

Rhu and Shandon Community Council Ordinary Meeting

Held on 8th February 2012

At Rhu Community Hall

In attendance:

Rhu & Shandon CC:

Jack Rudram	Convenor	(JR)
Pat Pollok-Morris	Deputy Convenor	(PPM)
Jean Cook	Secretary	(JC)
Colin Caskie	Treasurer	(CC)
Gordon King	Minute Secretary	(GK)
Martin Ritch		(MR)
Fiona Baker		(FB)
Jayne Burnett		(JB)
Morven Boyle		(MB)
Andrew Nicholson		(AN)

Guests/Public:

Cllr Billy Petrie	(BP)
Cllr George Freeman	(GF)
Cllr Danny Kelly	(DK)
Cdr James Leatherby	(JL)
PC Andy Crawford	(AC)
David Barr	(DB)

Meeting was opened by JR at 1950.

The Convenor welcomed those present to the meeting.

1. Apologies:

Scott Weir
Linda Duncan
Jim Duncan

2. Acceptance of minutes from previous meeting:

The minutes of the Special Meeting held on 11 Jan 2012 were accepted. FB pointed out that it was the pavement that required to be cleaned in Lineside Walk rather than the road.

3. Matters Arising: Nil

4. Guest Speakers:

Guest Speaker 1 – Police Community Officer – PC Andy Crawford: PC Andy Crawford introduced himself to the Community Council and handed out his contact details together with information leaflets 'Scambuster' regarding protection against scams and practical information to help keep you and your property safe.

He informed the council that:

- only 27 calls had been made by residents in Rhu and Shandon which resulted in zero reported crime.
- regular speed checks are being made in the village as a constant reminder to motorists to obey the limit.
- an 'antiseptic' smell has been reported between the Ardencaple Hotel and Helensburgh Sailing Club and the environmental health department has been involved in the investigation into its origin.

CC response was that we should be thankful that we live in an area where the crime rate is as low as it is.

Various scam and cyber crime examples were exchanged and the underlying message is for everyone to be on their guard and forward any seriously suspicious emails to the police.

AC continued:

- There have been a couple of instances on the peninsula where the theft of diesel fuel oil has been reported. Again it was stressed that practical steps are taken to reduce the risk by fitting locks to the tanks.
- Some speeding cars had been reported on the service road alongside the A814 in Shandon and the police are looking into fitting equipment to assess the speed of vehicles using the road.

AN asked for the police view of cyclists using the road rather than using the cycle path. The reply was that there is no obligation for cyclists to use the cycle path and it was suggested that cyclists should be encouraged to use the cycle path for their own safety. The convenor asked JL to take the point to the Base Commander to advise cyclists to use the cycle route.

Post Meeting Note: JL advised the appropriate authorities with HMNB Clyde of this request on 9 Feb 12. As a consequence it is anticipated that, on the one hand, cyclists will be encouraged to use cycle paths (noting that this is not mandatory), to take care to be as visible as possible and to abide by the legal requirement to have the correct lights and, on the other, motorists will be advised that cyclists are not breaking the law by cycling on the road and should be afforded due consideration accordingly.

Guest Speaker 2 – HMNB Clyde - Cdr James Leatherby: (as supplied by email from JL)

Having accepted the “Action” above to establish whether or not Base employees could be encouraged to use the cycle-paths where they are available, especially during ‘Outmuster’ periods, JL informed the Community Council that:

- HMS ASTUTE was soon to return from the US after a successful set of trials over there.
- HMS AMBUSH was still in Barrow but was now building herself up for a summer arrival on the Clyde.
- The next major Nuclear Emergency Response Exercise, Ex SHORT SERMON 2012, will take place on Wed 5 Sep 12. A Grade A Demonstration of ABC’s Off-Site Plan it will follow from a series of scenarios on the Base used to test the activities of all those agencies involved in the Clyde Off-Site Centre (COSC), all of whom will be operating under the primacy, at least initially, of Strathclyde Police.
- The invitations to ABC and other external agencies (ie StrathPol, SAS, SFRS, NHS, SEPA, etc, etc) for the annual Clyde Local Liaison Committee (CLLC) were in the course of being issued. Programmed for PM Thu 29 Mar 12 at the COSC in Rhu, JL reported that in the past R&SCC have been invited by ABC to send a member to witness events from the sidelines. PPM has attended for the Community Council in the past.
- NBC Clyde (Commodore Mike Wareham) is due to call on CE/ABC on Fri 10 Feb 12. The Agenda is likely to focus on continuing past discussions arising from the Base being the largest single site employer in Argyll & Bute and the various impacts of HMNB Clyde formally becoming the Home of the UK Submarine Service and the Submarine Centre of Specialisation (SMCoS) by 2023.
- By coincidence, there are also moves in hand currently for ABC to sign up to the Community Covenant with the MOD, hopefully before 1 Apr 12. This is an initiative that has fallen out from Westminster’s introduction of the Armed Forces Covenant last year; an initiative that was embraced fully by Holyrood. A spin-off from such an achievement would be that new Government funding would be made available.

