

Biggar Community Council
Minutes of the meeting held at 7:00pm on 18/11/19
in Biggar Library Meeting Room

Present:

Community Council

Jerry Sumpster (Chair), Jan Currie (Secretary), Thelma Ingram, Jimmy Ritchie, Laura Shirley, Janet Moxley, Lesley Craise (Minute Taker)
Al Stewart (Cornet's Club) – Associate Member

Ex Officio

Cllrs Ian McAllan and Alex Allison

In Attendance

Mark Richardson (Police Scotland)
Melitta Pllu (Police Scotland)

3 members of the public

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Gil Dunn.

2. Chair's Opening Remarks

Jerry welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Police Report

Crimes recorded in the Biggar area since 15th October: skip set on fire; boat stolen; theft of trailer; theft of two mountain bikes from a van in Tinto car park; breach of an ASBO; breach of the peace in the High Street.

On a wider note, Mark reported that there has been a spate of rural crime over a wide area, including Dumfries and Galloway, West Lothian and South Lanarkshire. Different items have been stolen, including trailers and tractors. Police Scotland have an action plan for this. Mark urged members of the public to phone 101 if they see anything they think is suspicious. BCC will publicise this information via social media and our website.

Thelma expressed concern about the crossing patrol at the bottom of the town and whether this is adequate. Recently, the regular crossing patrol man went off sick at short notice. A replacement has been provided during his absence and this was welcomed. There were some questions about whether the patrol's remit extends to helping anyone who wants to cross, or just primary school children.

Councillor Allison will look into this. Thelma asked for a police view on the situation but the officers stated it was not appropriate for them to comment.

3. Police Report (cont)

Councillors Allison and McAllan praised the work of Police Scotland at the recent Remembrance Day parade. Responding to recent negative comments on social media about traffic noise during the service, it was noted that there is no official road closure and the police do a good job in keeping any disruption to a minimum. It was also noted that cars were parked outside the Cross Keys this year. Usually, this area is kept clear. The police officers were thanked for their attendance.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 21/10/19

4.1 Corrections and Additions

- Under **9**, SLC Councillors Reports, the farmland around Overburn Quarry is not up for sale, it is the neighbouring farm
- Add to **10.2**, "The SUDS pond discharges to the combined sewer and thereafter to the sewage works."

With these amendments, adoption of the minutes was proposed by Lesley Craise and seconded by Laura Shirley. The minutes were adopted. All tasks previously listed in the action table were completed or ongoing.

5. Hogmanay Celebrations Update

Jerry welcomed Al Stewart as an Associate Member of the CC. Al reported that preparations for the bonfire were well under way. The risk assessment has been submitted and is with someone in Lanark being checked over. Participants in the torchlight procession will be given a safety briefing beforehand. Gravel and boarding have been organised. Nominations are being invited for the person to light the bonfire. Thelma asked that as much gravel as possible is laid so that fracturing of the cobbles underneath is avoided. Al replied that this is a matter for SLC. Thelma asked how the marshalling was being organised. Al stated that it can be difficult to get people to volunteer and it is generally the cornets and their friends. Janet undertook to advertise for volunteers on our website and get back to Al if any potential volunteers come forward. Jerry thanked Al for his attendance.

6. Chair's Monthly Report

Jerry noted his attendance, along with Lesley, at the Clyde Windfarm Fund event, which was a celebratory event, rather than a launch of the Clyde Extension Fund. Jerry has contacted Gareth Shields (SSE) asking when the extension fund is likely to be open for applications from this area, for clarification about whether it was possible to apply to both the Clyde Windfarm Fund, administered by SLC and the Clyde Extension Fund, administered by SSE, and what name the Clyde Extension Fund would be marketed under. Thelma expressed concern about members of the public potentially becoming confused about the two Clyde Windfarm funds.

7. Secretary's Report

There was no secretary's report because Jan has been away. We ratified the expenditure on the wreath for Remembrance Day which had previously been agreed by email. This was proposed by Lesley and seconded by Janet.

8. Digital Correspondence

Gil provided a summary of digital correspondence received since the last meeting. A copy of this is available on our website <https://biggarcc.weebly.com>, or at the Library.

9. Specific matters brought to meeting by public

A member of the public was present to raise concerns about the safety of people trying to cross the A702 at the junction with Station Road and the Wynd, particularly children. This is an issue that keeps coming back to us. There is no way children can safely cross there outwith the times when the school crossing patrol is operational. In response to this being raised previous by members of the public, Cllr McAllan had written to Transport Scotland expressing concern. He followed this up a week later and as a result Amey will carry out an assessment and report back before the end of the year.

Thelma stressed that other members of the public e.g. those with a visual impairment are also affected and that some people avoid going to that end of the town because they are frightened to cross the road.

A number of points were made about what should happen when Amey make their assessment:

- It should be done at "rush hour"
- Members of the public and the CC should be enabled to comment directly to Amey
- Moving the bus stop on the High Street could be mentioned at the same time, although it was noted that its location helps to slow down traffic.

