

**Minute of the Annual General Meeting of Torbrex Community Council**  
**held in Stirling High School at 7.15 pm on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2008.**

**1. Present:**

Community Councillors – Murray Dickie, Jim Docherty, Alex White, Brendan Docherty and Genia Wilson. Residents – Michael Green, Joyce Green, Margaret Duff, Richard Baker, Wilson Jamieson, Irene Walker, Bob Inglis, Vilma Inglis, Marjorie MacIntyre, Hirek Kwiatowski and Cllr Scott Farmer and Guests –David Scott, Lidl Stores

**Apologies:** - Bob Johnson, Julia Leftwich, Sue Ridler, Carolyn Edward, Sheena Baker and WPC Kirsop.

**2. Minute of the previous Annual General Meeting** – The minute of the AGM for 2007 was accepted as an accurate record. Proposed by Genia Graham and seconded by Michael Green.

**3. Matters arising:** Murrayshall Quarry. It was noted that the campaign to prevent renewed quarrying was on going.

**4. Chair's Report:** This past year, 2007 to 2008, has been an exceptionally busy one for the Community Council. There has been a wide range of Community Council activities, including:

➤ **Statutory Planning Responsibility** – proposals to make changes to the built environment of our community come to the Community Council from Stirling Council's Planning Services. Monitoring this process is one of the key responsibilities of the Community Council. Stirling Council's PPP project has continued to consume a great deal of our time. Much of the difficulty has been the complexity of the process.

➤ **New School** – I would like, on behalf of the Community Council, to recognise the benefits which a new building can offer pupils, staff, parents and the community. We would hope for the development of a positive relationship between school and community, aided by the opportunity which new faces within the school and at Viewforth will bring. I would wish to recognise the assistance given to us by Bob Gill, the Council's PPP manager. Despite differences of opinions at times, he has always responded quickly to our enquiries and requests for information.

We continue to have grave concerns about the delivery of promises made by the previous administration regarding community access and the quality of environmental works. In addition, there have and will continue to be issues arising from the siting of the new school, the construction of housing and the departure of the Ice Rink in 2009. These all look like remaining priority areas for the Community Council.

➤ **The old school and new housing** – From what seemed a short term development programme, the local community is now faced with a much longer period, perhaps as long as five years. We have established contact with the new developer and hope to keep in touch with the programme and offer local people a point of contact.

➤ **Planning Gain** – Monies are now received from the school developers and have been utilised for road modifications. Although the timescale was longer than we had hoped, the changes are now nearly completed and are making a difference. Monies will be received shortly from the housing developer and will fund further traffic safety improvements and development to children's play areas in Beechwood Park.

➤ **New School Development Groups** – We are delighted that Stirling High School has now set up a number of planning groups, including community and fundraising. We look forward to the opportunity to engage positively with these groups over the next few years.

➤ **Former Somerfield development** – Faced with the loss of the former Somerfield store and the possibility of additional housing, it has been a great relief to see the site being acquired by another retailer. We have established contact with Lidl staff and look forward to working with them as they develop the site.

➤ **Forth Valley Health Board** - Consultations continue with FVHB on issues relating to the new hospital at Larbert and the plans for the new community hospital in Stirling City. There is a public consultation between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm to be held in Viewforth, Stirling on Saturday 7th June, 2008. We

continue to keep in touch with the issue of new premises for Stirling GP practices. Hopefully, the proposals to move them all to Orchard House site have now passed away. The utilisation of the SRI site for this purpose has now become a distinct possibility. Again, there is an opportunity to raise this issue on the 7th June.