Post Meeting Note: As requested by Members, JL subsequently confirmed that the aim of the associated Community Covenant Grant Scheme is to help fund local projects that work to create relationships or strengthen ties between members of the Armed Force Community and the wider community in which they live. The web address/hyper-link to enable easy access to further detail is as follows:

- In another related initiative it was believed that 13 schools in the Helensburgh and Lomond area will be benefiting from @£147,000 awarded on the basis of £250 for every Service child registered with respective Headmasters before the 19 Jan 12 Spring Schools Census. The money is intended to help prevent disruption to learning by providing short-term support to Service children while they settle into their new surroundings.
- The next major NATO exercise [Ex JOINT WARRIOR 121] to be hosted by HMNB Clyde will start to make itself known almost immediately after the next R&SCC meeting (Wed 11 Apr 12). The first ships are likely to appear on Thu 12 and, following a fortnight of exercises in Scottish waters, the last vessels are expected to depart on Mon 30 Apr 12.

The above report concluded with advice from DK that an MOD planning application to build a Salt Barn on the Woodlea Crescent site had been returned by ABC to enable it to be re-worked, prompting JL say that he thought that the application had actually been withdrawn.

5. Planning Matters:

- a. Rhu Marina. There has been no response from the letter that was sent to Angus Gilmore with the Community Council's concerns over planning procedures. DK reported that the planning department had met with Crown Estates and Rhu Marina Developments to discuss the way forward but they have not come back to the council who are trying to keep people in touch. It is in the interests of all concerned that information is provided as soon as possible. GF stated that if parties do not come up with an acceptable plan to put before the site may be de-allocated for mixed use and could revert to just a marina development and any application will be turned down until a masterplan is produced. DB said that he had had a conversation with Howard Young which intimated that nothing was happening and that the situation is the same as it was before Christmas the parties did not seem to be getting together.
- b. Pierhead and Hermitage site Draft Masterplans. As a result of the briefing meeting attended by PPM and JR, and submissions by Council members, the consensus view of the Council was submitted by letter from the secretary. The Council Executive recommend that the Hermitage site plan is approved. The Pierhead is to be revised, using the area for parking, leisure and small units. It has been noted that the combined weight of public opinion has had affected the proposals. There is news on the council website with information on the progress of the development. PPM suggested that we should be available to have an extra-ordinary meeting or be able to conduct business using email if there is further controversy over the proposals.
- c. FB asked if we would be represented with respect to the Waitrose planning application at the meeting on 21st Feb. Although this is outside our direct area it would have an impact on the residents of Rhu and Shandon. It would appear that it is too late to put in a letter of representation and therefore you wouldn't be able to speak at the meeting. Group comments are welcomed and there is a website address that can be use to gather groups of supporters.
- d. Chord Project. PPM voiced her concerns that 2500 people do not want a curve in the square. It is felt that the priorities are not commensurate with the needs of the town and that money should be spent on improving the seafront with a decent promenade and footpaths. The money would be better spent to the benefit of properties and shops on the front by improving flood defences. BP said that the majority of people are against the proposals for the square but support development of the sea front. R&SCC are frustrated by this and it was decided to write to the council to express our views. JC and PPM will draft a letter reflecting the views of the community council:
 - Request modification of plans.
 - Is the expenditure justified.
 - Concerns about traffic management.
 - Prioritise spending on the sea front.

- Should the lamp posts be put into storage or used elsewhere.

Thought was given to invite the chief executive of Chord, Helen Ford, to next community council meeting but not considered to be worthwhile as she would be bound to reiterate the party line.

The letter should be copied to the 10 local councillors.

- e. Clyde Street School. There were no comments.
- f. Manse Brae. A retrospective application for sub-division – No comment.
- g. Dunera, Pier Road. Extension for small gym. – No sensible comment.
- h. Comet Arch. There is a proposal to construct a commemorative arch of the ‘Comet’ in the area of Helensburgh Pier. This was supported by the community council and it was suggested that a letter of approval be sent to the council.

