Stewart Turner in response to our request for a progress report about the Easdale Transport Link Appraisal. Mr Turner said the Council had still not received even a draft document from their Consultants and they were exceedingly disappointed that they continue to fail to meet their target dates. He said he hoped to be able to present a report to our next Community Council meeting in January 2009. Cllr Robertson said she had spoken to Mr Gorringer who will be meeting with the Consultants to discuss the delays.
- b) **Conservation Areas Appraisal** The Secretary reported that the sub-committee had met 3 times since our last Community Council meeting. The sub-committee comprises Stuart Reid, Mike Shaw, Tina Jordan, Adrian Jackson-Stark (Argyll and Bute Council) and Jim Watson (Secretary, Slate Islands Heritage Trust). We have received 76 responses to the 350 questionnaires sent out, and the purpose of the meetings was to begin the analysis of the returned papers. Tina Jordan has carried out most of the statistical analysis and Mike and Stuart are analysing the written comments. These will be consolidated and summarised. We will meet again to prepare our final analysis and conclusions which will be put forward to the Community Council before being presented to a public meeting. We expect this to happen early in 2009. Argyll and Bute Council will then be responsible for drawing up the Management Plan based on our recommendations.
- c) **Health Matters** No-one from the Community Council could attend the CHP meeting on 13th November but Tina Jordan gave a resume of other meetings. There has been a meeting of the Easdale Medical Practice Patients Group and there was an Area Public Partnership Forum on 18th November.

It appears that the preferred location for the NHS Dental Practice is the old Harbour Bowling Alley but we do not know when it might be ready.

Forms for the Highland and Islands Travel Scheme (to claim travel expenses for medical appointments in Glasgow etc.) are now available in the Surgery.

The emergency evacuation procedures from Easdale, Luing and other islands in Argyll are now being discussed at Health Board level in order to establish the proper, more sustainable, protocol. Dr Hannah said that a helicopter was not always the most appropriate method of evacuation and that the preferred method in the case of Luing was the car ferry. In some cases, helicopter response times could be unpredictable, sometimes up to 6 hours. Cllr Robertson agreed. She said that discussions were being held about helicopter landing areas but talks must also be held to resolve the ferry situation. Dr Hannah was concerned that the size of the population on Luing meant that an emergency situation was likely sooner rather than later and he regarded the situation as urgent.

Mental health services are being redesigned but there is a delay in the process while more information is being sought. The next round of public consultation will take place between January and March 2009.

Tina said that there was to be a review of chaplaincy services at Oban Hospital covering all faiths and non-faiths with facilities for hospital chaplains, staff, patients and relatives.

There is a new post in the Citizens' Advice Bureau to support anyone having difficulty with NHS service and in 2009 there will be a 'patient experience' programme to look at the good/bad experiences people have had in NHS Argyll

There is a Locality PPF meeting on 8th December and Tina will raise some problems relating to Outpatients' Department appointments and difficulties getting through to Oban Hospital departments by telephone.

We will organise another Heartstart refresher training session for Seil and Easdale residents early next year.

- d) **Local Roads** We are now sending a list of road defects to the Roads Department after each of our meetings. We have made them aware of our concern about the damage being caused to the B 844 by the waste water works and will ask for a proper survey to be carried out when the work is nearer completion. In the meantime we will ask for repairs to be made to parts of the road not affected by the work. The Chairman read a response from the Council who are liaising closely with Balfour Beatty.

We have asked if the level of the road into Balvicar Village, by pump station number 6 and the 'creek', could be raised when it is resurfaced. This part floods at High Water Springs and cuts off the village. They will consider our request but any remedial work depends upon available finance.

Other problems identified were the possible subsidence of the stone wall on Barnacarry Hill and the potholes appearing between Barnacarry and Kilninver Hill and on the road approaching Ellenabeich and in Front Street.

- e) **Planning** The Chairman read out the latest planning applications. None of these were subject to comment by the Community Council.

- f) **Police Report** The Chairman introduced Chief Inspector Fred Hall and PC Andrew Simpson who is our new Beat Officer. Chief Inspector Hall apologised for a breakdown in communications. He said the Secretary had been trying to contact them to find out who our new Beat Officer was but we had finally found out through the local press. He accepted that the Community Council should have been informed properly by the police. He introduced PC Simpson who was interviewed successfully for the job. PC Simpson said he was finding his feet and looked forward to serving the community. He appreciated any help we could give him and to meeting everyone. The Secretary asked about the best way to contact him. Other than emergency calls, his number is 01631 510500. This is the number for Oban Police Station but callers will be routed via a call centre. Simply ask to speak to PC Andrew Simpson. If the need for your call is queried, say Chief Inspector Hall has authorised your call.

Tina Jordan asked about the mobile Police Office. PC Simpson said it was in our area on Saturday, as part of a road safety campaign. If we wish, talks and visits can be booked via Lochgilphead (Richard Barry). If we are holding an event, particularly involving children, we can ask for it to be present. It would be ideal for the stone-skimming. The Chairman thanked the police officers for the extra coverage during this year's event which passed off without incident.

Keith Oversby asked if the CCTV camera was still to be erected at Ellenabeich. CI Hall said it was difficult authorising live cameras because of legalities. It was agreed that a dummy camera might deter malefactors from petty vandalism at the pier.

Mike Shaw asked if patrols could include visits to remote houses such as Kilbrandon. PC Simpson was happy to do this as long as house-owners did not object or feel uncomfortable. He also encouraged residents to let him know when properties are unoccupied so he could watch them. CI Hall said he hoped we would see a more frequent police presence in the future.