It was suggested that there could be some involvement from SLC as other crossings, on adjoining streets e.g. Station Road might be needed. It was noted that if pedestrian traffic lights were to be considered they would need to be placed away from the junction.

When the 20 mph limit was introduced, it was thought that this should make a major contribution to traffic calming in the High Street. This is, at best, patchy. The 20 mph limit was established as 3 year pilot project so it is unlikely that changes will be made before the end of that time unless pressure is brought to bear. Cllr McAllan undertook to contact Transport Scotland again the following day and express the public's concerns in the strongest possible terms. If this does not yield any results, contact with local MSPs could be an option.

10. Treasurer's Report

Balance figures

given are correct at 18/11/19

Business account balance **£351.31**

There is still around £70 to come off this balance.

Incentive account balance **£1250.55**

(Glenkerie Windfarm balance £541.12, Incentive fund balance £709.43)

Clyde Windfarm account balance **£2750.50**

Fixed assets are a Canon printer and a filing cabinet. Jimmy said that he had found a taker for the filing cabinet.

11. SLC Councillors Reports

Cllr McAllan advised that councillors had been involved with parking issues and neighbourhood/housing issues, and in trying to get signage for "Little Sparta", to highlight its presence to tourists.

Councillor Allison reported that the Gladman planning application goes to committee on 19/11/119 with a recommendation for refusal because it does not fit with the local plan. The local plan is currently with the Scottish Government at the moment and Gladman are appealing it.

The councillors reported that CRAG is looking at different ways to "future proof" against Patterson's applying for planning permission again, which they can do after two years.

Some of the issues being considered are:

- Some councils designate "Landmark Hills", which restricts development. South Lanarkshire does not currently do this but is considering the possibility of designating Tinto as a "Landmark Hill". It could not be the only hill so designated and thought would need to be given to the criteria for designation and the possibility of any unintended consequences e.g. no development at all would be possible.
- Develop, promote and increase the use of the footpath which runs opposite to the proposed quarry site.

Janet suggested that a canoeing/kayaking trail could be developed and marketed. We also discussed possible plans for a footpath/cycle path between Biggar and Symington.

12. Agenda Items

12.1 Process for filling vacancies

Jerry reiterated the two options that SLC had advised as available to BCC: approaching people who might be willing to be co-opted, or advertise. Lesley suggested combining both approaches, in that members of BCC could approach

12.1 Process for filling vacancies (cont.)

individuals who were felt to be able to offer added value, but they would then need to seek nomination (rather than be co-opted). This was agreed, the agreement was that if there are more people standing than there are places for, the CC votes. Jerry felt that we might need to put our intention to advertise on the agenda for the next meeting, but the majority view was that minuting our decision at this meeting would be acceptable. Jerry undertook to look again at our constitution, and the recent guidance from Elizabeth Harrison, his concern being that we might need to call an EGM and undertook to get back to the CC within 24 hours with clarification. We agreed that, subject to Jerry not finding anything which would contraindicate this course of action, we would advertise the two vacancies and invite nominations via our website, social media, the Gazette, the Peebleshire and via posters, up to a maximum cost of £50.

12.2 Community Action Planning

Lesley informed the meeting about the statutory framework for community participation which came into place following legislation being introduced in 2015, and that the working group has met twice and explored a range of options and approaches. A budget will be needed. Our next step is to meet with Gregor Leishman (SLC Community Empowerment and Participation), before presenting a range of options to the full CC. Terms of reference for the group did not seem appropriate for the working group as it will be short lived in its current form. It was agreed that we would “launch” the Local Action Planning (LAP)” process at the January Community Fair and that we would explore the use of Place Standard at that event. This can be found at <https://placestandard.scot>.

12.3 Hustings

Janet proposed that the CC should organise a hustings prior to the General Election. This was agreed by a narrow margin. A working group consisting of Thelma, Jan and Janet was set up to organise this, with the place and time to be arranged, depending on candidates' availability and venue availability. Janet will also let surrounding community councils know that this is being organised. The importance of a good, neutral chairperson was stressed.

12.4 Winter Resilience Planning

Some local communities have a local resilience plan, including winter, flooding and other emergencies. We do not, although SLC has a plan. Thelma will investigate and identify gaps not covered by the SLC plan.

12.5 Micro-grant Applications

Two applications had been received, one from Biggar Museum Trust and one from the Greenhills Support Group. Lesley declared an interest in the Greenhills Support

12.5 Micro-grant Applications (cont.)

Group application and withdrew while that was being discussed.

The application from Biggar Museum Trust was declined as they have already received a grant this year. The application from Greenhills Support Group, to pay for banners to advertise their Christmas Fair, was approved.

Thelma abstained from both votes. As this has been the case for some time, the Chair asked Thelma whether there was anything that he and/or the other members may be able to do in order to help Thelma take a position and vote on these matters. Thelma declined this offer, indicating that she would spend some time considering her thoughts regarding micro-grants.