6. Invitation for public to speak: No comments.

7. Treasurer’s Report. CC had engaged with the Treasurer of the Village Hall and paid £200 for use of the room for meetings. He reiterated that he would need to be relieved of his duties by the end of the financial year.

8. Correspondence. JC had some correspondence with Marsha Mann with regard to ‘Graffiti Paintout’ project removing graffiti from a bridge in Shandon. This has now been dealt with by the community council of Shandon....California.

9. Agreement of Roles. There were 2 volunteers for the role of treasurer, MR and MB. After a brief discussion Martin Ritch was nominated by MB and seconded by CC.

Martin Ritch will become Treasurer of the Rhu and Shandon Community Council at the end of this financial year; the exact date to be agreed between the current Treasurer and his successor. Martin Ritch, Jack Rudram and Jean Cook will be authorised to sign cheques and each cheque will require 2 signatures.

The following roles for members of the community council were agreed:

Strategic Planning	Jack Rudram
Healthcare and Social	Pat Pollok-Morris
Specific Planning	Morven Boyle and Pat Pollok-Morris
Utilities	Gordon King
Treasurer	Martin Ritch
Gala Liaison	Fiona Baker
School Liaison	Jayne Burnett
Hall Liaison	Jean Cook

It was hoped that John Fenney would continue to update the Website.

10. Member’s Reports

JB. Reported that Rhu Primary School had been inspected and the report would be published on 14 Feb and will be available on line. She explained that the scoring parameters had been changed and is now difficult to achieve **excellent** in any category. The school was **Very Good** overall. The children had been awarded a 3rd ECO Green Flag which few other schools have achieved. They are learning a lot about sustaining the environment, growing vegetables and producing compost in the strip of ground between the school and the church. The school has received a grant from the lottery of £8k for outside equipment and they are trying to raise a further £3.5k to go towards the eco playground equipment.

The community council feel that they should write a letter congratulating the school for their outstanding achievements.

CC. Asked the councillors when the church wall will be repaired having been damaged by a taxi. BP explained that there were difficulties claiming on the insurance but undertook to get the repairs carried out and sort out the claim with the insurers. Colin also pointed out that the drains were blocked in Manse Brae and Station Road.

MB. Stated that we should be trying to publicise the Rhu & Shandon Community Council and suggested that we should have a stall at the Rhu Gala on 9th June, to make people aware of our existence and what we do.

FB. Informed the community council that the Gala Committee had met and had commenced planning for the gala.

GK. Reported that he had been in contact with Stuart McCracken with regard to road sweeping schedules, the outcome was that the intention is to send the road sweeper around once per fortnight. The vehicle is shared with another area and there are obvious difficulties with parked cars and these parts of the route need to be done by hand which is slow and labour intensive. FB said that it was the pavement that was the issue on Lineside walk rather than the road.

The street lighting on the A814 has been reported through the council website and has received an acknowledgement of the report but the lights have been out for a month. (Further communication attached at the Annex)

Is has been noted that there are many blocked drains around Rhu particularly on Manse Brae and Station Road, these are more difficult to report as no dedicated page can be found on the council website. Correspondence had been received at a previous meeting enquiring about beacons for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, a purpose made beacon can be available if required.

PPM. The play park is progressing well and new goal posts have been ordered using money donated by the Helensburgh Art Society.

Local Councillors:

BP. With the Bi-centenary of Henry Bell's Comet coming up the community are looking for help in restoring the grave of Robert Bain, the first Captain of the Comet to its original condition.

Post meeting Note:

The large iron memorial in Rhu Churchyard was erected by Comet steamship pioneer Henry Bell to Robert Bain, the skipper most famously associated with the Comet, following his death in 1829 at the age of 39. He spent 16 years of his life working for Bell, Helensburgh's first Provost, and also served as deputy town clerk. He took over command of the Comet in 1812. The tombstone was made at Shotts Iron Works.

DK . Nothing further to report.

GF. The plan for the work at Wilson's garage has been approved.

11. AOB.

JB. Asked if anything can be done about the litter around the bus stop to the North of the peace camp on the A814. She pointed out that there is no litter bin at present and asked if one could be fitted. GK will make enquiries.

12. DONM. 11th April at 1930 in the Community Hall.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 2134.