



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MILNGAVIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
Held in The Fraser Centre on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013

**1. Present**

Community Councillors – Fiona Risk, Norman Peacock, Susan Lavrie, Donald Hamilton, Rona Hooper, Rona Miller, Elizabeth Crombie, Anne Hunter, Marianne Prentice, Caroline Diaz, Michael Millerick, Joyce Kerr.

**2. Attending**

Lon Edwards, Cllr Gotts, Cllr Gibbons, Wilson Blaikey, PC Toal, PC Scougall, Peter Blackshaw, R Hamilton, A Callaghan, K Mackay, G Adair, F Kyle, L Marshall, C McDade, W Carruthers, J Maclean, J Gibson, M Reynolds, A Watt, J Hooper, Margaret Gordon.

**3. Apologies**

Neil Weir, who feels unable to participate in MCC at the present time due to ill health, Jean Pentland and Callum Christie

**4. Convener's Opening Remarks**

The Convenor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the representatives from Craighdu school for coming. It was noted that there was a full agenda and therefore we should try to be brief where possible. She would defer many items to the end of the meeting as it was important to spend time discussing the matter of the Primary Schools Improvement Programme.

**5. Police Report**

The Police were called to an Incident and the Chair said that we could take their report later if time allowed.

After the meeting the Police sent an email to the Chair with information which she circulated to members. A summary of this is that there were 42 crimes in the previous month of which none were categorised as serious. This is an increase on last month's 38 crimes however this can be attributed to a spate of vandalism.

**6. Primary Schools Improvement Programme**

Representatives from Craighdu School Parent Council and Safeguard Craighdu Campaign said that they were in attendance at the meeting as they wanted to express their concerns regarding MCC bringing Craighdu School into the consultation process and MCC's response to EDC's Primary Schools Improvement Programme. A number of questions were posed to MCC on this matter.

MCC was asked if it was aware of the excellent facilities at Craighdu school? The response indicated that MCC is aware that all of the schools in Milngavie provide children with a high quality educational experience and that in their response to EDC they had been considering the broader issues around a child's experience of growing up in a community as the education of a child does not only happen in school. MCC had also considered the non educational effects of the proposals such as on the viability of the town centre and on traffic.

MCC was asked why it had not consulted with the various primary schools prior to issuing its response to EDC ?. The answer to this was given that MCC knew that the schools would each be giving their own focused responses to the Council and that MCC was being asked for its own views as a different organisation.

MCC was then asked how it could say that it is representative of a cross section of the views of the community of Milngavie?. The response was given that Milngavie community councillors come from across the area and represent their various groups. Community Councillors are also volunteers and the Council can only be as representative as the members it attracts however there was confidence that the members lived in various areas and had sent their children to schools across Milngavie. It was suggested that representatives of all schools including Craighdu would be welcome to participate in the MCC and thereby extend the range of our membership.

MCC was asked why it had recommended that there should be an amalgamation of Craighdu and Clober schools as this would mean that Craighdu would close? The Chair answered that EDC had informed MCC that not all of the schools could remain open as there was under-occupancy in schools and budgets could not support the refurbishment and operation of all schools and that in order to provide a high quality education for the children of Milngavie that some schools would have to close. It was on this basis that MCC made its recommendations.

One member said that she had attended an early consultation meeting at Douglas Academy where many of those present said that they wanted to retain all schools however EDC said that this was not possible. The CC member also stated that at the Douglas Academy meeting it was stated that other options could be looked at, Craighdu was mentioned then as was Lennox Park and suggestions of joint campus for St Joseph's within the Milngavie area. Nursery, breakfast and after school care were also discussed and reference was made to Craighdu & Clober already sharing nursery facilities and breakfast and after school care being shared with St Joseph's and Craighdu on the St Joseph's location. The Council leader has since reiterated this in the press.

It was this background that led MCC to reach their conclusions after consideration of what they felt would be the best outcome for the children and the community of Milngavie. MCC had felt strongly that having a school in the heart of the village was vital for its vibrancy and sense of community. Craighdu parents asked for it to be noted that they made a point of using the local shops.

MCC were then told that they had not acted within the guidelines of the Local Government Scotland Act and Code of Conduct . The Chair responded that Legal services in EDC had been consulted on this matter and that they were satisfied that MCC was operating appropriately.

