



# BALFRON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2020 IN BALFRON HIGH SCHOOL DRAFT MINUTES

**Present:** Colin Cameron (chair), Alison Lamont Chalmers, Carsten Mandt (minutes), David McGowan, Bill Noblett, Luci Rooney, Christine Wilson, Robert Young

**In Attendance:** Kirsty Banks (Forth Valley Sensory Centre), Pam Campbell (Stirling Council), Councillor Graham Lambie, William Ritchie, M. Crombie, Janet Rutherford, Catherine Cameron, Carol Murphy.

### 1. Welcome, Recording of those Present and Apologies

Apologies were received from Fraser Allan, Councillor Rob Davies, Laura Elder, John Nicholson, Jim Thomson, Rae Wilson.

### 2. Recording of Declarations of Interest

No interests to declare.

### 3. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting 5 December 2019

Bill Noblett proposed the minutes as an accurate record, seconded by Alison Lamont Chalmers.

### 4. Matters Arising

Colin Cameron informed BCC that he had not yet written to Bruce Crawford MSP about the future of Strathendrick Care Home.

### 5. Police Report

BCC noted a written Police report, highlighting recent activity in Balfroon and the surrounding area. This is available via the Community Council website [www.balfroncc.org.uk](http://www.balfroncc.org.uk).

### 6. Forth Valley Sensory Centre

Kirsty Banks gave an overview of the range of services, activities, and facilities available at the Forth Valley Sensory Centre. Based in Camelon, Falkirk, the Centre supports people with sight or hearing loss. In particular, she highlighted the Making Sense of Energy Savings project. This is a Climate Challenge Fund supported project to make information about energy saving accessible to people with sensory loss, e.g advising eligible people on the Government's Warmer Homes Grant scheme. Interested parties can contact Kirsty Banks directly at [kirstybanks@forthvalleysensorycentre.org](mailto:kirstybanks@forthvalleysensorycentre.org) or 07719 916050.

## **7. Balfron Bank of Scotland Closure**

BCC discussed Bank of Scotland's decision to close the Balfron bank branch on 17 August 2020.

The case for bank closure was questioned and there was consensus that it did not take full account of the significant negative impact the branch closure would have on local residents, businesses and community groups. The discussion stressed that the Balfron branch was the last remaining bank branch in the West Stirling area and having such a facility was particularly important for Balfron as the local hub village. It was noted that the bank in Aberfoyle was due to stay open despite the village not performing a hub function.

A petition against the closure is available to sign at Shearer's Garage, Balfron Butchers and McFarlane's. It was agreed to extend the petition into other businesses and to outlying villages, as well as social media (the online petition is available at: <https://www.change.org/p/bank-of-scotland-save-balfron-s-bank>).

Cllr Lambie stated that all political parties in Stirling Council were opposed to the bank closure. He would lodge a complaint to the financial Ombudsman.

It was also agreed to link with other community councils, in particular those also affected by local bank closures e.g. Killin, and to create a media response. Colin will also write to the Bank and its Chief Executive.

## **8. Elected Councillor's Report**

Councillor Lambie provided a report, highlighting a number of pertinent issues concerning:

- The new Scottish budget and the Stirling Council budget
- Ongoing work on a local bus company
- Assurances that Strathendrick Care Home would not close this year although the longer term future remained unclear.
- Implementation of the Kippen 20mph limit, making Kippen the third village with a village-wide 20mph after Fintry and Gargunnoch
- The Finnich Glen application, which was now live.

It was noted that the replacement programme for street lights was not yet complete in Balfron.

## **9. Treasurer Report**

Nothing to report on the BCC budget.

Bill Noblett mentioned that the Cherry Tree Resource Centre was due to be demolished. Community suggestions on how the space could be used were now being sought.

Trossachs Search and Rescue had taken on responsibility for telecare in the area, supported by two full time members.

## **10. Planning Report**

Nothing to report.

## **11. Subgroups, Projects and Guests**

*Balfron Active Places:* planned work on The Clachan and Printer's Row is due to start by late March. The impact will be communicated in advance to local residents. The remaining projects are still under discussion with Sustrans and Stirling Council.

*Donaldson Park:* The area where the old flying fox used to be will be landscaped. Discussions are still ongoing about replacing two pieces of toddler play equipment using section 75 funding.

*Telephone Box:* Plans to paint the phone box had been postponed until the spring due to unsuitable weather conditions.

*Millennium Benches:* BCC agreed to obtain public liability insurance for the benches, as well as for the bus stop at the GP practice and the telephone box. An annual inspection maintenance programme would be implemented.

## **12. Chair – Including Correspondence**

- The electric vehicle charging bays at the Co-op car park still needed to be properly marked for electric vehicle charging only.
- The 20 minute time limit for parking at the library was agreed to be insufficient. This should be extended to 1 hour.
- A Stirling Council proposal to reduce the registry office opening hours to 3 days/week was raised. The idea of co-location of the library and registry office, which had been discussed previously, was mentioned as better alternative to provide essential services in Balfron while supporting the Council to operate more efficiently. Colin will progress this with Council officers.
- The Community Resilience Plan is available on the BCC website and on Facebook. Paper copies will be distributed to key local businesses.

## **13. Residents' Forum**

No further business was raised.

## **14. Any Other Business**

The latest issue of the BCC Newsletter is due to be distributed by the Guides next week. BCC thanked the Guides for their support.

## **15. Date of next meeting**

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Balfron High School, 7.30pm.