

Minutes of Meeting held 19:15 on Monday 26 March 2018 at Kilmallie Community Centre

Present

Kilmallie Community Council

Carol Anne Campbell
Christine Hutchison (Chair)
Mandy Ketchin
Russell Leaper
Jan MacLugash
Jim Ramsay

Duncan Mackison, Jahama Highland Estates
Alasdair Nicholson, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Highland Council

Cllr Allan Henderson
Cllr Ben Thompson
Tim Stott, Highland Council Planning Service

Apologies

Sgt Ross McCartney (Police Scotland)

1. Approval of previous minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 26 February 2018 were approved.

2. Treasurer's report

The total balance available on 01/03/2018 was £2935.07

3. Police Update

There was no police representative at the meeting and no police business was discussed.

4. Discussion with Duncan Mackison, CEO of Jahama Highland Estates, about Liberty's plans that may affect the Kilmallie Community Council area

CH noted that the large audience of over 30 showed the considerable interest related to developments associated with the aluminium smelter. She stressed that the invitation extended to Liberty was solely to gain information about any proposals they have that might affect the Kilmallie CC area and should not be regarded as consultation. Members of the public were not being asked for their views at this stage, but the meeting gave an opportunity to ask questions. She welcomed Duncan Mackison who was joined by Alasdair Nicholson, Programme Manager Lochaber, for Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Tim Stott, Principal Planner from the Highland Council Planning Service.

Mr Mackison explained the structure of the privately owned GFG group which includes Liberty which is concerned with metals production, Jahama which is concerned with property management of the extensive (114000 acres) land holdings, and SIMEC which is involved in power generation. A proposed alloy wheel factory has planning permission and is expected to start operating in 2020 using molten aluminium straight from the smelter. This facility is matched by a similar smelter and wheel factory in France and is expected to employ around 400 staff, the great majority of which will be new to the area because of the requirement for specialist skills. The staff will require around 300 new houses and different models of ownership are being considered. In addition there are plans for a 40 turbine wind farm close to Laggan and hydro schemes at Leanachan. The estate also has 41 properties which will be refurbished for holiday accommodation and residential letting.

The intention is that raw materials will be brought in by rail and road and the finished products will be sent out by road. It is anticipated that the production of around 2 million alloy wheels a year will result in an extra 7-8 lorries per day over current numbers. In future there may be some use of the port at Corpach,

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but this requires further development. Boyd's had requested that Eilean nan Craobh be included in the port area for industrial development within the WestPlan. Highland Council will also be looking to use areas of the Blar Mor north of the A830 for housing in addition to a hospital and science and technology centre on the site. The factory will also require a supply of LNG for burners to maintain the heat of the metal and in the casting machines and the heat treatment furnaces. Concerns were raised about the storage of large quantities of potentially explosive gas close to centres of population.

Concerns were raised about the pressure that the influx of people would place on the local infrastructure including transport, medical facilities and schools. The increase in pressure comes at a time when services are being cut and funding for increased provision is unlikely to be forthcoming in advance of any increase in local population. Although the numbers of additional vehicle movements directly associated with the factory is relatively small, at times the road network is already unable to cope with the current vehicle numbers and several people raised concerns over increased traffic congestion. DM confirmed that Liberty had no plans to help support public transport. Concerns were also raised about the capacity to build large numbers of new houses and where factory workers would live while housing was being built. The building industry in the Fort William area is already currently operating at full capacity.

DM confirmed that there were no plans for a Community Liaison Forum or community consultations that were not required by the planning process. However, he was happy to keep Community Councils updated through meetings such as this one.

The scale of the likely developments associated with the Liberty proposals will have implications for the WestPlan which is no longer open for further comments. It is not clear whether any of the proposals will conflict with the current draft of the plan. The Lochaber Area Committee will meet on 11 April to consider a new document, the '2040 Vision', which could form an appendix to the plan. This would not have the legal status of the plan but would provide some information on what might be proposed.

5. Update from Transport Scotland regarding pedestrian crossings on A830 through Kilmallie

Following an engineering study and initial discussions, Transport Scotland had requested comments on a proposed design for a pedestrian crossing at Corpach. KCC had suggested reducing the speed limit to 20mph and extending the kerb to improve sight lines, but neither of these suggestions had been taken forward. The current proposals would involve moving the bus stop 60 metres east of its current location on the north side of the A830 such that the bus would stop on the carriageway. The required sightlines for the crossing could then be achieved with 6 parking spaces being retained for west bound traffic and 5 being lost, and 3 spaces being retained and 5 spaces being lost for eastbound traffic.

It was agreed that further consultation was needed to gather views on this option.

There have been no proposals from Transport Scotland to address the situation at the Banavie Swing Bridge.

6. Update from Environmental Health regarding noise from Annat

The Environmental Health Service have accepted the findings of a report from BSW which details noise attenuation works to minimise noise emissions from the installation and facilitate ongoing compliance with noise conditions within their Planning permission. BSW have commenced the civil engineering works needed to facilitate the installation of these noise attenuation works. Once these works are complete the EH Service will undertake noise monitoring to verify that the predicted noise reduction has been achieved and that the remaining noise emissions comply with the planning conditions.

EH has also proposed installing noise monitoring equipment at a property which is currently being affected by industrial noise in order to get a representative time history of the noise environment in the Annat area. EH had asked KCC to seek volunteers to host this equipment. Two volunteers (Colin Wood and Norman Clark) came forward at the meeting and their details will be passed on to EH.

EH have also commenced an investigation into noise emissions from the Boyd Bros site following complaints.

7. Follow up on complaints of smell from Duiskey landfill site

SEPA reported that investigations were carried out to try and find the source of the odour last year which appeared to be because the current cell was reaching full capacity and was more open to the elements. The operator had agreed to increase the cover over the site at the end of each day. This seemed to work as there have been very few complaints to SEPA of odour since.

8. Reflections on the Hustings on 23 March for local council by-election

The hustings were well attended with 36 people. Four candidates attended (Alex MacInnes – SNP, Catherine MacKinnon – Ind, Denis Rixson – Lib Dem, and Colin Wood – Ind). KCC thanked John Hutchison for chairing and the candidates for attending.

9. Banavie War Memorial

The lettering on the war memorial has become very difficult to read. KCC had contacted Alf Leslie, the Project Co-ordinator for War Memorials, about this and he had confirmed that he had requested a quotation for cleaning the memorial and painting the letters black. He will decide what can be done once he has received the quote.

10. Next meeting

The next meeting of KCC will be at 19:15 on Monday 23 April 2018 at Kilmallie Community Centre.