12.6 Meetings with other organisations

12.6.1 Meeting with Health and Social Care Partnership (11/11/19)

Lesley said that she felt one of the most useful aspects of the meeting had been the opportunity to meet up with members from the Health and Social Care Partnership Local Forum who represent the views of local communities in various strategic health and social care structures.

Craig Cunningham (SLC) had outlined SLC's approach to Health and Social Care which is to use a "Hub and Spoke" model. The Hub will be in Lanark near the Health Centre and will offer a range of services. The location of the Spokes is yet to be finally decided but there will probably be one in Biggar. Possible buildings have not yet been identified but a decision is expected by April 2020. Cllrs McAllan and Allison reassured the CC that there would be community consultation once possible locations for spokes had been identified. SLC are using an "assets based model" which focuses on what an individual can do and would like to do rather than what is wrong with them. The model relies heavily on community involvement.

Thelma expressed concerns about the quality of training and support any community volunteers would receive. Lesley advised that a good route for any questions would be via the Local Forum. Thelma undertook to pass the questions she has onto Lesley who will pass them on to the Local Forum.

The question of whether people in remoter rural areas are getting equal access to home care services was raised, since, anecdotally, this is said not to be the case. We were reassured that this was not the case at the meeting but it transpires that recently someone was told that SLC had been unable to access Home Care and that they would be allocated a Self Directed Support Budget. Self Directed Support is meant to offer a choice. It does not suit everyone as it can involve employing someone or trying to access a Home Care service yourself when SLC has been unable to.

There are still no plans for the Bield Day Care Building.

12.6.1 Meeting with Health and Social Care Partnership (cont.)

There is a new Chief Executive in post, Dr Lynne Douglas, and it was agreed that Lesley should write to her on behalf of the CC asking about Bield's plans.

12.6.2 Meeting with Rotary re Citizen of Year Award (13/11/19)

It was agreed that the CC should try to go ahead with making these awards at the Community Fair in January. The award recipients will then automatically be nominated for the Rotary Awards, made later in the year and covering a wider area. We will progress this at the working group meeting arranged to discuss the Community Fair.

It was also suggested that we should link in with the Provost's Awards, which are open for nominations in January. This was agreed.

12.7 Clyde Windfarm New Application Process

There is a new online application process for the Clyde Windfarm Fund administered by SLC. We agreed to publicise this on our website and via social media. Link is: https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200168/getting_involved_in_your_community/571/clyde_wind_farm_fund

12.8 Output from Climate Conversation

Janet reported that the event was successful with 19 people attending. Feedback has been sent to the Scottish Government.

13. AOCB

- a) We discussed Amey's proposals for the A702 Biggar Inclusive Mobility Improvements, which are improvements that are assessed as necessary under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act. The timescale for any community consultation is very short. Opinions varied as to whether we should just let the work go ahead, as most of it will be beneficial, or whether we should seize the opportunity and insist on consultation, possibly delaying the work. It was suggested that we could use the opportunity, for instance, to raise the issues about crossing at the junction between the A702, Station Road and the Wynd. We decided to take the first course of action, and to respond advising that, but to include our thoughts that 1) BCC was disappointed as the plans had been presented for feedback in such a short timescale, 2) the plans are a good start, but not good enough and 3) that we should include some of a selection of improvements that we felt fell under the umbrella of "Inclusive Mobility" but were/are absent from the plans. We noted that the plans involve widening a stretch of pavement at the bus stop past the junction with Broughton Road and these mean making an area of garden the Civic Society

13. AOCB (cont.)

has been working on smaller. The existing plants will be lifted and replanted.

- b) New lighting in Burn Braes has been commented on positively by the community.
- c) Jerry expressed concern regarding the amount of printing that has become the norm for each BCC meeting, noting that he had prepared over 500 pages of duplex printed A4 sheets for this meeting, around 75% of which remained untouched at the centre of the table. He asked that BCC members give consideration to their personal needs for printed matter, in order to find a more ecological way forwards for future meetings.

Date of Next Meeting 16th December

ACTIONS TABLE 18/11/19

Arrange meeting with other CCs	Janet Moxley Ongoing
Make enquiries re designating Park Place as an emergency route and the possibility of signage	Councillor McAllan Ongoing
Publicise information from Police Scotland about current rural crime on website and via social media	Janet Moxley Gil Dunn
Advertise for marshalls for Bonfire on website and via social media	Janet Moxley Gil Dunn
Contact Transport Scotland	Councillor McAllan
Deal with filing cabinet	Jimmy Ritchie
Advertise vacancies	Janet Moxley
Organise hustings	Janet Moxley Thelma Ingram Jan Currie
Explore winter resilience planning	Thelma Ingram
Collate questions for health and social care partnership	Thelma Ingram
Write to Dr Lynne Douglas	Lesley Craise
Write to Amey/SLC re Biggar Inclusive Mobility	Jerry Sumpster
Consider your personal needs for printed matter at future BCC meetings	All