



Largs Community Council  
 Approved Minutes  
 21 September 2017 at 7pm  
 Largs Library

Present: Cllr D Blair (Chair), Cllr V Lundie (Secretary), Cllr P Perman, Cllr J Perman, Cllr A Carson (Treasurer), Cllr E Marshall, Cllr J Stewart, Cllr A Adair, Cllr M Woods, Cllr T Marshall, PC C Figgins, PC J McLauchlan, Cllr A Hill (Late)

Apologies: Cllr D Cochrane, Cllr I Murdoch

Item	Business
1	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>Cllr Blair welcomed members and for the benefit of members of the public in attendance he introduced those around the table. Cllr Blair advised that Cllr Hill will attend but has been delayed at attendance at another meeting but had asked if the issue of Douglas Park Shelter was to be discussed could this await his arrival. The Chair had agreed to this.</p>
2	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Noted above</p>
3	<p><b>North Ayrshire Council Report</b></p> <p>Report by Cllr T Marshall - Cllr Marshall wished to read a statement but first a point of order, having spoken to Chief Legal Officer, Andrew Fraser, he would like to know if Largs Community Council has adopted North Ayrshire Council's Standing Orders? Cllr Blair responded that he was surprised that the Chief Legal Officer does not know about this as all information regarding standing orders, constitutions etc are sent to North Ayrshire Council and they arranged the election, therefore he knows already. Cllr Blair also stated that he was surprised that Mr Fraser had not called to ask this direct without speaking through Cllr Marshall as Mr Fraser has previously in relation to other matters. The answer to the question is "yes" otherwise Largs would not be a formally constituted Community Council.</p> <p>Cllr Marshall referred to NAC Planning had considered the application from Hunterston Power Station for cladding. The surrounding community councils were concerned about the colour to be applied. Planning has agreed in principle for the cladding however, they will have to come back to them with regards to a change of colour.</p> <p>In the area at Manor Park, someone has cleared a site and commenced building houses, so North Ayrshire Council have taken enforcement action in regard to that.</p> <p>Cllr Marshall demanded to read a statement about Douglas Park. The Chair asked that he keep it relevant to the North Ayrshire Council Report and he could speak later on the topic based on his earlier comments . However, Cllr Marshall stated that he had spoken to Chief Executive Elma Murray, Head of Community Services Audrey Sutton and Deputy Head of Place Yvonne Baulk and a report is going to the Cabinet on Tuesday with the recommendation to seek approval for the demolition of the shelter and public toilets within Douglas Park. Audrey Sutton feels that the residents should be listened to and that the Community Council should take on board the view of the residents. Cllr Marshall asked that we allow Mr Baxter (resident of Bankhouse Ave) to talk at this point. The Chair declined that request and stated that this may be possible later in the meeting. The Chair expressed his dissatisfaction that North Ayrshire Councillors should dictate what he should and should not do. They have no hesitation in picking up the phone for any other issue but on this particular topic they have not, for whatever reason. At our previous meeting Cllr Marshall stated</p>

that any discussion on Douglas Park was out of order and should be struck from the minutes. The Chair had ruled against that as he feels a discussion should remain 'open' at all times. The members of Largs Community Council who had to take a vote at a previous meeting were concerned that not all facts had been put forward to them when they made the decision regarding the demolition. All concerns from the residents had been taken into account. The residents are wider than just the immediate residents but takes in the whole town of Largs and it is also about community assets. The Chair ruled that meeting should move on as there were other items on agenda to be discussed and Cllr Hill had asked to be in attendance. This issue may be re-visited at a later point of the meeting.

Cllr Marshall stated this was unfortunate that people are here representing 60-70 others and that on this occasion have not heard them and moved them further down the agenda. The Chair responded that he did not agree with Cllr Marshall's opinion as they had already been heard at the July meeting and he wished to return to the Agenda. Community Councillors' approval is sought to hear items out of sequence eg. Police report as they have to return to policing duties. The Chair re-iterated that there is an agenda to be followed and if members of public wish to speak, which he is not against, this can be done under A.O.C.B which covers a range of issues.

Cllr Carson pointed out that there is a meeting/consultation at Douglas Park tomorrow (Friday 22 September 2017), facilitated by North Ayrshire Council to hear the views of the whole town. This will provide an opportunity for people to speak and make their views known. This would imply that a decision on the shelter is yet to be made, otherwise why would North Ayrshire Council have this consultation contrary to Cllr Marshall's initial comments that the decision had already been made?

