

**HOWWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2003**

PRESENT

Nick Walker, Bill David, Ken Macdonald, Rosee Macdonald, Grace Weir, Gordon Weir, Norma David, Linda Smith, Millar Leon, David McKie, Danny McAlister, Brian Young, Craig Crawford.

IN ATTENDANCE

Cllr Alastair Nimmo, PC Graham Barclay, PC Colette Pryde, Michelle Knox (Dog Warden), Jeanette Fraser, Iain Fraser, Norma Walker.

APOLOGIES

Robert Scarsbrook, Christine Scarsbrook, Andrew Wilson, David Bottomley, Amish Amin, Tom Currie, Evelyn Currie.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

The Minutes of the 11.02.2003 meeting were accepted (prop. Gordon Weir, sec. Brian Young).

1. DOG WARDEN:

Michelle Knox (0141 8400 3106) is responsible across Renfrewshire for stray and nuisance dogs (including excessive noise) and dog fouling. Anyone who has problems with dogs may contact her in confidence and she will approach dog owners anonymously. A Bill currently before the Scottish Parliament will change the law so that dog owners may be fined without corroborative evidence, but at present corroboration is required. Michelle will spend time in Howwood as part of her regular rounds in Renfrewshire, and the Community Police will co-ordinate with her at times, so that offending dog owners can be charged. Currently it is unlawful to allow dogs to foul footpaths and leisure areas (in effect gardens, play parks and mown areas). Michelle will provide information on dog-related issues, posters and dog-poo bags. These will be available at Storrie's shop and the Post Office.

2. POLICE REPORT:

Figures for January: one motor vehicle theft, one breaking into a motor vehicle and two road traffic offences; and February: four road traffic offences. There has been a recent blitz on antisocial youth behaviour involving alcohol in Lochwinnoch. Specific targeted action may be taken in Howwood if problems arise and persist.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

3.1 *Library*

The mobile libraries are both in use all day during the week, and Monday to Thursday one is out each evening, so there are unlikely to be resources to have an evening visit to Howwood. A recent survey of mobile library users showed four people who use it in Howwood had no specific complaints or concerns and felt that the service was good. As yet no others (who may find the timings unsuitable) have been surveyed.

3.2 *Hall tables*

Ken Macdonald has yet to gather information on availability and costs of small "cafe" style tables for social events in the Hall.

4. WORKING GROUPS:

4.1 *Scottish Evening*

Bill David, Brian Young, Andrew Wilson, Amish Amin, Linda Smith, Craig Crawford.

Bill David thanked everyone involved and CC will write to thank those others who participated. Forty-seven people attended and all enjoyed. Only one complaint was received (that the drinks were too big!). In particular the music as patrons arrived seemed to help create a pleasant, welcoming atmosphere.

4.2 *Planning*

Bill David, Brian Young, Andrew Wilson and Ken Macdonald.

Main Street site. No news.

Field between Kilnknowe and Beith Road cottages. Andrew Wilson met representatives of the developers. They propose around 45 houses but the field is designated green belt in the new Local Plan which is in its final consultation at present; this means that planning permission is unlikely to be granted. The Developers seem keen to gauge public opinion on development and will attend the April CC meeting.

Bowfield Way decking. Alastair Nimmo indicated that the applicant has six months to lodge an appeal against the order to remove the decking; this time will expire on about 5.5.2003. There is no news at present.

Fence on Dunallister to Bowfield Road path. The Planning Dept has rejected an application for a fence along this

path on the Bowfield Rise house boundaries on the basis that it would enclose the path too much with potential personal safety implications. The CC welcomed this decision.

4.3 *2003 Fête 21.6.03*

David Bottomley, David McKie, Rosee Macdonald and Amish Amin.

Village groups and businesses, locals with business interests, and larger businesses in the surrounding area have been contacted for support (eg raffle prizes, donations, assistance in kind), but there has been little response yet. Nine groups have agreed to hold stalls at the Fete so far.

The programme will be printed formally and include advertising support. A draft plan for the week includes: Fri 13.6 Bingo at the School; Mon 16.6 Bowling; Tues 17.6 Quiz; Weds 18.6 Guides, etc. Gang Show; Thu 19.6 Darts and Dominoes at Railway Inn; Fri 20.6 Sports and Hobbies Group Barbecue; Sat 21.6 Fete itself and Dance. Dance tickets will cost £5.00 per couple.

Bunting for the central village was proposed, and CC agreed to consider request to purchase this if the length required and estimated cost could be identified for the next CC meeting.

4.4 *Margaret Fraser Commemoration*

Norma David, Linda Smith and Brian Young.

Progress is being monitored, and the churches will be consulted again about intimating to church-goers that donations are welcome.