- **Beechwood Park Consultation** – From little acorns, great oaks grow – or perhaps I should say from small masts great beech woods arise! A considerable effort has gone into supporting Stirling Council to engage with local residents. As an additional bonus, the Community Council has gained a standing sub-committee, the Friends of Beechwood Park, to take forward issues relating to the longer term maintenance and development of the park. I would like to take the opportunity of thanking the members of this sub-committee for their great efforts in supporting the consultation process and for their continued efforts in seeking to improve the park and its facilities.
- **Beechwood Scouts** – One of the great successes of this past year has been the transformation of the run down Beechwood Scout hut into a stunning new Beechwood Scout Centre. Our thanks to all of those who have contributed to the transformation, but in particular to the Scoutmaster, David Mitchell, whose vision and drive took the idea into the reality. In recognition of his efforts, would wish to propose that the Community Council nominate David for Stirling Council's Civic award for services to the community.
- **Communications** - have continued to play a key role in keeping local people in touch. We have used the Stirling Observer's communities voice section as our main method and recognise its great value. We have produced a number of newsletters and I would wish to thank all of you who trudged through sun and rain to deliver them. E-mail has been a powerful method of keeping in touch and I would welcome contacts from people who would like to be added to our e-mail list. If you have recently changed or are going to change your e-mail address, please let the Secretary know. We have recently developed a new website, [www.Torbrex.org.uk](http://www.Torbrex.org.uk), and my thanks to Brendan Docherty for his help with this.
- **The Community Planning Forum** - offers us a chance to get together with neighbouring communities to exchange information and views and to engage with the local council and other agencies.
- **St Ninians Community Development Trust** – we continue to be represented on the Trust which has organised another fair, is looking to set one up for February 2009 and is supporting local groups with fundraising. My particular thanks go to Genia Graham for her work in supporting these activities.
- **Older people' Activities** – after a successful start, these have fallen by the wayside. Their resurrection will be a key activity for next year.
- **New Community Councillor:** Brendan Docherty has joined us as a co-opted community councillor.
- **Retiring Community Councillor - Alex White** has served us as Treasurer since the inception of the community council in 1997. I would like to thank Alex for his stalwart service and to wish him well in the future.
- **New Sub-Committee** – The Friends of Beechwood Park sub-committee has been extremely active in taking forward proposals for the development of the park. I am sure that, in the next few years, they will make a major contribution to ensuring its transformation from its present, tired state.
- **New Ward Councillors** – Our local Councillors Neil Benny, Scott Farmer and Alex Simpson have been of considerable help in this past year. We look forward to their continued support.
- **New Community Policewoman** - We have been joined by WPC Katherine Kirsop, as our new community policewoman. Katherine has been a welcome, regular attendee and supported at our meetings.
- **Retiring and New Headteachers** - : To the outgoing head teachers Greig Ingram and Gill Friel a long and happy retirement and to the new head teachers of Stirling High School and St Ninians Primary School, a warm welcome.
- **The Year Ahead** - I am sure that we will not be short of things to do. I look forward to your continuing support in ensuring that our community has a chance to get its voice heard in influencing the key decisions which will affect its future.

I would like to thank all Community Councillors for their efforts in keeping our heads above the water and ensuring that our community continues to be kept informed of issues, has a chance to consider key issues and gets their voices heard. My thanks go to Jim Docherty for his work as our secretary and to Alex White for his work as treasurer and our auditor for keeping our accounts scrutinised. I would like to thank Sue Ridler and Julia Leftwich for their stalwart efforts to keep us on top of the Stirling Council planning process. Thanks to Hirek, Wilson, Genia, Brendan and all the other who have supported the activities of the Friends of Beechwood Park sub-committee and the Council staff and consultant who have given generously of their time. I would like to recognise the help we receive from Stirling Council, particularly the resource centre, in supporting our meetings, newsletters and consultations. Lastly, I would like to thank all of the local residents who have given of their time to attend meetings, provide us with local intelligence, broaden our perspectives and provide support with our activities.