Member of public, Ian Ord interrupted the meeting, stating that we are speaking in riddles and that the Community Council had already voted on this. The Chair clarified that the Community Council voted based on the information that was presented to them at that meeting (July).

They were unaware of other facts including that there was a Community Assets transfer in process with North Ayrshire Council and that a local group had been involved with North Ayrshire Council since 2015 regarding this transfer. There were also discussions with the Council in relation to the repair of the pavilion and the local environment. The Community Council was not aware of these facts when asked to give an opinion and vote on the demolition of the shelter/pavilion. Again, The Chair stated that he had to move on with the agenda and that all persons were welcome to stay and if time permits they would be invited to speak and emphasised the details for North Ayrshire Council's drop-in session tomorrow for the public to comment on and discuss this issue.

Cllr Marshall stated that these people (Bankhouse residents) have come through a lot and thinks it is dreadful if we do not let each one of them speak. The Chair responded that some had already spoken and been heard this evening regarding this issue and a vote taken in July. The Chair, again, stated that he is not preventing them from speaking but that we are moving on with other business. Cllr Marshall interrupted stating that he was going to read out a letter from Council Official Audrey Sutton. Despite The Chair declining this repeatedly, Cllr Marshall ignored the Chair and continued to read out and speak over The Chair. Members of Community Council requested that meeting be suspended. The Chair declared the meeting suspended and that if any persons wished to leave they could do so. Cllr Marshall and Cllr Marshall left the meeting room. The Press were in attendance and had a piece of paper handed to them from Cllr Marshall.

The Chair advised members of the public that he is more than willing to give them the opportunity to speak but that the council had a full agenda to discuss and other members of the public wished to raise their own issues but had the courtesy of contacting the Chair prior to the community council meeting. They would have the opportunity under another heading at which time we would allow the courtesy of another elected councillor to be present. This was not unreasonable.

Meeting reconvened – Community Councillors agreed to continue with agenda as required. Cllr P Perman stated that the residents have previously had the opportunity to speak and be heard. A vote was taken, what else is there to say?

Cllr Marshall and Cllr Marshall both took their seats.

The Chair stated that we had been asked to strike a discussion from previous minutes, now we are being

	asked to continue with this same discussion. He would move on to the next agenda item without any more interruption.
4	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting 17 August 2017</b> No amendments. Proposed Councillor Carson 2<sup>nd</sup> Councillor J Perman</p>
5	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes</b> Discussed under other appropriate items</p>
6	<p><b>Secretary's Report and Correspondence</b> Very little to report. Letter from Police Scotland regarding consultation on the future of Largs Police Station. Current building is in poor state of repair is challenging and expensive to maintain. They are considering relocation to shared premises. It is stressed that these proposals will in no way alter Locality Policing Teams and Response officers. There will no reduction in officers and allows the public counter facility to be maintained. Councillor Wood stated that she feels this is a good idea and having visited the local office today can confirm that it is indeed in a very poor state.</p> <p>Member of public interrupted the meeting and asked about the meeting at Douglas Park again. Councillor Carson responded that the public meeting is not being hosted by Largs Community Council but has been arranged and facilitated by North Ayrshire Council. It has been detailed in local press and timings are Friday 22 September, from 4pm -7.30pm The Chair stated that Cllr Gallagher had advised him the previous week that the papers for demolition had already been drawn up.</p> <p>Cllr Marshall stated that if he could read the email from Audrey Sutton (NAC) who is in charge of community asset transfers it would clarify things. Councillor Blair agreed to Cllr Marshall's request. Email date 14 September 2017 stating that drop in session is to provide information on how the growers envisage the development of the part of the park for which they have requested the asset transfer. The groups have no interest in the shelter or pavilion. It is to reassure people how their vision is developing. This does not in any way contravene the proposals to demolish the shelter rather that it should provide reassurance as to how the park might look. The groups have no interest in the shelter or pavilion. Cllr Marshall also stated that the council is struggling for money and that it costs £35000 a year to maintain Douglas Park so there are wanting to charge Largs Common Good for that so the council would welcome another body to come in and take over some maintenance.</p> <p>The Chair responded that the information that we have from the interested groups is totally diverse to what has just been stated. The interested group, since 2015, were confused when they received a letter stating that the shelter was to be demolished as they were in discussion with North Ayrshire Council.</p> <p>The Chair asked that an action point to be noted to contact Audrey Sutton because there is information coming out from different sources at different times and not necessarily with the same information on it.</p> <p>Member of public – Martyn Shaw – asked for clarification as to what we would be writing to Audrey Sutton for. The Chair asked Councillor J Perman to respond to this point. Councillor J Perman stated that following a meeting the we had with the applicants for the community asset transfer we are submitting a freedom of information request to North Ayrshire Council for specific information because what they have stated in their letter is a direct variance to what the applicant has told us. The Chair clarified the background to this case, ie the asset transfer since 2015 and the speed and way this subject has been dealt with. Also that we had been asked to remove certain discussions on this subject from the minutes of our last community meeting. We have on the on hand council officials telling us one thing and on the other hand we other council officers telling us that. The letter we refer to is from the Chief Executive in which she makes various statements and for which we will respond to as it contains inaccuracies. We have worked with Police and council officials to make Largs a good place to live. We have had delegations from various parts of the town who we have tried to help as far as we can up to the point that authorities have to take over. Sometimes</p>

