

Ordinary Meeting of Crookfur, Greenfarm & Mearns Village Community Council - Thursday 12 January 2017

1. **Present** - David Pearson (Chair), Bryson McNeil, John O'Brien, Karen Armstrong, Cllrs Buchanan and Gilbert

2. **Apologies** - Lee Tec and Azra Saleem -

The Chair gave an update in his efforts to increase participation, but despite the increased number of attendees he was disappointed at the turnout.

3. **Approval of Previous Minutes** - These were approved with one correction relating to the Biogas plant - it should have stated that discussion also covered if there was a bond to cover the regeneration of the plan once completed. Bryson McNeil approved the minutes and John O'Brien seconded.

4. **Police Report** - This report covers progress the Police have made in dealing with police matters in the Community Council area for the period 1st to 31st December. A briefing summary is below:

- Assault and Violent Crime - During the month of December there were no serious assaults in the area; however three common assaults were recorded, taking place in the car park area in Greenlaw Place (retail units), Harvie Avenue shops and in Warnock Road. Questions were asked in relation to young people hanging about the new Co-op and the accessibility to buy alcohol. Another question was asked around CCTV. It was suggested that the CCTV camera needs to capture all of the shops especially closer to the café and the post office rather than just the Co-op.
- Drug Dealing and Drug Use - A male was charged with possession of herbal cannabis. Members of the public are reminded that they can provide the Police with information relating to drug supply by telephoning the non-emergency "101" number of anonymously by **contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111**.
- Drunk or Disorderly Behaviour - In early December there were a small number of calls in Harvie Avenue relation to youth disorder. In recent weeks there have been no incidents reported. There were also a number of vandalism incidents reported including damage to garden fences and cars. However no areas have been identified as hot spots.
- Housebreaking and Other Theft - One housebreaking incident was reported at a dwelling house in the more rural Loganswell area of Newton Mearns.

Across East Renfrewshire crime remains low but the Police would again like to remind the public of the dangers involved in leaving cars unattended with their engines running whilst they defrost.

A question was asked by a member of the public on how individuals report cyber crime. The Police stated that you would go through the usual channels and then asked to be directed to the relevant unit. A member of the public asked if they could have a wider discussion with the Police after their update.

5. **Treasurer's Report** - John O'Brien (Treasurer) gave an update to say that the Community Council does not have many assets. At the moment they have £536.05 with no outgoings at the moment.

6. **No 4 Bus Service - Eric Stewart (SPT)** - Cllr Gilbert had spoken to Eric Stewart of SPT and an invitation had been sent to him asking if he could update residents on the rationale for the changes to the service. Mr Stewart did not attend.

A local resident had produced a paper and updated the public and the Community Council of the changes and the economic effects to both passengers and SPT. The change to the bus route has severed direct connection between the East and West of Ayr Road. Since 23 October, the No 4 bus has begun and terminated at Newton Mearns Shopping centre and not, as was the case for many years, in Crookfur.

First bus saves a nine minute, three mile journey in each direction.

The main issues are that a wide range of users now have to change bus at Mearns Cross to make a journey previously completed on the number 4 bus. The reality now is that many people will have to use cars and the previous users will be lost to SPT.

Those most affected by the changes are:

- Pupils at Mearns Castle School living west of Ayr Road,
- Customers for Greenlaw (Waitrose etc) living East of Ayr Road;
- Visitors to the care homes west of Ayr Road for those living east of Ayr Road;
- Patients with appointments at the new Victoria Hospital living west of Ayr Road;
- Patients attending the clinic in Clarkston, living west of Ayr Road;
- All journeys to Claskston, Netherlwe, Muirend, Cathcart and Queens Park for those living west of Ayr Road.

The paper produced also looked at the gains and losses for passengers and for First Bus.

