

Denny & District Community Council

Meeting Minutes-Draft

Mon 5th Jan 2009

Meeting held in Denny Business Centre – Carronbank 7p.m. – 9p.m
Minutes by C. Bell

PRESENT:

John Rintoul
Christine Bell
Roy Robertson
Jennifer Steel
David Dow
Colin Belbin
Ray Richards
Mick McIntosh
John Cooper
Neil McDonald
Louise Montgomery – Denny High School
Jim Marshall – Falkirk Council
Jim Allan – Inspector C. S. Police
Robert Beaton – C. S. Police Sub Area Commander Denny
Michelle McCallum – CTRA, CGI
Wm J Buchanan – Local Resident
Deborah Punshon – Falkirk Herald
Cllr Blackwood
Cllr Waddell

APOLOGIES:

Mick McIntosh
Cllr McNally

1.0 Welcome

The convenor John Rintoul opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present and wishing them all the best for 2009. Jim Allan and Bob Beaton from **Central Scotland Police** were introduced to the meeting and invited to address the meeting first.

Action

2.0 Jim Allan Regeneration Project Manager for CSP

Jim covers the regeneration for both Denny and Grangemouth. A few years ago the existing police station building in Denny was classed as no longer fit for purpose due to the age and structure of the building and the environmental and economical impact of operating from the station. It was decided that both Denny and Steinhousemuir would have to be combined as they were two offices which fell into this category. Plans have been put in place to operate the police service for Denny from a HQ in Central Business Park Larbert (industrial estate beside Outside Inn) with an office facility in the New Town Centre in Denny after the regeneration has taken place. The new facility which is proposed to be on the corner of the Denny Town Centre site next to the Clydesdale bank will be the office used during the day shift and will be manned daily. In the

evening the office will be used by duty officers when needed during their evening shift to perform their duties. It will have a reception area, interview rooms and office facilities. Until the new Town Centre is complete, the service will still either use the existing police station in Denny or relocate to another temporary location in Denny. Assurances were given that the service will not be compromised in any way due to the proposed changes. It is felt that the service should in fact be improved by the new centralisation of the HQ in Larbert which is due for completion autumn 2009.

Bob Beaton contributed to the meeting by outlining how the proposed plan will serve to both improve facilities and efficiency of the police officers and the service to the Denny area.

He then responded to some questions raised by the C.Council.

Q. It was raised that the current perception of some members of the community in Denny is that the crime situation in Denny is worsening which is felt to be contributed to by the letting policy of the housing in Vale View.

Is the Vale View Housing policy showing increased crime rates and if so what is being done about it?

A. Whilst there have been some reported incidents at the vale view housing complex, these have not resulted in an increase in criminal activity in the area.

Q. The CC asked about factual figures for crime rates in Denny.

A. It was reported that there has been a decrease in reported crime of 7% in the last year with a clear up rate of 54% which is considered as a very high rate compared with other local area's. There has already been an increase in area constables for Denny and there are proposals for an additional 3 constables for the sub area command. It has been identified that there are some incidents which are claimed to have taken place which have in fact not been reported to the police. All reported incidents are dealt with by the police.

It was stated by the secretary of DDCC that one of the main concerns is confidence in the police force and the safety of the area. It was felt that the feeling of the distance from the HQ could undermine confidence in the service. It was felt that the notion of local policing was being removed. It was identified that the reduction in the reported crime could possibly be due to less confidence in the public to report crime due to less confidence in the police force to react.

It was stated by Bob Beaton that all reported incidents are responded to, however there is no way of knowing about the level of unreported crime. It is the understanding of the police

department that the public do have confidence in the service and that the public do witness physical responses to crimes in the area.

It was highlighted by Neil McDonald that during his role as Area Commander for Falkirk that there was a detailed analysis carried out on the use of police offices/stations by the public for reporting crime. The result was that very few people do actually use the police office. Most cases are reported by phone or to officers in the crime location. This would indicate that the relocation of the main police office moving to Larbert will have no significant impact on reported crime levels.

It was agreed by Neil McDonald that the perception of the public is of prime importance and that there is perhaps some work to be done by the force to install the confidence in the communities and that has started by the presence of the officers at the CC meeting. It was agreed that the media department could improve the reporting of the successes of the service which would improve the perception of the force, however by the nature of the press activities, it is often the case that bad news is reported more frequently than good news.