	<p>there is a disparity between what is promised and what is delivered. The information that was provided at the July meeting is different to what we now know in terms of funding, planning, etc.</p>
7	<p><b>Treasurer’s Report</b>  Since last meeting there has been no movement in either income or expenditure. The project account remains at £2606.03 and current account remains at £390.22  Proposed – Cllr Wood 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Adair  The Chair stated that office bearers should meet soon to discuss and move forward regarding the recently received funds.</p>
8	<p><b>Sub Committees</b></p> <p><b>Police</b> – attached report. Reported by Cllr Woods - there has been several events and festivals happening recently in and around the town and everything has gone smoothly with no arrests. The events have been well organised making the policing a lot easier. With regard to the topic of Douglas Park, the police are keeping an eye on it and regularly patrolling. There have been fewer calls over the past month in regard to the park. Having spoken to local teenagers they too are disappointed that youths from out of town are being disruptive.  The Chair asked the constables what they consider to be the main concerns or issues from police perspective. PC McLauchlan advised that drunk and disorderly, particularly at night remains the biggest issue. This year’s fair was well organised and they did not have to attend. Recent festival at Kelburn Country Centre they did have issues with 16 year olds who had gained entry. However, parents were contacted to come and collect them. Cllr P Perman asked if there had been any issues with traffic given recent volumes of visitors. PC McLauchlan responded that things went as well as expected. Recurring problems with persons not reading road signs, and markings. There were no concerns with traffic for the Cumbrae ferry or at the taxi rank even in the absence of taxi marshals. Largs Resilience team and special constables assisted with the flow of traffic.  Member of public, Ian Ord, stated that since last community council meeting things in Douglas Park had quietened down but it starting to pick up again. Again, as at many meetings, police urge members of public to phone in.</p> <p><b>Licensing</b> – No new applications. The Chair enquired about the reopening of The Fiddlers nightclub and whether it required a new licence. Cllr Wood responded that it did not as this licence is concurring and merely an inspection is required.</p> <p><b>Planning</b> – Retrospective application from McAuley’s for new signage and lighting. No objections.  Application from John Corrigan for 4 storey hotel to be constructed in the gap site in Gallowgate Lane. No parking to be provided. General consensus is that it is preferable to the vacant gap site.  LCC response – subject to conditions that all services maintained from the rear.  Proposed Cllr Carson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Lundie. Vote 5 for, 3 against, chair not required cast vote.  Cllr Lundie enquired if there was any further update regarding the vehicle on roof of former Vapour Frog shop. Cllr J Perman responded that they are still in dispute as to whether it requires planning consent. If the vehicle is fixed then it does and if it is not fixed then it is dangerous.</p> <p><b>Environment</b> – Just to recap Cllr P Perman wrote to all elected councillors on 14 September and asked them when they became aware of the asset transfer application, as that is a pivotal point in our discussion. Cllr Murdoch responded 21 July and received more information on 24 July 2017. Cllr Hill advised that he knew about the transfer of the pavilion from the outset in 2015. Cllr Marshall had advised that he was aware on 31 August. Cllr P Perman quoted from Plato 347BC just to illustrate that attitude and behaviour of some youths has not changed.</p> <p>Regarding response from Dundee Council about their method of seagull control. They do shoot seagulls</p>

under the terms of a general licence during the hours of 4 and 6 am. They have years of experience in this practice and the main aim is to get to the nest and retrieve the eggs otherwise shooting is waste of time. They had communicated with SPCA and RSPB who had no issues with this practice. Also in Elgin they use lasers to disrupt to gulls. In Largs the Beachcombers and Fish Works use a fake hawk on a pole which discourages the gulls as a temporary measure.