5. **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer produced a copy of the annual audited accounts for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. The accounts were accepted and proposed by Genia Wilson and seconded by Brendan Docherty.
6. **Update on PPP:** - The Chair publicly thanked Julia Leftwich and Sue Ridler for their work during the year. Torbrex Community Council recognises the benefits a new school can bring but noted that community access during the first quarter had been disappointing. Bob Gil, PPP Team, had consistently provided valuable assistance throughout the process. It was agreed that a representative from Children's Services should be invited to a meeting in the new future to clarify exactly what access to the new school the community may expect.
7. **Beechwood Park Update:** Hirek reported that serious acts of vandalism had taken place in the park in recent weeks; these had been reported to Central Scotland Police. Hirek tabled a summary report of key issues arising from an analysis of data from the consultation exercise on Beechwood Park /Proposed Developments by Children's Services. A summary overview of key issues emerging from analysis of the questionnaires indicates a range of very positive views:-
  - (a) A genuine interest in valuing Beechwood Park as a social space and for its environment and facilities
  - (b) An appreciation of its facilities – especially for children's bikes and play, (recognising that these facilities require refurbishment and redevelopment).
  - (c) A strongly expressed wish for development of additional facilities for teenagers and adults
  - (d) A wish to raise the quality of park environment through addressing – litter dropping; more litter bins; antisocial dog owners; more dog bins; more seating (relaxing areas); wider range of shrubs and plants; better lighting.

However, there is also clear evidence of a number of strong concerns:

- (a) Lack of maintenance of environment and equipment
- (b) Inadequate number of litter and dog bins and inadequate management of these
- (c) Proposed developments do not cater for the range of community needs
- (d) Current vandalism / rowdiness, and a worry that these could increase with new proposals
- (e) Safety / security related particularly to children's play areas (especially from older people bringing young people to the park)
- (f) Current levels of lighting in the park (particularly by people using it as a thoroughfare)
- (g) Lack of responsibility by some dog owners leading to fears over children feeling threatened by dogs and the health risks associated with dog fouling in an opened up environment.

FOBP are keen to see positive developments in Beechwood Park, including developments for children and young people. While there may be a policy in Stirling to move to more open play areas for children and in view of the broader consultation being initiated by Stirling Council on the development of play areas FOBP are of the view that the very clear and specific concerns which have emerged from the consultation must be addressed in relation to the Children's Services proposals for Beechwood Park before any proposals are implemented. It was agreed that Torbrex Community Council will support FOBP's request that they are informed by Children's Services as soon as possible as to how Children's Services propose to address the above concerns which were expressed in the consultation.

- 8. Forth Valley NHS:** The joint meeting on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2008 between the local community planning Area Fora and the Community Health Partnership's Public Partnership Forum was well attended. There were presentations on the current thinking behind the development of the new acute hospital at Larbert, the proposals for the new community hospital on the Stirling Royal Infirmary site and the Orchard House Resource Centre. Members had a chance to discuss the issues, air their views and were clearly comforted by assurances of the flexibility and future consultation promised by Health Board staff. It is hoped that minutes this and future meetings would be publicly available.
- 9. Lidl Store:** Presentation by David Scott, Acquisitions Manager. David delivered a presentation on the new store which will be open for business by the end of 2008. There followed a question and answer session. It was agreed that the low key proposals for landscaping were acceptable. It was also understood that the present temporary mast replaced an existing mast which had been on the Somerfield roof for some time. A planning application will be made for a permanent mast..
- 10. Election of Office Bearers:** Co-option of additional community councillor – Hirek Kwiatowski –proposed by Brendan Docherty and seconded by Jim Docherty. Chair – Murray Dickie and Secretary – Jim Docherty, proposed by Joyce Green and seconded by Richard Baker. Treasurer – Brendan Docherty – proposed by Genia Graham and seconded by Jim Docherty. Vice Chair – it was agreed to keep this vacant at the moment. The Chair again thanked Alex White for his many years of service as Treasurer.
- 11. Roads consultation:** Murray reported that £68,000 would be spent in road narrowing and installation of speed bumps in Cedar Avenue and Laburnum Grove. It was agreed that TCC would contact Stirling Council Roads Department seeking a public meeting to discuss this.
- 12. A.O.C.B.:**
  - a) Activities for Older People:** This initiative would be revisited during the summer and Active Stirling would be contacted for assistance.
  - b) Bus Service:** Torbrex Community Council had received a complaint from a resident about the timing and frequency of the bus service in Torbrex. It was agreed that TCC would raise the matter with Stirling Council.
  - c) Richard Baker** referred to the level of motorway noise and asked if something can be done about it.