

**Minutes of Bo'ness Community Council Meeting held on
Wednesday 12th March 2008 in Upper Rooms Bo'ness Library**

Present: M Hunt (Convenor), I. Don (Treasurer), L Ainslie, D Findlay, G Fairholm, M Bennett, W Stanners, A Ritchie and M Gilfillan.

Apologies: B Kelly (vice-Convenor), S McAllister, A Nimmo, B Bruce, R O'Connor (Secretary) and M Gibbons.

In attendance: Falkirk Councillors A Mahoney, J Constable and members of the public.

M Hunt introduced Thomas Ross who is the HMO Enforcement Officer with Falkirk Council and will explain about Houses of Multiple Occupancy to us. He will answer any questions or concerns we might have.

This legislation was introduced after a fire in Glasgow in 1991 in which two students died. It affects mainly foreign workers and students who rent properties and then are joined by others to share costs. This results in a property suitable for say 4 people being occupied by as many as 10. Sometimes it is the owner who exploits the occupants. There are between 30 to 40 HMO'S in Bo'ness.

My job is to find out who pays the Council Tax, who is the landlord and investigate should my office receive a query. I work with the landlord and Fire Service concerning the welfare and safety of tenants and where necessary take action to get things done. Tenants are mostly innocent and being manipulated by landlords who want to make more money out of vulnerable people. Sometimes the landlord is not aware of what is happening in his property and hopefully when informed will comply with the law.

The Council has HMO'S which are registered for homeless people. Mr Ross answered questions and distributed information leaflets.

Convenor thanked Mr. Ross for his informative presentation and wished him well in his new post as a Licensing Officer.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Corrections: AOCB Lollipop cover should read withdrawn from Borrowstoun Road to Jamieson Avenue.

Were proposed by L Ainslie and seconded by D Findlay.

Congratulations were offered on previous meeting about Kinneil Woods when over 50 members of the public attended. It was well organised and members of the public got the chance to voice their opinions.

Matters Arising

These will be dealt with in the reports.

REPORTS

M Hunt: Police report had been sent to Convenor and copies were distributed.

Safety Group were looking at buying computer, printer/copier, laminator and display boards as funding had been received. An application for the Child Safety Project was progressing. Mae Bell of CVS was willing to undertake Child Protection Training and Bo'ness Churches are being contacted.

Mining Memorial: A request was received from B. Kelly asking us to pay Falkirk Council £13,000 towards the project.

I attended the handover of the Hippodrome to Falkirk, with W.Stanners and R.O'Connor on 14 March.

I was invited to and attended the official opening of Christie's Timber on 21st February and was presented to the Duke of Kent who performed the ceremony. I received a gift of a pen and pencil to commemorate this.

As regards the Mining Memorial Plaque I am able to report that arrangements are at an advanced stage for a replacement. My thanks to Bill Bruce for this, especially as it will not incur any additional cost to us.

I have applied for a road closure order for the Victorian Street Fair on the 25th May but as yet I have not had any response despite sending a reminder.

As regards the harbour and foreshore development a letter has been sent to the leader of the Council about our concerns of the changes made to the original plans. We were disappointed to learn that the revised plans appear to have been passed by a casting vote of the chair.

The McLaren Trophy Award is on 26th March and M Bennett is co-ordinating attendance and L Ainslie is organising the catering with Ian Tough at Falkirk Council.

On 7th March I met with Hania Scott and Catherine Wilson to arrange a clean up of Kinneil Estate. Friends of Kinneil Chairperson Lynn Munro also attended. We have to thank the Estate gardeners for allowing us to use their portacabin as weather conditions were unsuitable for a meeting outside and they accommodated us at the last minute.

It was agreed to have a litter pick in the Estate on Sunday 27th April from 10am to 12 noon. All necessary equipment will be supplied by Hania and staff and posters and fliers will be available for distribution soon. Bonnie Bo'ness has agreed to help us on the day. It is hoped the Cub Scouts can get involved.

Tomorrow evening- 13th March I will be attending a Litter Strategy Launch in the Municipal Buildings and Stuart McAllister, Gail Fairholm and Bill Kelly will also be there.

I have also acquired approx 200 pots of daffodils and with the help of anyone who has time to spare will plant these on Thursday 27th March from 2pm. If enough helpers attend it should take less than an hour to do the planting.

Planning: Two items to consider:

Change of use from a shop to a hot food takeaway in South Street and an application to build a house in the grounds of Braemar, Braehead has been received and access for this development would be from the Bog.

Avondale Liaison Group: I have sent a sympathy card from the Council to John Holt whose wife died suddenly.

Treasurer Ian Don: £13,372.889 in account. Need to pay Falkirk Council £ 13,000 towards cost of Mining Memorial.

Len Ainslie: Bo'ness Fair Meeting is on 17th March. This year there will be Military Bands. Mrs Connarty. Wife of MP Michael Connarty will be crowning the Queen. We handed over £2,000 to Bo'ness Means Business towards the Victorian Street Fair to be held on Sunday 25th May. This was money that had been left over from our last Victorian Fair. The Area Forum is in Kinneil School on Thursday 17th April at 7pm and Ing representatives will be attending. Also mentioned parking at the Co-op, recycling and wheelie bin collections.

Margaret Bennett: World Day of Prayer Service was in St.Catharine's Church on 7th March and was written by the women of Guyana and samples of baking using their recipes were available

Malcolm Gilfillan: Gave his apologies for McLaren Award on 26th March.

David Findlay: Returned Kinneil Ponds survey on CD.

Adrian Mahoney: Spoke about the change in the order of the development of Bo'ness Harbour. There will be a period of consultation on future uses of the Hippodrome-heritage, films and community use to be discussed.

The Council has agreed to make Falkirk a Fair Trade Zone and there will be promotional events in The Lesser Town Hall tomorrow.

Walter Stanners: I was interviewed article about the Hippodrome by the Daily Mail. Info and pictures of old miners given to the Journal. Asked about success of brown bin collection during the winter. Footpath at Cumlouden needs repaired. My wife had a bad fall there recently.

John Constable: Pleased with extension of brown bin collection. Will follow up Cumlouden but the area in question is in private ownership.
Disappointed Town and Waterfront Development link abandoned for the present. An EU grant of £1 million had been lost due to the late development of the site.
The old Police Station in Corbiehall is being renovated for small business use. Malcolm asked about the water on Grangemouth Road and the drainage problems. Also about scaffolding at the Queen Mary building where panels were obstructing the view of oncoming traffic. Also the road was completely blocked when delivery vehicles were at the site.

Gail Fairholm: Hanging baskets are on order from Estates Department and we are awaiting costings.

AOCB

1. Len mentioned we can complain to Waterwatch if we are unhappy with increased rates. Community hospitals under discussion.
2. The Safety Group Cabin will have to be moved if housing development goes ahead.
3. Council has renewed concessions at weekends for rail travel for the elderly
4. CVS and a whole range of voluntary community face funding problems.
5. Ann mentioned that youth were going over the foreshore at night to consume alcohol. This was dangerous near the river especially on dark nights and during stormy weather. One has already fallen into the water.
6. There has been an increase of youths on the shore and acts of vandalism at the railway.

There being no other business the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the chair.

Next Meeting is on Wednesday 9th April 2008 at 7pm.