

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Rhu and Shandon Community Council
Wednesday 14th December 2016
Held in Rhu Church Hall**

In attendance:

Rhu & Shandon CC:

Jack Rudram (JR)
Pat Pollok-Morris (PPM)
Jean Cook (JC)
Gordon King (GK)
Brian Fleming (BF)
Linda Duncan (LD)
Jim Duncan (JD)
Olivia Birch (OB)
Fiona Baker (FB)
Andrew Nicholson (AN)
Peter Knox (PK)
Derek Hall (DH)

Guests/Public:

Cllr Maurice Corry (MC)
Cllr R MacIntyre (RM)
Cllr G Freeman (GF)
Cdr James Leatherby RN (JL)
Craig Borland (Press) (CB)
Robert Hamilton (RH)

Topic	Minute	Decision/ Action
1. Apologies:	1. Apologies were received from or on behalf of: Tim Lamb, Jayne Burnett, Maggie McCowan, Audrey Butler, Edna Muir and Sergeant Tommy Harkness (Police Scotland).	
2. Declarations of interest:	2. There were no declarations of interest.	
3. Guest speakers:	<p>3a. By phone from Sergeant Tommy Harkness. The only reported crime was of a vehicle being driven at a man in Manse Brae, Rhu on 30th November. Enquiries are ongoing.</p> <p>Sergeant Harkness also reported that patrols will be increased over the holiday period.</p> <p>3b. Cdr James Leatherby: Presented the brief for the Naval Base and the report can be found at Appendix 2</p> <p>There was a short discussion as to which charities were going to supply funding for the proposed 3G artificial pitch at Ardenconnel Playing Fields before attention was drawn to recent international newspaper articles which had raised concerns about 3G pitches. These related to health & safety issues derived from the composition of their construction. JL will give update.</p> <p><i>Post Meeting Note. JL has confirmed that discussions continue between HMNB Clyde and the RN's Sports' Policy team in Portsmouth, with the aim of identifying the optimum way in which to meet the Base's requirements for sports pitches (artificial or otherwise). As soon as that clarity has been established, then the Captain of the Base (COB – Captain Craig Mearns RN) fully intends to engage again with all the local</i></p>	

stakeholders. COB recognises that this project has not been as straightforward as anticipated but he is resolved to determine the right answer. However, the question raised by some Members at the meeting concerning the efficacy, or otherwise, of meeting the requirement with a new 3G pitch has been duly noted. The advice received was a revelation; this will now be pursued further on Safety, Health and Environmental grounds, in order to ensure that the final specification of the facility sought is properly warranted.

4. Minutes of meeting held 19th October 2016:

4. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th October 2016 were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed PK and Seconded BF. The minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from minutes not otherwise on the agenda:

5f. Road Surface in Rhu. RM reported that there were further road works on the Garelochhead side of Rhu on the A814 to come and these will present more of a challenge due to the narrowness of the road. This work has not yet been scheduled.

10. A warm welcome was given to Derek Hall as the newest member of the Community Council.

12a. GF gave an update on the school holiday dates for 2017/18 and 2018/19 which include a 2 week break in October. Unfortunately these were approved against the general wishes of parents and others in the Helensburgh & Lomond area. Flexibility has now been removed and holiday dates will be the same across Argyll and Bute. Full details are yet to go onto the Council's website. GF will provide copies to CC. JC was asked put item on website highlighting the changes and inviting comments which are to be forwarded to GF.

JC to add note to website

7b. Barge Memorial Garden. PPM has written to ACHA to seek funding for a seat in the garden. The erosion of the bank has been reported but no action has been taken and there are concerns that the bank will subside and that it is affecting the adjacent fencing. A letter of thanks has been sent to the Community Payback Scheme for their assistance and the feedback form has been completed.

7c. Beach Cleaning. PK completed the highly detailed application and secured a Seachange grant of £202.53. This is to be used to conduct beach cleaning more efficiently. A request had been made for the CC to provide a logo for publicity purposes. As the CC has no logo at present it was suggested that simply the letters 'R&SCC' in a box would suffice as a temporary measure. More thought will be given to designing a permanent logo in due course.

