

Isle of Arran Community Council

Minute of Isle of Arran Community Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 26th January 2010 Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick

Those present were:

Campbell Laing Chair, Alison Prince , Secretary, Harry Davidson , Treasurer, John Inglis , Willie Kelso , Ian McCallum, Jenny Meade, Brenda Stewart , Richard McMaster , Ian Small , Charles Currie, Gillean Langley , Cllr Margie Currie

Sgt R. MacKay Strathclyde Police,
Also in attendance Jim Nichols (ACVS), Howard Driver (Arran Banner), Joanna Voisey (Trust Housing), Mary Pritchard (Trust Housing).

Apologies for absence

Nil

Declaration of Interest

Nil

The Chair welcomed Ian McCallum as the newly appointed Community Councillor for Whiting Bay to this, his first, meeting.

1. Minutes of Meeting held Tuesday 25th November 2009 were agreed as a true record.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 Airtricity

Cllr Currie advised that she was aware of a group in Blackwaterfoot who were making an application for an award from this potential funding source.

3. Trust Housing / Isle of Arran Homes Allocation Policy

The Chair welcomed Mary Pritchard and Joanna Voisey to the meeting.

Mary advised that the Policy is governed by the Housing Act of 2001. One provision is that applications for housing must be considered from anywhere in the UK.

The Act does not allow discrimination against what people have in terms of money or housing. What must be considered is their housing needs and support needs. It might be therefore be possible for someone to legally move into sheltered housing, whilst still owning their own property or letting it out.

The points-based Allocations Policy with regards to points for people who live and/or work locally, points are awarded for working on Arran, but not for living on the Island.

John Inglis spoke of complaints he had received allocation to people who already owned a house, and queried whether an assessment of housing need could exclude allocation.

In respect to general needs, this circumstance probably would exclude, but not so for sheltered housing. The priority would be consideration of safety, security, daily living, and ability to get out and about to shops and doctors.

John mentioned assurances given earlier that the 1st allocations of new build properties on Arran would be to local Arran residents. Mary explained that 2 housing lists exist- Isle of Arran Homes list, and North Ayrshire Councils list. Most allocations made are to applicants who are on both lists. Notwithstanding this, permission will need to be sought from the Regulator to implement a 'Local' Lettings Policy.

Cllr Currie spoke of the ambiguity surrounding the word 'local'. If someone has rented for 6 months or more, in law they become 'local'.

Under the Act, the definition of 'local' relates to someone having a connection with the area, but not necessarily residing there or coming to take up employment

Willie Kelso enquired if applicants for special needs housing, who have sold a property, have to pay rent. Mary advised that there was no free-of-charge housing, and that the applicant would be subject to assessment of their circumstances to be eligible for housing benefit. It was emphasised that most applicants come here because family or friends reside on Arran.

Ian Small asked if individuals could get a transfer to Arran from elsewhere. Mary explained that RSL's and Councils operate transfer schemes. Potential barriers would be rent arrears or anti-social behaviour complaints, but otherwise IoArran Homes cannot refuse a transfer application .

Charles Currie felt that the criteria potentially could lead to a larger number of elderly persons moving to Arran, and a shortage of sheltered housing. Mary advised that there are no current plans to increase the current sheltered housing (35 properties), and that the new-build were for general needs.

Cllr Currie pointed out that the withdrawal of right to buy in 2001 should slightly reduce demand for general needs.

Mary advised that the allocations recommendations are initially generated by computer, and checked by an officer and a home visit in each case. As manager of IoArran Homes she oversees each decision. The Regulator audits allocations decisions made by IoArran Homes

Ian Small felt there was the potential for people move in to caravans or sub-standard properties to advance up the list. In some cases, properties might be used more than once in this regard.

Mary advised that the Council has the power to deal with properties below tolerable standard

Campbell Laing remarked it was unfortunate that Trust would not allow the Community Council as body to be represented on the local IoArran Homes Committee.

John Inglis felt that Islands should be made a special case in regulations and legislation. It would be necessary to lobby government to get changes.

3. Police Matters

The Chair spoke of a meeting held with Superintendent Fitzpatrick on 8th January 2010. It was felt that this was a very positive meeting.

A letter had now been received indicating his wish to attend the CC meeting on 23rd February 2010.

4. Correspondence

Correspondence was reported as under:

4.1. Licencing

An application for 'Arran on a Plate' (formerly Bilislands Outdoor) for an 86 cover bar and restaurant. Any comments should be forwarded to the Chair.

4.2 Accounts

Harry Davidson reported that the accounts had been audited by NAC. The 2008/9 income was about the same, but the expenses had gone up considerably.

He had written to NAC requesting a higher expenses payment for the Community Council, but NAC had said no to an increase.

It was agreed to pay expenses currently claimed. In respect of ACVS support, it was noted that no payment had been made to ACVS in respect of the service provided.

It was noted that the Scottish Government would be supportive of the web-site development being funded from the Pilot Project funding.

The Annual Accounts were APPROVED and ACCEPTED by the Community Council.

4.3 Arran goes Green

Jenny Meade spoke to an e-mail regarding a Climate Challenge Fund Application for £233,000. It was noted the necessity of support from the Community Council.

After discussion, it was AGREED that, in principle, the CC supports the Arran goes Green project. The Chair AGREED to write a letter confirming this.

5. Housing

5.1 Sannox Church

John Inglis reported that a meeting had taken place between HIFAR and the United Reform Church in relation to the sale of the site. Potentially this might be for 4 units of housing for young people and the use of the former church as a community building. The Church has given HIFAR until September to develop a proposal, otherwise it will sold to the highest bidder.

6. Planning

The following were noted;

- JJ Market Garden, High Kildonan A Local Review Meeting will be held.
- Auchrannie
- Jubilee Cottage
- 21 Dwelling houses nr Benlister Terrace Lamlash

7. Roads

- It was AGREED that Ian Small write to NAC Roads Dept re the condition of Lamlash Hill.
- The condition of the Cattle Grid on Machrie Road has been taken up locally.
- Whilst generally the NAC team had done good work in difficult conditions, it was NOTED that stretch of road fro Shedog – Machrie Pillar Box had not been snow ploughed for 3 days.
- Harry Davidson recorded the good work done by NAC in respect to Brodick Seafront walkway.

8. AOCB

- It was noted that future housing plans for the Island will form part of the new Local Development Plan.
- An application has been made for the Fair at Brodick to operate for 4 weeks, rather than the 3 weeks in the past. Harry Davidson reported that BIC and locals do not want the fair extended to 4 weeks.
- It was reported that concern has been expressed concerning provision of music, history and maths at the High School. Issues have been raised with both the MP and MSP. The CC will await the outcome of these discussions.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 30th March 2010, at 7.30 pm in Ormidale Sports Pavilion, Brodick.