Further contact with Forestry Commission regarding the proposed forestry project and a meeting is arranged for 4 October. They will provide us with an update on the project.

Tilhill, the planters for the forestry project, have asked us for a meeting to discuss access. This has been arranged for 5 October. Councillor Perman questioned the fact that if they have yet to received approval, then why would they want to discuss access? Councillor Adair had attended the CMRP meeting and his impression was that it was a case of 'Fate accompli'.

Ian Dippie from Save The Grettas Group stated that his understanding is that this still has to come back out to public consultation and then FCS will make a decision as to whether it goes ahead or not. He also understands that the meeting on 5 October is to discuss 'improved access to the site'. This would imply that they have the go ahead and want to formalise where people can and can't go.

With reference to the compacting bins, they had proved to be very effective and we did not have a seagull issue whilst they were in use. North Ayrshire Council refused to buy due to costing £5000 each. Councillor Perman has proposed that she write to BIDs and other surrounding businesses to ask if they would sponsor a bin with their logo or advert. When purchased they come with 5years servicing and £350 each year thereafter.

**Transportation** – the box junction at the pier head area is due to be repainted end September beginning October time.

Appearing in latest edition of local paper is traffic order for Alexander Avenue for no parking at east kerb line nos. 50-84 and west kerb line nos. 59-71. Between 25 September to 30 October 2017. This is for Scottish Water to carry out works and is not in relation to the Largs Campus.

Cllr Marshall confirmed that there is also planned works to rebuild the footpath from Moorburn Road up to the campus soon.

The Chair reported that the Sustrans Cycle Survey Report has been completed and we were expecting a copy before the summer holiday period. But as yet we have still not had this. Councillor Adair will follow up on this.

9 **A.O.C.B.**

Councillor Lundie advised that Scottish Water are carrying out a project up at their tank area up the Greeto path which has resulted in a variety of heavy traffic. Bellesdale Avenue is not suitable for this type of traffic and as a result two vehicles on two separate occasions have been damaged to the value of approx £4000. The attitude of the drivers and representatives of Scottish Water was considered to be out of order to the point that one driver became so abusive the police were contacted. They failed to attend. Councillor Lundie has asked for approval to write to Scottish Water on behalf of the residents concerned about this and suggesting the alternative route via A760 (new forestry road). Councillor Wood asked to be contacted for any future instances in order to communicate with local police.

Douglas Park Pavilion – Some residents of Bankhouse Avenue had asked to be heard. The Chair referred to the letter from North Ayrshire Council Chief Executive dated 31 August, we have still to respond to this and that there are a number of inaccuracies in this letter. North Ayrshire Council have been in discussions regarding the asset transfer with the growers group, who had secured a contractor to carry out works eg, lighting, security etc.

We also received an email from Inspector Brian Skimming of Police Scotland confirming that incidents at Douglas Park have greatly reduced due to efforts of Sgt Marshall and her locality team, engaging with North

Ayrshire Council's anti-social behaviour team who have passed the names of a number of youths who are regular visitors to the park at times of incidences. They have also lettered local residents to reassure them that they maintain focus on the issues discussed and spoken to and lettered parent/guardians to remind them of their parental and social responsibilities.

Cllr P Perman stated that there was a shelter further up the hill and due drinking and anti-social behaviour, which was not near any houses, it was taken down. So, the persons involved just moved down to this other shelter. The shelter has been surveyed by McMillan and Cronin and deemed to be in good structural condition other than some roof tiles and gents toilets. That building is part of the Common Good and is in good condition, can the Council just pull it down? What happens then? They will just move on to other places. Cllr P Perman also stated that in the seven years that she has been involved in the community council, at not one of the meetings has the police ever report anti-social behaviour in Douglas Park. Cllr Adair confirmed that he was for the demolition of the shelter but that he had made his decision based on what was presented to him on the evening of the vote. We were unaware of the grower's group intentions or their involvement since 2015. It is his opinion that they have had a 'kick in the teeth'.

Cllr J Perman read out our draft response, stating that all NAC elected councillors were aware of the intended asset transfer around 2015, it had been surveyed and considered to be in good condition, and proposed building works offered free of charge subject to documentation proving completion of asset transfer. In 2016 the applicant made the asset transfer request specifically including the toilet block. The applicants had attended a training day lead by North Ayrshire Council on asset transfer in early 2017. As at July 2017 the applicant was still under the impression that the asset transfer was in progress and it was only an application to the court that was delaying the completion of the process. Representatives of the applicant have confirmed that they are still interested in an asset transfer of the shelter/toilet block. The letter received from The Chief Executive contains several items that are at direct variance to the information received from the applicant. Under the Freedom of Information Act Scotland 2002 we request copies of all correspondence, emails, reports, applications in relation to the Douglas Park shelter/toilet block.