Future Beach cleans will be planned but realistically would not be until March next year. A date will be announced nearer the time.

6. Planning Matters:

6a. Ardenconnel Sports Pitch: 15/02729/PP. As discussed at item 3b.

6b. Siting of Metal Storage Container (retrospective): 15/03082/PP. There has been no change on this issue. PK will contact the Planning Department.

Action PK

6c. Laigh Balernock Turbines. This proposed development comprises two 48m turbines that straddle the boundary between Rhu & Shandon and Garelochhead CC areas. The Community Council has submitted a letter expressing concerns about the scale and impact of the proposed development. The letter, together with the Archaeological report, can be found on the website.

GF confirmed that the statutory consultees will be involved and that any CC can comment whether the development is in their area or not. Representations with comments on any planning applications can be made without these having to indicate support or objections to an application. GF had provided the Convener with a copy of the Scheme of Delegation relating to planning issues. The number of representations will have an impact on the planners' output.

RH from Laigh Balernock farm was present at the meeting and introduced himself as one of the few young farmers in the area and extended an invitation to anyone who would like to view the site. The purpose of the wind farm was to sustain the farm's energy needs and any income derived would be put back into the farm and provide a living wage. Additionally RH is hoping to be able to give some financial support to 'Route 81 Youth Project'. He observed that the average age of the farmers was rising and the funding from subsidies was reducing and added that the purpose of the farm was contributing to the nation's food supply.

FB pointed out that 50m was the maximum recommended height for turbines on the ridge line and asked if 20m turbines would be viable. RH replied that he thought that a wind study had been going on for 2 years and that the lower turbines would be unlikely to meet the requirement.

Post Meeting Note

The application for planning permission was approved for the 'Erection of temporary anemometer wind monitoring mast (30 metres high) for a period of two years' was approved on 30th March this year, so the wind study has been underway for 8 months at a maximum.

6d. Other Applications:

- Rhu House. 2 applications, one for new roof and gutters and another for new windows and painting. Both applications supported by CC.
- RNCYC. Nothing new to report.
- Shop adjacent to Post Office. The condition of the buildings is giving cause for concern. Building Control have powers if the building is considered to be dangerous. Buildings within the conservation area may be subject to tighter controls.
- New entrance to property within the National Park has been approved.

PPM to contact owner.

7. Other Matters:

7a. Update of Broadband. There have been some developments. OB reported that the box at the end of Guthrie place is nearing completion. GF attended a seminar on the subject earlier in December. He said that for the 3 boxes in

Garelochhead, Open Reach appeared to be blaming the Council for delays but the planning was approved 18 months ago; similarly with all other boxes.

Action on GF

MC said that this is a big issue throughout Scotland and Open Reach has the monopoly. All green boxes are to be installed within the next 3 months and suppliers will be taking orders for the service when the work is complete. For some postcodes, the 'When and Where' website has not been updated for 18 months.

GF has a number of contacts and will try to arrange a meeting with Digital Scotland and a member from each Community Council. The meeting would not take place until early in the new year.

7b. Key Environmental Features. FB has produced a draft which has already been circulated. JR will re-circulate the latest draft, collate comments and produce the final version complete with R&SCC corporate logo.

Action JR

7c. Conservation Area Appraisal. JD has contacted Charles Reppke to determine whether CC funds can be used to finance this exercise and also to ask for assistance from council officers. Charles Reppke passed on correspondence to Angus Gilmore.

There has been no Heritage Officer in Argyll and Bute for the last 2 years but one is to be appointed in January 2017. Angus Gilmore has offered support and guidance but no funding will be available even if we provided a template for other areas. It is hoped that the new Heritage Officer will produce instructions on how to gain approval for the appraisal. No external consultants could be recommended. It was considered logical to wait for the new person to be in post and establish a relationship with him/her prior to proceeding. Rhu and Shandon are deemed to be way down the list to qualify for any grants or other funding. JD to contact Angus Gilmore and, given the previous delays, ask for this to be given some priority. Also to convey our anticipation to develop a good working relationship with the new officer.