- g) **Association of Argyll and Bute Community Councils Meeting** The Secretary reported on this meeting with Argyll and Bute Council on 4th October at Kilmory. It was attended by 13 Community Councils and led by Council Leader Dick Walsh. There was a good presentation by the Chairman of the Scottish Council for National Parks but we were disappointed by the absence of the new Council Chief Executive who was due to be introduced but was too busy to attend. Council Leader Walsh gave a talk about the Community Planning Partnership and answered written questions. It was during these answers that we discovered that a review of Community Council boundaries was due before the Community Council elections in April. The Secretary said the implications of this were to be discussed later in the agenda. The tone of the meeting was generally disappointing.

- h) **Recycling** Following our meeting with Sandra Duncan about a proper site for the bins at the Hall, John Gordon was to let her have a drawing of the area available. The Secretary mentioned that Ms Duncan was due to retire at the end of the December so it was important to let her have details as soon as possible. If she left before arrangements were made, we may lose the opportunity to improve the recycling area. We will follow up once she has the details.
- i) **Scottish Water** The Chairman read an e-mail to Scottish Water expressing our concern about earthworks in an area of knotweed by Dalanasaig. We were concerned about its being spread to other locations. In their reply, the contractors said they had identified the weed and had treated the area concerned according to SEPA guidance notes.

The Chairman also referred to a letter from Mr Peter Reid asking if rough ground and road verges could be re-seeded with wild flower seed when the work was finished. We have written to Scottish Water who are agreeable but will have to raise the matter with the Roads Department as far as road verges are concerned.

We have asked Scottish Water for a timetable for the remaining work. They expect the bulk of the 'civil' work (digging) to be done by January '09. The mechanical and electrical work is due to be completed by March '09. There will have to be some reinstatement work after this date.

At previous meetings, we had referred to a formal public meeting to discuss the waste water project. However, following a public 'open day' with Scottish Water on 3rd September and talks with Cllr MacIntyre, we felt that at this stage of the project a further meeting would serve no useful purpose. Mr Scotland of Scottish Water wrote thanking us for our help in arranging the 'open day' (Chairman read out his letter) and said they were always available to discuss any matters that may arise.

Dr Hannah told the meeting that he was still in contact with Waterwatch Scotland about the huge cost of the project – he said it will cost £1000 per house to maintain the system – ad infinitum – and he was still doubtful about its efficacy.

The Chairman asked for comments. It was noted that the STOP/GO boards were not visible in the dark and that roads were difficult to drive on when contractors were using floodlights. CI Hall said he would ask 'traffic' to look into this. Rose Wands said there was a steep drop beside the road near her house where it was dangerous for traffic trying to pass each other.

3 **Other Business**

- a) **Community council Review** The Secretary explained the background of this review which was first raised at the Kilmory Association meeting. There was a degree of concern because the review would affect the structure and number of Community Councils and it could not be completed before our elections in April 2009. The Secretary said we had raised the matter at our Community Engagement meeting with Councillors on 9th October. It was confirmed that a review was to take place but it was agreed it could not be done before elections. The Secretary read extracts from subsequent correspondence explaining that the review had to take place because of changes in the polling district Ward boundaries which were changed in 2007 and the

introduction of multi-member local authority Wards in 2005. Community Council boundaries must be brought into line. As a review cannot be completed in time for April 2009 elections are to be deferred until September 2009. The initial consultation should take place by March 2009 and we have been assured that full discussions will take place with Community Councils.

The Secretary outlined a number of concerns we already had, though we had not yet seen proposals. We know that the Council want to reduce the number of Community Councils. We are anxious that, as a result, the 'community' aspect will be lost, communication and consultation will be less effective and fewer local volunteer representatives will be burdened with more responsibility but unable to be as effective.

We await the Consultation Paper and will ask for the matter to be raised at the next Community Engagement meeting.

- b) **Community Engagement Meeting** The Secretary said this took place on 9th October and he, the Vice Chairman and Mike Shaw attended. There was a presentation on the Oban Waterfront Proposals including the Development Road, Dunbeg Corridor, the Marina and the £10 million CHORD project. Mr Blades gave a talk about our local public transport. He said the 418 bus service to Seil and Easdale carried 14,300 passengers in 2006, 15,600 in 2007 and he was expecting a further increase in 2008. Cllr MacIntyre presented a paper about the Ferry Review due in 2009.

The next meeting is on 11th December. We will ask for the Community Council review to be put on the agenda.

- c) **Environmental (Dog) Warden** The Chairman read an e-mail from a resident of Easdale Island complaining about the amount of dog fouling on the Island. They said residents in Ellenabeich also had a problem with this.

They wondered if the Warden could come to our public meeting to explain their duties. The Chairman said the Warden was unable to attend but had promised to patrol the areas and assess the problem. He had asked for any incidents to be reported to him and he will take the appropriate action. His telephone number is 01631 562125 (ext. 2185).

A question as to the Warden's powers to prosecute on Easdale Island – being private property – was raised. We will ask him.

- 4 **Documents to be tabled** A number of documents were tabled for general interest.

- 5 **Date, time and place of next meeting** The next meeting of the Community Council will take place on Tuesday 27th January 2009 at 7 p.m. in the Seil Island Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.37 p.m.

Signed:

Chairman:

Date:

Signed:

Secretary:

Date: