

Dunblane Community Council

Rachael Muir
Secretary

Anna Jarchow-MacDonald
Chair

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Minutes of the Dunblane Community Council held on Wednesday, 2 April, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Library, Dunblane. This is a “blended” meeting, with some attendees joining by Zoom.

Present: Anna Jarchow-MacDonald (Chair), Rachael Muir (Secretary), Stewart Corbett (Treasurer), Jonathan Failes, Alan Booth, Peter Swindon, Fiona Plumtree, Karen Jenkins, Anthony Delleur, Rachel Nelson.

In attendance: Councillor David Wilson, Bridget Clark, Liz-Anne Richards, Fiona Chirnside (Stirling Council Sustainable Transport), Margaret Bragg (Minutes Secretary). By Zoom: Calum Thomson, Councillor Thomas Heald, Euan MacDonald.

1. Apologies

Apologies have been received from Caroline McArthur, Annelise Bakri, Mairi Santolini and Councillors Robin Kleinman and Alasdair Tollemache.

2. Conflicts of interest and Chair’s Remarks

There are no stated conflicts of interest. The Chair reported that the Council has signed a 10-year lease with Creative Dunblane for the Burgh Chambers.

3. Adoption of minutes of 19 February 2025 and of 7 March 2025

The minutes of 19 February were approved, proposed by Karen Jenkins and seconded by Jonathan Failes. The minutes of 7 March were approved, proposed by Peter Swindon and seconded by Karen Jenkins.

4. Residents’ Forum and current topics

The Chair introduced Fiona Chirnside from Stirling Council’s Sustainable Transport team to speak to the meeting on proposals for a new active travel link between Dunblane and Causewayhead; about the process of designing it and the role the community council can take in this. Phase 1 is from Causewayhead to Bridge of Allan and construction should start in the autumn, subject to funding from the City Region Deal (CRD) and Transport Scotland. The concept design will be posted on the website shortly.

A feasibility study to identify the most suitable route for Phase 2, from Bridge of Allan to Dunblane, has been conducted. However, no final decision has been made on the plans and Fiona Chirnside was at pains to state that a lot of conversations are taking place to ascertain views and ideas from as many people as possible. The draft design at present envisages relocating carriageway space to provide an Active Travel corridor, bypassing the Keir roundabout, and ending at the Dunblane Centre. This involves negotiations with third-party landowners. Fiona Chirnside also commented that this would be part of a much larger network that the team is developing, and connectivity, such as a route to Doune, is not being ignored.

Community councillors were of the view that the route should continue north to the Fourways roundabout. Bridget Clark gave a summary of the history of the cycle lanes on the B8033 from the Dunblane Centre to the Fourways roundabout and the present solution of buffer zones, which had been negotiated with the promise of a future dedicated off-road cycle route to Bridge of Allan. She expressed frustration that this is now queued behind Phase 1 with no clear design or time-scale and stated the preference for the route to be off-road. Concerns were raised over funding for Phase 2, after Phase 1, and Fiona Chirnside said that the CRD provides some funding with applications for funding from Transport Scotland having to be submitted annually.

Concerns were raised over the Keir roundabout which is an asset of Transport Scotland (which will have to be involved in negotiations) and is recognised as not being safe for cyclists. Bridget Clark suggested using the underpass under the A9 to the north-west of the roundabout, constructed for farm use, and which might be a good link to the Hillside development.

Fiona Chirnside noted that the draft design for Phase 2 is subject to change after she and her team have spoken to community members, including local traders. A concept design will be pulled together, taking account of these views, and will then be shown to the community, hopefully by the end of summer 2025. She invited councillors to contact her if they have any questions. Calum Thomson reminded the meeting that there had been stiff opposition to earlier proposals and it is essential to discuss this fully with residents to garner support.

The Chair noted that the community council is working on a new Local Place Plan and two workshops are being organised, the first with different groups in the community and the second with the wider public. She suggested that discussion of the active travel link could be included in these workshops. She thanked Fiona Chirnside for attending the meeting.

5. Reports

Police report This has been circulated. Alan Booth suggested that the Police be invited to a community council meeting to discuss the enforcement of the 20 mph speed limit. With the A9 being closed at night from 31 March to 5

April, all traffic, including heavy lorries, is being diverted through Dunblane and up the Perth Road. Notification of the work was given less than 24 hours beforehand and residents on the Perth Road were not informed at all. He asked if Amey would be held responsible for damage to the road surface caused by the heavy traffic. Councillor Wilson agreed to pursue this. **Action: Councillor Wilson.** Councillor Heald has also contacted Transport Scotland.

Planning report Calum Thomson has already circulated the planning action tracker. The Chair asked that a list of planning applications which might not need to be further discussed be included.

Firs of Kinbuck There was a long discussion over the application for a low carbon refuelling hub comprising hydrogen storage and fuelling facility, electric vehicle (EV) charging hub, solar farm and battery storage, petrol filling station and retail kiosk, parking provision, and vehicle washing facilities.

Calum Thomson gave a summary of the issues involved in this application.