There was a point raised by Mr Buchanan that the police force no longer feels part of the communities they operate in due largely to centralisation.

The response from Jim Allan was that this has been largely due to the modernisation of the service but is being addressed by assigning community constables who by confirmation from the elected Councillors present, are doing a great job in their area's, particularly in the reduction of youth ASB.

The convenor identified that incidents of ASB and youth crime particularly underage drinking have been reported to the police more often over the last two years from certain areas in Denny and that the public feedback on this is positive in that the crime in their area has reduced as a result.

Bob Beaton confirmed that alcohol related youth crime was the most common criminal activity in the area and there are various schemes in place to try to reduce this which are proving effective.

Cllr Waddell identified that the new licensing regulations which are extremely rigorous are hoped to have long term benefits to the area by reducing the supply of alcohol to underage drinkers.

It was commented by the vice convenor that there appears to be an imbalance in society in the attitude towards drug abusers compared with other addictive activities such as smoking. Smoking issues have been high profile and radical policy changes

have resulted in stigmatising the smokers in communities. The vice convenor felt that more stringent policy implications should be put in place by the government and NHS towards drug abusers to deal with this serious problem more effectively.

A general discussion followed during which it was mentioned that the majority of crimes reported in this area are crimes relating to ASB, underage drinking, dog fouling and car parking. The car parking issues around schools at peak times were discussed and have been identified as a country wide issue which is an ongoing problem. Bob Beaton will report the particular issue at St Patricks Primary to the community officers and identifies that it is the main access to the doctor's surgery and the one stop shop which adds to the concern.

The community officers Andy and Lyndsey will attend the Community Council meetings when possible.

The convenor thanked the officers for attending the meeting. The officers discussion ended with them urging the community council to remind members of the public that if they have policing issue's in their area, they must report them to the police and that by doing so, the issues will be dealt with accordingly.

3.0 Town Centre Regeneration

Falkirk Council are still in discussion with Henry Boot. Nothing has been finalised yet. The Community Council members were not at the Nov Regeneration meeting but did have copies of the minutes from it.

Cllr Waddell did have a set of plans which show some changes. The CC requested copies of these plans in A3 size for clarity. The secretary will request new copies.

There is no confirmation yet as to which supermarket will be in the new town centre.

Next Town Centre Development Group meeting Is on Wed 21st Jan at 6.30 in the Broompark Centre and the Community Councillors who are members of this Dev group are urged to attend.

Roy

**David
Mick
CBell**

4.0 Minutes of 6th Dec Meeting

The minutes were proposed as a true record by John Rintoul and seconded by John Cooper.

5.0 Members of the Clergy to Feb Meeting

It was noted by the convenor that there had been an interest shown by some members of the clergy who wish attend the Feb CC meeting.

6.0 Meeting of all Falkirk Area Community Councils

This took place on 8th Dec. John Rintoul and Mick McIntosh attended.

Most community councils were represented and it proved to be a very useful meeting. The subject of area forums was discussed and is being looked into by Brian Pirrie who will inform all CC's when a decision is made on how to go forward with these.

7.0 Persimmon Homes PLI Decision

The final outcome of the PLI will be decided and publicised this month.

8.0 Public Partnership Forum

J. Steel has requested that the PPF become part of the area Forum. This notion is being pursued by Jennifer and the CHP will be updated in due course.

9.0 Station Masters House.

A response has been received by the secretary from Maureen Cambell concerning the position.

The letter was read out in full.

It made the suggestion that the CC request information of the intentions of the Heritage Society directly from the Heritage Society and revert.

Cllr Waddell read out the details relating to this issue from the minutes of the Dev group meeting of 13th Nov which does state that there has been info requested by the CC.

The situation still needs clarification. Roy will write and direct FC to Cllr McNally for the details of the situation with the heritage society.

ROY

10.0 First Ministers Question Time

John Rintoul and David Dow attended a session recently and felt it was a useful, impressive and enjoyable experience.

11.0 License Site Meeting --Duke Street Premises.

A site visit was requested for the premises in Duke St requiring a new license. This is due to take place on Wed 7th Jan and will be decided on 12th Jan.

12.0 Kingsbarn Windfarm

It was noted by Jennifer Steel that there should be a benefit fund meeting for this wind farm soon.

Mr Buchanan who attended the meeting voiced some concern over the potential community benefit from windfarms in general.