**Proposal for this letter/request be sent to North Ayrshire Council. Proposed by Cllr Wood 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Adair, vote 8 for, 0 against, 1 abstention**

Cllr Carson pointed out that the applicant has good intentions and putting in a lot of time with their proposals over last 3 years to make Douglas Park a more usable park, involving individual user groups. A lot of their funding is all pending on the outcome of the asset transfer. Cllr Carson pleaded for the tension to be reduced and urged the neighbours to become involved.

Member of public from Bankhouse Avenue reiterated the issues they have experienced, mainly at the weekend, and with all the best will in the world the grower's group etc. can't monitor the park all the time. Member of public, Ian Ord, stated he was shocked by the statement from Cllr P Perman regarding the police lack of reporting and they should be ashamed of themselves.

Cllr Lundie reiterated the fact that a police representative attends our meetings every month, they acknowledge that they do visit the park, they have removed alcohol from youngsters, but never have they expressed that it has been such a concern and that they can't deal with it, and that is minuted every meeting.

Another member of public is surprised that the shelter is considered to be in good condition, it's a tip, that the growers are hardly ever there and what they have done is pathetic. The anti-social behaviour is hours of shouting, screaming, swearing, signing, loud music, breaking bottles and loud banging. He also feels there is a fire hazard and expressed concern that any fire could spread by the trees to nearby garages and huts. He also states that they are a danger to themselves running about in the dark.

Member of the public, Emily Blair, as a young person who has visited Douglas Park, said she disagreed with some of the statements that have been made and it isn't necessarily Largs residents that are being anti-social. She also stated that there is very little for the youth of Largs to do. The youngsters are really just looking for a place to meet and chat. That is not a crime.

Cllr P Perman enquired as to what qualifications the gentlemen had to make the statement that the shelter was in state of disrepair. His response was that he had a pair of eyes! Cllr P Perman confirmed that a

structural survey had been carried out and it IS considered to be in a good structural condition. The Chair stated the vote taken in July still stands, however that vote was based on what we now believe to be partial information.

Cllr Hill reminded us of the public consultation for people to give their views, in light of these view the situation will be reviewed. Although the decision has been made to demolish, it is still being costed. Until North Ayrshire Council have reviewed the public consultation information then the final decision is yet to be made. He does not think it was right that the Community Council has been dragged into the firing line.

Martyn Shaw asked The Chair how he saw this going regarding the existing vote standing and now it appears that the community council have different thoughts on this. The Chair responded that as per our constitution and standing orders the vote taken in July stands but we have revisited in light of new information/evidence.

Cllr Adair advised that he had met with the police today and that he express that he was disappointed at their lack of action until now. Only now are they involving other bodies and contacting the parents.

Martyn Shaw asked The Chair as master of the meeting how we are going to address this issue. Are we going to defer until the next meeting? Cllr Hill stated that the decision is not actually for the Community Council to make but that their views are taken on board. He has never seen anything moved so breathtakingly swift by North Ayrshire Council. It is not the way these things should be dealt with.

Cllr Marshall stated that he was the prime mover for this and did so because the residents have records and records of 101 calls to the police who have been ineffective.

The cabinet meeting this coming Tuesday will decide on the removal of the shelter/public toilets, having taken into consideration the views of the residents and the outcome of the consultation this Friday.

Cllr P Perman reminded members of Largs Community Council that we could have another vote if we suspend standing orders, given the new information. The Chair advised that this would require proposal, seconded and requires a 2/3 majority.

Cllr P Perman proposed that standing orders be suspended, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Carson. **Vote 8 for, 1 against**

Cllr P Perman proposed that given the new information and evidence we are not in favour of the demolition of Douglas Park shelter, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Carson. **Vote 7 for, 1 abstention and chair chose not to vote.** It is agreed that this is now communicated to North Ayrshire Council Chief Executive, Elma Murray. It will be included in the correspondence along with the freedom of information request.

The Chair formally re-instated standing orders approved by the Community Councillors

The Chair reminded everyone of the consultation and thank all for their attendance. Closing comment from member of public, Ian Ord, that we lost any creditability as a committee, it is immoral what we've just done and we should all be ashamed of ourselves.

10	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b> 19 October 2017 @ 7pm Largs Library</p>
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