

Gargunnock Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on 14th September 2015

Present: Alison MacLachlan : Maitland Clark : Bryan Crawford : Bob Burman : Mike McGirr : Lovat McGregor : Cllr Graham Lambie : Dr Ian Young (GVDIA) and 16 members of the public

Apologies : Edmond Mansion, George Keeton

1. Minutes: Minutes of meeting held on 8th June were formally adopted.
2. Matters Arising: All matters arising would be covered later under their own headings.
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3. Community Police Officer's Report: Written report received. The only matter reported was that a car driver with defective lights was charged. In response to a question regarding the regular non-attendance of a police officer at the CC meetings, Cllr Lambie intimated that there were indications that the system could be returning to the previous arrangement as the police themselves were keen for this to happen.
4. Treasurer's Report : No report as Treasurer not present.
5. Planning: The application for the site at Manse Brae has been withdrawn. Any plot of land has to be within the village boundaries so this may well have contributed to the withdrawal. An application to upgrade roofing etc on a house at the Square for Miss Paterson was noted and no objection raised.
6. Broadband Update: A great deal of work has been carried out at the telephone exchange and it would seem that the village now has high speed broadband and has been widely taken up.

7. Affordable Housing: Alison opened the discussion with a brief resume of the position to date. Dr Young asked why the area of ground adjacent to the Community Centre could not be revisited. It was now off the radar as the village had rejected this site previously and now, in addition, the area has been included in the village conservation area.

The area south of the Glebe, which is the area under discussion, is owned by the GVDIA on behalf of the village but this body is currently in suspension. This piece of land is presently held for recreational purposes only.

An objection was raised that this meeting should have been better advertised eg a notice on the village notice board.

As decided at the last meeting, survey forms have been hand distributed to all the houses in the Glebe and Charles Street, and a supply made available in the shop. An article has appeared in the Bugle explaining the position and every house in Gargunnock gets a copy of the Bugle delivered.

Objections were raised as to some of the phraseology used in the Bugle article with the claim that they could be misleading, particularly with the suggested link between the need for additional housing and the forecasted decline in school roll numbers. It was strongly stated that these are two entirely separate issues. Indeed, it was suggested that some of the "fear" references could well put families off from moving to the village. It was explained, however, that there was consultation with the Head Teacher and the Parent Council before the article was printed.

The village had agreed a need for affordable housing in a previous questionnaire but there was no agreement on a site. Thus the Glebe site is being revisited as there were still no other suitable alternative sites proposed.

However, the results of the survey questionnaires were disappointing in that only 25 forms had been returned and it was agreed that this did not provide the CC with a mandate to proceed further with the housing proposal.

A question was raised as to what the triggers were for revisiting this particular site once again. The answer is that the village still feels there is a need for additional housing, no other sites were available and in addition the projected decline in school roll numbers. While the numbers projected by Stirling Council were disputed and, indeed, were largely disproved the trend seemed to be downward so the CC decided that they had a duty to move on that basis. It was agreed that this is only one aspect in a range of issues.

Cllr Lambie said that Stirling Council would support an affordable housing application but such is the shortage of such dwellings that the Council are currently looking at larger possible developments eg in Dunblane.

Other sites within the village which could be considered would require landowners' consent and it was suggested that such owners could be contacted with a view to ascertaining their views on such a possibility.

As the CC does not have a mandate to progress the housing situation, discussion turned to the roles of the GVDIA and the Gargunock Trust and future progress.

After the houses were built in Charles Street the remaining piece of land was gifted to the village as neither Ogilvie or Stirling Council wanted it and the GVDIA took title as there was no other body which could take it over at that time.

It would appear that, a number of years ago, the GVDIA had agreed to transfer the ownership of the land to the Gargunock Trust following meetings between representatives of the two bodies but negotiations had not been followed up thus the status quo. The GVDIA is currently in suspension and has no funds.

Bryan circulated a paper on key points for consideration -

The ultimate choice of use rests with the current owner, the Gargunock Village and Districts Interests Association. Recent Facebook activity on the subject has raised awareness of the existence of this body and it's aims.

Changes in land law from 2000 onwards have the potential to give the GVDIA more options and control on use than available at the original date of transfer.

Ogilvie Homes Ltd are willing to work with the community and are interested in discussing any potential housing development on the site. (In response to a question as to how many potential units had been mentioned, the answer was 14 or 15. It was stressed however that these were purely speculative figures)

Stirling Council is willing to examine the site along with barriers for development of the site, but only if it is submitted through the proper channels i.e. the Local Development Plan. There are currently no areas for development on the latest LDP.

Other interested parties including the Church of Scotland and Rural Stirling Housing have indicated their support for housing if that is what is required.

A question was raised regarding the use of the Community Councillors' Handbook. Enquiries will be made to find out if such a publication is still in existence and, if so, obtain a copy for every councillor.

So: The CC does not have a mandate from the village to pursue affordable housing on that site.

There is general consensus of agreement to transfer ownership of the land to the Gargunock Trust. It is up to both bodies to get together for further negotiations.

The GVDIA will convene a public meeting at which, following a question from the meeting, their constitution and minutes of previous meetings will be made available.

There will be a note in the next issue of the Bugle advising of names and contact numbers of the Community Councillors and the GVDIA Trustees.

In due course there will be a more broadbased survey distributed to all homes in the village with a view to obtaining wider views on the subject of housing in the village.

Enquire as to Community Councillor's Handbook existence.

Due to time restraints, other possible agenda items were carried forward to the next meeting.

Date of next meeting: 5th October 2015