The only Windfarm benefit which has been secured to date is the Earlsburn Windfarm Benefit which pays out a total £15,000 per year to the Denny Community. There are other windfarms in the area which are not yet complete and negotiations regarding community benefit are ongoing but not yet finalised.

It was identified by Jennifer that it was thanks to Mr Buchanan that the community did get the benefit it has currently secured and that he can be assured that the Community Council will continue to seek benefits from such projects. All advice and guidance from Mr Buchanan in relation to this is much appreciated by DDCC.

13.0 Enforcement of Litter Offending Legislation and Dog Fouling

John Cooper requested that a letter is sent from the CC to FC to state that the CC is disappointed in the enforcement levels of both issues in the Denny area. It was requested that the CC considers that enforcement levels have not matched the efforts of the community to tackle these issues.

Roy

14.0 Footpath Access at Wellsfield Farm

Cllr Waddell requested that the CC clarify this issue. There is no update on the situation. CC to chase up the position on this.

Roy

Greenspace Course.

15.0 How to turn a Place Around – Town Centre Spaces.

C Bell, had circulated details relating to a forthcoming course promoted by <http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/>

It was felt by C. Bell that due to the forthcoming Town Regeneration that it would be highly appropriate for a member of the Community Council to attend.

The potential positives and negatives of the course were debated for some time.

This was put to vote by the members which resulted in a vote of not to attend this event. Reasons offered were that, it was considered too late to change the situation in Denny, it was too expensive for what it offered, the project it drew upon in Dalmiur to promote the course was not a good example to be using and it was more geared towards planners and community planning partnerships personnel.

16.0 Denny High School Update from Louise.

The New School is reported to be on schedule to open in Feb 09. It may be that pupils get a slightly extended Feb holiday due to the move but this has still tbc.

The Battlefields Trip is due to run again in Oct 09.

There was other trips hoped for but funding appears to be a problem. Mrs Steel mentioned that the school may be eligible for funding from the windfarm funding pot provided the required criteria are met. Louise will inform the necessary personnel at school that this may be a possible source for funding.

17.0	<u>Correspondence</u>	
17.1	<p>Michael Russell MSP Climate Change in National Forest Estate. Requiring feedback by 27th Jan. This paper can be found on www.forest.gov/fcsclimateconsultation Any member who wishes to respond can by downloading the form.</p>	ALL
17.2	<p>Planning Aid for Scotland Four dates and Locations for forthcoming sessions to outline planning changes. More information available on the website: www.planningaidscotland</p>	ALL
17.3	<p>Community Council Working Group Letter from Brian Pirrie regarding feedback from a recent meeting of the CCWG. For details see website. For web address please refer to Mr Roy Robertson. Letter circulated at the meeting.</p>	ALL
17.4	<p>CHP and PPF meeting to be held on Tue 27th Jan. For details see the Community Health Partnership website. Jennifer urged some of the CC members to attend. C. Bell is registered to attend.</p>	
17.5	<p>Community News Health Service – patients Rights Meeting to be held in Stirling Royal on Wed 7th Jan 6.30 – 9.30p.m. for public to feedback information on their views on patients rights. Jennifer is attending and urges as many members of the public, as possible to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to have your views heard.</p>	ALL
18.0	<u>Any Other Business</u>	
18.1	<p>Rotary Club Funds for National and International Charities. Neil McDonald informed the group that following the recent Christmas Events the club has raised around £2500 due to the exceptional efforts of its members. This sum is destined to be distributed to local charities and the club is keen to hear from worthy causes. Both individuals and groups will be considered. Sometimes a small amount can make a big business. Neil asked the meeting if they knew of any local causes. Driving Force was mentioned.</p>	ALL

Anyone with any thoughts on this should contact the Rotary Club.

18.2 John Neil.

Jennifer sent a card at Christmas to John Neil from the community council. He has recently been moved to a new residential care home in Falkirk.

18.3 Community Health partnership

Michelle McCallum of CGI reminded the meeting that the CHP have a week long 'Credit Crunch' event planned for Denny Town Centre with stalls from various local groups being represented to help people with the concerns and the effects of the downturn in the economy.

This event will be held in the Town Centre 'Old Electrical Shop' premises and will run from:

Monday noon to 4 pm;

Tues, Wed, Thurs 9:30-4:00,

Friday 9:30 to Noon.

There will be stalls offering financial help, healthy eating stalls, fruit smoothies and alternative health therapies, to name just a few.

Meeting Closed.

18.4 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 2nd February 2009.

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