Action JD

7d. Proposed Sewage Works in Rhu. This was discussed at the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 13th Dec. Two septic tanks will be installed 'on the verge', at the bottom of Artaman Road and Torwood Hill Road. There should not be a requirement for road closures. The work is due to start in 2017 and last for 6 weeks. Scottish Water has undertaken to hold meetings to keep interested parties informed. JC has written emails to SEPA asking how many untreated sewage outfalls there are into the Gareloch, and how many of these they have asked SW to improve. Only automatic replies have been received.

GF said that serious concerns are being raised in a number of areas that if a property is not connected to the sewer main or a septic tank as it could jeopardise the sale of a property. There have been 3 people in 2 months that have raised their concerns with GF.

MC to take up with SEPA

It was noted that there is a SEPA imposed deadline in 2017 for the cessation of untreated sewage entering the Gareloch.

7e. Future of the Defunct Telephone Box in Rhu. There is an ongoing BT Consultation on the removal of little used active phone boxes. None such exist in Rhu and Shandon. There is however a defunct phone box at the bottom of Manse Brae. There was agreement that BT should be approached to remove this as it serves no useful purpose and does nothing to enhance the appearance of the village.

JC to contact
BT

8. Opportunity for the Members of the Public to Speak:

8. There were no further comments from the members of the public.

9. Treasurer's report:

9. Treasurer's Report: LD stated that there was £2236 .73 in the account with an additional £100 in the seat fund.

10. Correspondence:

10. Correspondence: Correspondence is circulated as and when it is received..

- Planning our future – No CC response. Members asked to provide individual comments if they so wish.
- Community Development and Learning – Individual comments.
- Scottish Fire and Rescue guidance – Individual comments.
- Draft Referendum Bill – Consultation ends 11 Jan 17.

Details and links of all these consultations are on the news page of our website.

A letter regarding the felling of trees in Highlandman's Wood has been received to initiate a dialogue with the community. Timber will be taken from the site by road which may cause some problems particularly in Station Road and Pier Road in Rhu. FB volunteered to act as a point of contact with assistance from GK and PK. More information is needed.

Action FB

11. Website and related issues:

11. Website: Nothing to report.

12. Councillors' reports

12a. MC. Reported that the school bus contract had been awarded to Garelochhead Coaches.

MC had and PK had attended the Marine Conservation Symposium for litter. They were looking at a robust plan which covers the entire Clyde. It was recognized that Garelochhead and Arrochar bear the brunt of litter being washed up. Audrey Baird is taking the lead and offering support to villages.

The Shandon War Memorial has been cleaned and restored. The orb and cross were damaged during the process but have since been repaired.

Billie Petrie has proposed that the Rhu War Memorial is entered in a national competition for War Memorials. The memorial is in good condition and will be part of the 1914 – 1918 commemorations.

Rhu Gala will be returning to the RNCYC next year.

GK was asked why cyclists don't use the cycle path between Rhu and the Base. Reasons cited as follows:

- Poor lighting – street lighting is over the main road and the change to LED lights has exacerbated the issue.
- Path and road surface pot holed and uneven – hazardous in the light, treacherous in the dark.
- Path not wide enough – insufficient separation between cyclists and other users of the path.
- Give way markings – cyclists are required to give way at driveways although the prevailing traffic would be on the path. Vehicles emerge from properties without caution in the knowledge that they have right of way. Signage inappropriate for other users of the path. How does this apply when a young child is using the path who may not understand right of way rules?
- Give Way Markings – these are so worn out that there are barely more than a few bits of white paint remaining and therefore do not constitute proper signage.
- Path not properly drained – there are parts of the path that have standing water several inches in depth at some points. This also hides the pot holes, particularly in the dark.
- Path in the vicinity of Blairvadach encroached by brambles.
- Cycle crossing near the peace camp – crossing is too near the bend and when crossing from the seaward side of the road vehicles approaching from the right cannot be seen.

GK considers that the 'cycle path' is not fit for the intended purpose.

As well as the LED lights providing less illumination on the cycle path it was noted that they created areas of shadow on the main road. These dark areas are a result of the cone of light from the LEDs being different from that of the sodium lights.