5. ROADS:

David McKie has set up a system to monitor complaints about roads issues which will help the CC and Howwood residents in general keep track of what has been reported and action which results. The next stage will be to prioritise concerns and put the list on the Hall notice board and www.howwood.com.

Alastair Nimmo recommended contacting the Roads Engineer for this part of Renfrewshire, Chris Lawrence, with Roads issues in the hope that they may be addressed more speedily. Alastair has also noticed the triangle flooding which continues as bad as ever, and he will organise a meeting with the Roads Dept and David McKie. Alastair will also pursue landscaping on the path from the Howwood Inn to Mayfield. The path between Main and George Streets is privately owned which limits what can be done with it by Renfrewshire Council.

6. ENVIRONMENT:

Andrew Wilson has still to complete gathering information from Station Avenue residents about their preferences for planting along the platform. This information should be passed to Alastair Nimmo. To discourage climbing on the fence, some thorn bushes may be worth considering.

The Howwood litter clearing weekend is planned for 5-6.4.2003; after discussion it was agreed that there was time to arrange this. Nick Walker and Andrew Wilson will discuss with David Bottomley and organise posters, fliers, contact with local youth groups (Guides, and Sports & Hobbies) and negotiate with Elaine McIntosh from Renfrewshire Council Environmental Services. Elaine can provide skips, gloves, tabards and bags, and information on health and safety issues for litter collectors. All volunteers will be welcome to leaflet the village and to help collect litter on the weekend.

7. WEB SITE AND COMMUNICATION:

The web site receives about 1000 hits per month, and there have been no inappropriate or offensive comments sent to the Bulletin Board. Scottish Evening pictures are now on line. More content is always welcome. The History of Howwood information would be good on line and Danny McAlister suggested John Anderson as the main contact for this.

There is no further information on a Howwood notice and information board.

8. MEMBERSHIP:

Having received a letter about his attendance, Danny McAlister indicated his wish to remain a CC member but his work commitments at present seriously affect his ability to attend meetings. There followed a long preliminary discussion about membership and its responsibilities, and how the CC manages this. The CC Constitution and Rules allow the CC to contact members who miss three consecutive meetings (without apologies) or six meetings in a year (irrespective of apologies), asking their intentions. Thereafter non-attendance may lead to membership being forfeited. The ruling aims to maintain a CC membership which is as active as possible, so that we go on meeting

our objectives in terms of consultation, community involvement and so on. Two main views on this were: unless others are keen to join the CC it need not be implemented because nothing is gained by it and goodwill may be lost; or having agreed the constitutional state, it should be applied evenly in all cases. It is acknowledged that demands on people's lives change and it will not always be possible to devote time to CC activities despite remaining interested. Even so, it is possible to have an interest in and help out the CC on occasion or at a specific event, or to attend meetings, without being a CC member, and some Howwood residents do just this. The CC might consider allowing members a "sabbatical" period if they are unable to participate for a period but wish to retain membership and plan to resume a fuller commitment in due course; if so, how long a period would be acceptable? and on what grounds?

It was generally accepted that a full CC meeting should be consulted for each case (as happens now), but how cases are dealt with is less clear. The issue should be considered and will be discussed at the next CC meeting.

Meanwhile, there is one vacancy on the CC.

9. COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

Nothing beyond items minuted elsewhere.

10. CORRESPONDENCE (as per list attached to agenda):

Nil specific.

11. MIDTON ROAD TRAFFIC & SPEEDING:

Alastair Nimmo, Jeanette Fraser, Iain Fraser and Norma Walker raised this issue. Residents in Kilnknowe Cottages are concerned at increasing traffic volume and speeds in Midton Road which appears increasingly dangerous. Residents have asked Alastair to present a petition to Renfrewshire Council. The CC shared concerns about traffic dangers especially as the Howwood Playground Project proposes to relocate the children's play park nearer to the cottages on Midton Road. Graham Barclay and Colette Pryde agreed to seek a traffic volume and speed survey to provide evidence to support the case for action. A survey near the Midton - Bowfield Roads junction in 2000 showed 959 vehicles in 48 hours with an average speed of 31 mph; the range of speeds was not available, but this is good information for comparison. Alastair plans to meet with the Roads Department and the Police, with local residents and David McKie (CC Roads Liaison). This issue will be discussed further at the next CC meeting.

12. AOCB:

12.1 Howwood Playground Project

There have been changes on the HPP Committee and the Annual General Meeting will be held in the Railway Inn (upstairs) at 8.00 pm on Thursday 27.3.2003. Andrew Wilson, Bill David and Brian Young all provide support to the HPP Committee and they are making good progress on fund-raising and grant applications. This will be a public meeting, and the CC is encouraged to attend.

NEXT MEETINGS:

TUESDAY 8 APRIL 2003, 7.30 pm, Howwood Village Hall

Then the following Tuesdays: 13 May; 10 June.