- (a) Road safety. There are six gaps in the central reservation between Dunblane and Greenloaning to allow agricultural vehicles to cross and he suggested that these gaps be closed, with farmers to receive compensation. However, Alan Booth contended that this could not be added as a planning condition and the central reservation is the responsibility of Transport Scotland. Concerns were raised over the danger of vehicles entering and exiting the site off the A9 on short slip roads. The safety of staff crossing the A9 to catch the bus back to Dunblane was also raised.
- (b) EV charging station. A discussion arose over the need for an EV hub there, half-way between Perth and Stirling, where there is a large charging station which people are more likely to use. The Chair has tried to find out if there is a nationwide plan for the roll-out of EV charging stations across the country.
- (c) Hydrogen fuel. Concerns were expressed about the safety of hydrogen fuel storage, but there are now very stringent safety regulations. Hydrogen is used for buses and lorries, but it was suggested that, without a larger network of hydrogen fuel stations, this single facility would be irrelevant. Councillor Wilson agreed to find out if there are plans for a national network of hydrogen fuelling stations. **Action: Councillor Wilson.**
- (d) Petrol station. Alan Booth reported that there is a presumption that petrol stations should not be built along the A9; rather they should be situated in communities for the benefit of these communities. Having a café 2 miles north of Dunblane will affect traders in the town. If Dunblane residents used the petrol station, they would have to cross the A9 to return to the town, a potentially dangerous manoeuvre.
- (e) Vehicle washing facility. Concerns were raised that there could be a run off of oil into the watercourses. Lorry drivers need proper facilities where they can take a break and the Chair asked if there was a network of rest stops for lorry drivers.

In summary, it was felt that the proposed development would not be of benefit to Dunblane; there was no evidence for the need for an EV station at that site; the short slip roads are viewed as unsafe; and information on future use and a business plan was not included. It was decided to vote on whether the community council should express concerns only, should object on the grounds of a petrol station outwith the community and unsafe slip roads, or support the proposal. Community councillors agreed unanimously to object to the application. The Chair added that new developments should include facilities for disabled drivers.

Windburn windfarm Alan Booth suggested that it should be noted that there is limited visibility of the turbines from Dunblane, which could be relevant when looking for compensation.

Bakery in the High Street The Chair agreed to enquire about the delay in a decision being made by the planning department. **Action: The Chair.**

Operations report: See attached.

An addition to the original report has also been circulated: Transport Scotland has agreed to carry out a Conflict Study over the next few months at the Keir roundabout to identify potential conflicts between road users, pedestrians and cyclists, with a report in the summer.

Ramoyle traffic proposals It was noted that Councillor Tollemache has contacted the Chief Executive of Stirling Council to discuss this.

Openreach installation of fibre Terence O'Byrne has had positive discussions with Openreach management. The Chair wondered why the ducting was not shared with other companies and will ask Terence O'Byrne about this. **Action: The Chair.**

Elected members' reports Councillor Wilson reported on the uncertain future of the Integration Joint Board (IJB), by which NHS Forth Valley and Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils provides adult care. The service is continuing but discussions are being held over the funding gap. He agreed to keep the Chair informed. **Action: Councillor Wilson.**

Community

Local Place Plan The Chair reported that two sessions are being organised by Imagine If and invited other community councillors to join her, Jonathan Failes and Anthony Delleur at the first workshop later in the month. Various groups from the community will participate and ideas arising from this will be pulled together for a public meeting on 9 May in St Mary's hall as part of Ecofest.

Schools Mairi Santolini (Parent Council, Dunblane High School) has given a report to the Chair. The Vaison-la-Romaine Choralies team has invited 10-12 young people from Dunblane this summer to help with the organisation.

(See Minutes 5 February 2025.) Accommodation would be provided and they would be well looked after. The Chair suggested that a Friends of Vaison group be set up, with the schools being represented on it. The Chair intimated that she is keen to visit Vaison for the dance festival this summer and encouraged others to attend. She agreed to contact local dance groups and the school to discuss with the Headteacher the issues involved. **Action: The Chair.**

Dunblane Development Trust (DDT) Stewart Corbett, Chair of the DDT, gave a brief report. New officers are now in post and it is hoped to have a new administrative assistant appointed shortly. The Giving Tree shop is doing well and, together with the Riverview building, is providing an income stream. The DDT is looking at setting up a process to distribute funds for community projects. He invited the community council to nominate a representative to the Board of the DDT.

Environment/Sustainability

Forestry The Chair has been in contact with the Bridge of Allan community council to discuss the forestry planting at Drumbrae by the University of Edinburgh. There are concerns about the fencing and access for cyclists and walkers. She also reported that glyphosate is being used to treat the bracken to give tree saplings a good start and questioned the impact of run-off into the streams and the nearby reservoir. She agreed to check the paperwork and find out more. **Action: The Chair.**

Events

Orchard Blossom Day The Chair reported that Orchard Blossom Day will take place on 4 May as part of Ecofest and will involve two sites in the Laighhills and three sites elsewhere. She will discuss with Annelise Bakri the provision of snacks and quizzes about orchards.

Fiona Plumtree reported that the community woodland at the bottom of Grant Drive has been planted in by some of the residents. The land is not owned by the local authority and the first step would be to find out who owns it and does it comply with the conditions placed on the original development.

Fling The Fling will be held on 31 May and it was agreed the Chair will support application for funding.

Internal

Correspondence and communication It was agreed to look at different ways of using the Dunblane.info homepage to circulate correspondence and the Chair will find out if there is a limit on what can go through the website. It was suggested that using community council email addresses, with separate ones for the Secretary and the Chair, would be easier.

Treasurer's Report: See attached.

The Treasurer indicated that he intends to stand down as Treasurer at the next Annual General Meeting of the community council. Fiona Plumbtree has agreed to take over the post.

6. Full membership of community council

It was agreed that, having fulfilled the qualification of attending three meetings as a co-opted member, full membership be offered to Rachael Muir, which she accepted.

7. AOCB

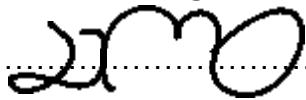
There was nothing further.

8. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Dunblane community council will take place on Wednesday, 7 May, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Library, Dunblane.

The meeting ended at 9.40 p.m.

This is a true representation of the meeting.

Anna Jarchow-MacDonald  Date...30/4/25
Chair

Rachael Muir Date
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Secretary