The highlighted points are:

- If customers living west of Ayr Road have adopted an alternative route, then First Bus may be losing about **£180** per day;
- If all customers remain loyal to bus travel, the customers may be paying about **£320** additional per day as a result of the change of route
- A journey from Harvie Avenue to the New Victoria Hospital has increased by a minimum of 17 minutes and cost £1.50 more;
- A journey from the New Victoria Hospital to Harvie Avenue has increased by a minimum of 9 minutes and cost £1.50 more
- A customer living west of Ayr Road, waiting in Renfield Street and seeing a 4 bus destined for Newton Mearns has either to let the bus pass or has to alight at Means Cross and complete the last two miles on another bus.

Questions were then raised in relation to what the Council's role in this was and how they could help to ensure that transport was adequate across the authority area.

There has been large amounts of planning permission given by the council for new homes and for new businesses across the region, but infrastructure and transport has not kept pace with the changes. Areas across East Renfrewshire are not connected and now with the changes to the bus service residents cannot even get from Mearns Cross to the new Greenlaw Village let alone to Silverburn or the train station at Patterton.

The Councillors were asked if transport colleagues are included in planning discussions and if they have conducted a transport survey. Consultation and surveys have a very low response rate. .

Due to the additional housing and its location travelling by train is the only option for some residents and the trains too are now completely overcrowded. Again do East Renfrewshire consult with Scot Rail on a regular basis. There was felt to be no integration across the region - with new planning applications being approved it was felt this should now be a matter of priority for the Council. Even the new Health Centre in Williamwood is difficult to access.

A discussion also took place around whether the Community Council should start a petition page in relation to the changes to the bus route.

Action 1 - David will look into the merits of this.

It was also agreed that the Community Council should re-write to Eric Stewart and urge him to attend a meeting.

Action 2 - As Councillor Gilbert thought that the Community Council were doing the asking - John will re-invite Eric Stewart to a meeting.

7. **Council Tax Increase** - Bryson asked members of the public if anyone had any issues in relation to the new increases in Council Tax for certain band ranges. Bryson was not in favour of this as he felt it was an unfair tax. Only 2 members of the public present expressed satisfaction with the increase.

8. **Looking Forward Paper (Karen Armstrong)** - Karen gave an update and rationale for the paper which is now on the website. Anyone who has any comments or further ideas can do so using the Community Council email address..

9. **AOCB**

- **Main Issues Report** - Attention was drawn to the Main Issues Report which is now out for consultation until 8 February. Councillor Buchanan was asked why this consultation was put out during the holiday period. A discussion also took place in relation to how the Council ensure that their consultations reach a wide range of people across the area. There did not appear to be a huge effort to ensure that as many people as possible in the region got the opportunity to feed in their views. It was felt that if there are issues about transport and the Council want to hear views they should gather information

from those travelling by train, bus etc. Public consultations should not merely be a box ticking exercise but a proper effort to get to and hear the views of the community.

There was much discussion in relation to how the Council sets about their transport strategy, housing etc and if there is integrated planning.

Access to education and local schools was also brought up as new residents moving into the area are being denied places at the local schools. Cllr Buchanan stressed that this was not the case; however one member of the public raised the point that despite their family buying a house at £500,000, a short distance from the new Crookfur primary they had been denied a placement at the school.

- Planning Updates - Netherplace Road - The Chair wished to draw attention to a new planning application for a retirement village at Netherplace Road. There was a wide discussion around this being presented as a retirement village when it clearly wasn't. Previous planning consent had been refused.

There are many issues around these proposed plans including sewage and surface water drainage, shops and access roads. It was also noted that this planning application had been lodged by an individual not a company.

Community Council should also ensure that they are aware of planning applications and that if members of the local area have issues the **Community Council should ensure that they are lodging objections.**

It was also highlighted that there is a lack of expertise in relation to planning issues on the Community Council. Community Council should consider the local expertise available.

- Consultations – Netherplace over 55s village - There is a public consultation in relation to this next Thursday at Whitecraigs Rugby Club - it appears to be more of a drop in session as it is running from 12 noon until 19:00 hours.
- Consultations - Change to Ward 15 - Attention was raised to the plan to move Ward 15 of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children. A consultation is taking place next week and David can provide further information if anyone is interested.

10. **Date of Next Meeting** - the next meeting will take place on 9 February.

Karen Armstrong - 24 January 2017