12b. GF raised the issue of bin collections. Since the introduction of the new schedules there continues to be serious problems with the service. Bins are frequently not being collected on the programmed day and the advice is that any bin not emptied should be left out to be collected in the next 2 days. Some people have been having difficulties in deciphering the schedule because the colours that have been used are hard to distinguish. PK noted that in Dundee shapes are used instead. The bins are an ongoing problem and information should be fed back to the council.

GF confirmed that the handling of the school bus contract by the Council had again been chaotic and had put 14 local jobs at risk. Only through a great deal of effort by Garelochhead Coaches and locally had this contract been retained locally.

12c. RM said that the roadworks will be done and that he would check up on the septic tank installations.

13. Members' Reports:

13a. PPM drew attention to the National Health and Social Care Standards which can be read on the web and are available in hard copy by request.

MMC and PPM attended a workshop in Stirling, and have completed a consultation (as individuals) stating that the proposals are unaffordable and will create unrealisable expectations.

The consultation is open until 27th January, and we encourage anyone interested to make an individual response.

13b. FB. Proposed that the CC write a letter to Jackie Baillie and the Health Secretary regarding the removal of midwife led maternity care in the area. The feeling of the CC is that the Vale of Leven Hospital is gradually dying and that this is the latest example in the reduction of local services.

DH to draft letter

13c. AN. Church Services will take place in Rhu at 1830 and 2330 on Christmas Eve and a joint Service with Helensburgh at 1100 on 1st January. There will be no Service in Rhu on Christmas Day but there will be a joint Service in Helensburgh.

13d. LD. Reported that the bus stop opposite the marina had been vandalised and been taped up with red and white tape which looks particularly bad. GF confirmed that the tape had only been placed on the damaged shelter after he had reported it. He considered that this was totally unacceptable and was continuing to pursue the matter with Council officers.

Action GF

13e. BF. Reported that the yellow signs for the roadworks were still present and obscuring the view of the road by the RNCYC and asked for them to be removed. He also asked if the advertising banners on the wall by the Royal Northern gates were compliant with the Council's policy.

13f. GK. Raised the issue that the Rosslea Hall Hotel had been having fireworks regularly since the end of October. He has registered his disappointment that nothing seems to have changed since this time last year.

13g. JC reported that the future for the derelict MOD housing in Rhu has been discussed at the last two Helensburgh and Lomond Community Planning Group meetings. A decision will be taken by the MOD in January and there is an action on them to report to the February meeting of HLCPG. Unfortunately this will be a week after our February meeting.

13h. JR attended a briefing regarding the community empowerment act which is being introduced by the Scottish Government. The Act is in 11 parts and JR highlighted 3 of interest:

Part 3: Participation Requests: *Provides a mechanism for community bodies to put forward their ideas for how services could be changed to improve outcomes for their community. This could include community bodies taking on delivery of services.*

Part 4: Community Rights to Buy Land: *Amends the Land Reform*

(Scotland) Act 2003, extending the community right to buy to all of Scotland, urban and rural, and improving procedures. Part 4 introduces a new provision for community bodies to purchase land which is abandoned, neglected or causing harm to the environmental wellbeing of the community, where the owner is not willing to sell that land. This is if the purchase is in the public interest and compatible with the achievement of sustainable development of the land.

Part 5: Asset Transfer Requests: *Provides community bodies with a right to request to purchase, lease, manage or use land and buildings belonging to local authorities, Scottish public bodies or Scottish Ministers. There will be a presumption of agreement to requests, unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal. Reducing inequalities will be a factor for public authorities to consider when making a decision. Relevant authorities will be required to create and maintain a register of land which they will make available to the public.*

14. AOB:

14a. Signage Consultation. Argyll and Bute Council launched public consultation on advertisement and signage policy last month and is open for comment until 6 Jan 17. JR is compiling a response on behalf of the CC and requires any comments by 3rd Jan.

Action all members and JR.

14b. JC passed round a Christmas Card received from Jackie Baillie

15. DONM:

15. The next ordinary meeting will take place at 1930 on 8th February 2017 in the Community Hall.