MCC were asked if they were aware that Bearsden North CC had called a public meeting and why had MCC not done this? The Chair responded that a public

meeting of that sort would not have served a purpose as there would have been so many varying views at it and that these were best expressed by the schools themselves in their individual responses as they would be looking at their own issues.

Several questions were asked about the minutes of the meeting of MCC when the Primary Schools Improvement Programme had been discussed and the resulting letter with the recommendations for a school in the east and one in the west of Milngavie and when this matter had been agreed by MCC members. Donald Hamilton stated that he had not been aware of this proposal and would have objected. The Chair stated that the draft response had been sent to all MCC members including Mr Hamilton for comment on 12<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Jan and the final version sent on 28<sup>th</sup> Jan however he had not responded at any of these opportunities to make his objections known. He also did not raise any issues regarding this at MCCs February meeting and no other members had raised any issues.

MCC members were then asked by Craighdu representatives to declare any interests that they have in Milngavie Town Centre eg as traders or having family members as traders. One member said that they had a family business but in fact they lived locally and had sent their children to Craighdu.

Craighdu representatives stated that they wished MCC to withdraw their response to EDC as they felt it had been influenced by personal interests. The Chair indicated that this was not the case and that MCC members had not been partisan and in fact had sought to consider the matter of the whole community in their response.

Cllr Gotts said that MCC had followed a proper process in their response however as MCC did not consult the schools in this matter then EDC would take this into account when considering its response to the consultation.

Craighdu representatives asked if MCC would withdraw their letter of response to the Consultation.

Cllr Gotts said that MCC could reconvene to discuss the matter further and that the Council would be considering the schools estate on March 27<sup>th</sup>, with the IBP results being made public on 21<sup>st</sup> March. Cllr Gibbons said that schools had been able to send in late responses to EDC which would be accepted and it was noted that the Milngavie Action Group had been given an extension.

The Chair suggested that there would be a ten minute comfort break and that the MCC meeting would reconvene after that and the Craighdu parents were welcome to stay if they wished.

## **7. Minutes of Meeting of 6th February 2013**

These were agreed by all present and there were no points arising.

The Chair informed the meeting that Moir Garrett had died and he would be sadly missed by the people of Milngavie. He had been a man who had given much to his community.

It was noted that there would be a representative from the Allander Champions Group at the next meeting to discuss Sports Provision.

Mr Donald Hamilton informed the meeting that he wished to resign from the Milngavie 20/20 Vision but that he would continue in the Allander Champions Group.

## **8. Financial Report**

The Chair informed the meeting that we had already paid the Dragons Chess League and that we had been approached for financial assistance by the Bocclair Under 5s club who meet at Kessington Hall for assistance in paying their hall rental charges. It was agreed not to support this request as generally MCC financial support should go to Milngavie groups.

## **9. Treasurer's Report**

There was no additional report made

## **10. Town Centre Proposals**

Milngavie Bid, Heritage Centre, Public Toilets, TPO Petition, Fish Ladder and Allander Walkway signs.

As there was nothing significant to report on these items the Chair suggested that they could be deferred to the next meeting.

## **11. Planning**

- a) Waitrose – There is to be a Public Hearing on April 24<sup>th</sup> and then the Planning Board will meet after that.  
Tesco – There have been rumours regarding the refurbishment of the existing store however nothing has been confirmed.
- b) New Application: Two storey house at Mugdock Rd/ Barloch Av. Discussion took place around the loss of green amenity in this woodland area if a house was to be built there. The land had originally been sold to the owners for carparking. MCC members were encouraged to look at the site and then submit their views to the chair.
- c) Twenty Twenty Vision for Milngavie – This will be on the agenda for the next meeting
- d) The Allander Champions Report was deferred to the next meeting
- e) The minutes of Bearsden North CC had been previously circulated to MCC members
- f) EDC Traffic Regulation Order, Designation of Disabled Persons' Parking Places Within Milngavie – noted that this traffic order will become effective on 22<sup>nd</sup> April
- g) Waste Collection Changes, MCC will decide at the next meeting if we wish EDC to do a presentation on this at a future meeting.
- h) Castlemains Rd . The matter of problems with inconsiderate parking was raised . Cllr Gotts said that EDC are seeking a solution however we require to go through the consultation process with residents first.
- i) Tambowie Fields - Consultations had taken place with the community regarding certain pockets of land . One of the areas identified was Tambowie Fields. The farmer who owns it has applied to the Forestry commission to make a forest however concern was expressed that there is a Right of Way here that is used regularly. Mains Estate Residents are concerned that it is green belt that should be protected and maintained and it was also suggested that it could be of

archaeological interest. The feeling of the members was the Mains Estate Residents Assoc should be supported in this.

## **12) EDC Primary Schools Estate Consultation**

The Chair put it to the meeting that MCC were being asked to change or withdraw their letter to EDC regarding the above matter. Cllr Gibbons suggested that perhaps if no way forward could be found for Milngavie at this time then the status quo could be maintained until other options could be found. Cllr Gotts said that EDC did have to look at the whole schools estate as not all schools can be kept, however perhaps some other options could be considered for Milngavie. Mr D Hamilton said that he wanted the letter which expressed the view of having a school in the east and one in the west withdrawn by MCC.

A discussion took place amongst members on what decision they wished to reach regarding the withdrawal or amendment of the letter to EDC and a couple said that they would like MCC to withdraw its proposal to have a school in the west and one in the east and that we should support all schools staying open. One member said that she would prefer all schools to remain open but wondered if we required to leave in the option of having one school in the west and one in the east as the Council had made it plain that not all schools could be retained.

The meeting was asked by Craighdu representatives the reason why we had made this suggestion to EDC in the first place when Craighdu had not been targeted as part of the schools consultation.

It was explained by a MCC member that the reason for this was that MCC had been emphatically told by EDC that it was not going to be possible for financial reasons to refurbish schools and that a choice would need to be made between local schools. She told the meeting that in her view the Consultation process was far too short for a matter of this importance to the community and that it should have been given at least a year for initial consideration and development of options. It was suggested that the facts regarding the finances should be made available to everyone as EDC were proposing to borrow millions of pounds on taxpayers behalf to build schools that no-one wanted.

It was agreed by several at the meeting including representatives from Craighdu that EDC had brought about a level of discord amongst community members due to the flawed consultation process on this important matter and being pushed into making speedy decisions with little time for information to be gathered on finances and options.

The Chair asked the members to come to a decision about what they wished to do.

The general feeling was that now MCC had had the opportunity to further consult and to consider the matter and the wider implications of EDC proposals, that this has changed their view on the situation and the EDC proposals. MCC wished to revise their original letter and state instead that they did not wish to see any of the schools in Milngavie targeted for closure and instead supported all primary schools to stay open. MCC would also express concerns regarding traffic in their letter.

It was suggested that MCC should ask EDC to make available to the public full costings for the options of a) refurbishment of all schools b) building new schools. This information to contain details on how much money was to be borrowed to carry these out and what the proposals to pay this back were and which services in EDC would need to be reduced as a result of this expenditure on the schools estate. This

was felt to be particularly pertinent as at this time local authorities are all saying that they don't have any money .

Further discussion took place regarding the matter of supporting a school in the east and one in the west. A couple of MCC members felt that it might be important to still retain the proposal of having one school on each side of the community in the letter to the Council but to remove any specific suggestions about where these should be. Craighdu representatives said that they would feel supported by MCC if we were to state to EDC that we don't want any schools to close.

Cllr Gotts stated that EDC could take a slower implementation approach across the whole Council area which might mean that not all decisions need to be taken now eg schools in a bad state of repair could be acted on now and others could be acted upon later. It was confirmed that no schools in Milngavie are in a bad state of repair and are all in category B .He asked that MCC ensure that in any letter to EDC they make it clear that they are only referring to Milngavie schools.

After some further consideration of the matter MCC members reached a consensus that they did not wish any longer to support the proposal to EDC that there should be a primary school in the east and one in the west of Milngavie but rather that all Milngavie Primary schools should remain open and that EDC should look again at the options for Milngavie. It was agreed to write to EDC expressing MCC views on this matter.

The Chair agreed that a draft statement would be issued on this matter for members to agree and it would also be issued to the parents of the Craighdu Primary representative groups.

### **13. Date of Next meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2013**