

Neilston Community Council

Meeting of Tuesday 25 March 2025

MINUTES

In attendance

CC Members:

Malcolm Briggs, Margaret Currie (Treasurer), Rowena Johnstone (Acting Chair), Margaret Pettigrew, Gail Squires (Secretary & minutes).

Visitors (42):

Allan Ogg, E.Alexander, J.Alexander, Alison Findlay, Jacqueline Drennan, Josh Currie, Maria Parker, Thomas Sanderson, Maureen Cameron, James Clark, Anne Clark, John Crawford, Anne Orr, Donald Orr, James Imrie, Carol Imrie, Tracey Grey, Lily Devlin, Mary Lillis, Douglas Currie, V.Perrie, C.Jones, John Perrie, June Jones, Lindsay Jones, Frances Boyle, Steven Birnie, Linda Sherman, Paul Sherman, Dolina Heaney, Jean Wallace, David Wallace, E.Gilhooley, G.Wallace, S.Mullen, J.Mullen, M.Robertson, G.Robertson, J.Gray, E.Jamieson, Gary Elliot, Louise Elliot.

Apologies:

Julie Cloherty, Janice Connery (Vice Chair), Cllr O'Donnell, Cllr Buchanan and Cllr Morrison.

1. Welcome

Rowena Johnstone (Acting Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the role and relative powers of the CC for the benefit of the visitors.

2. Previous meeting's minutes: Proposed – Margaret Currie; Seconded – Malcolm Briggs

3. Police Report

The police report had not been provided in advance of the meeting and no officers were present. Secretary will follow up. **(Action: GS)**

4. Visitors' Issues

Dareduff Quarry

42 visitors attended the meeting to address this issue. When asked, most had only become aware of the issue in the previous week or two mainly due to a resident taking the time and effort to put up posters to raise awareness in the village.

The Chair explained that this issue was a standing item on the CC's agenda and a lot of work had been done in contacting ERC for information and support with little result. She also highlighted that, as none of the councillors were present at this meeting, the possibility of getting questions answered tonight was substantially reduced. She also advised that, although ERC had not provided a copy of the Traffic Management Plan (TMP) despite a number of requests, NCC had obtained a copy without any problem directly from Advance Construction who had also offered a site visit to the CC.

Copies of both the TMP and the 2019 response by NCC to the original planning application will be posted on the NCC Facebook page and signposted on local social media. **(Action: M.Briggs)**

Jim Sheriff, secretary of NCC in 2019 when the application was first made, and who had collaborated in the research and writing of NCC's response document, had kindly attended the meeting to provide background and answer any questions that he could. He gave a brief history of the process so far and how it had got to this point.

Points raised included

- The inordinate proportion of 75% of all the quarry's HGV traffic (plus 50% of all LGV and cars) will be routed through the village streets. This is clearly not necessary when other routes are available, and it was generally agreed that the obvious reason is that it saves the quarry money being the quickest route. Slowing down the lorries so their journey times increase could be a method of rendering the

Neilston Community Council

route ineffective by impacting on the quarry's profits, and suggestions were made including speed bumps, chicanes, traffic lights.

- It was highlighted that when ERC enforces the legislation banning pavement parking, this will directly impact on the space for lorries to get by
- Alternatives had been suggested by NCC in 2019 including connecting with the nearby railway and routing the lorries to join Lochlibo Road at Lugton, but were ignored
- East Ayrshire Council (EAC) maintain that there will be 'negligible impact' on Neilston
- A major problem will be at the junction of High St and Main St at the doctors' surgery which may need the installation of traffic lights
- Emissions from the lorries, especially while stopped and idling, will have huge negative impacts and on health and the environment
- The hours when lorries are prohibited from moving (school start/finish times) do not take into account the nursery's hours, the times when the high school children go/return from the station, after school and breakfast clubs, extra-curricular clubs and groups, activities at the church hall, children and families using Kingston Park and many more.
- This mitigation is completely voluntary and not enforceable should they decide at some point to run the lorries constantly
- At times when traffic is diverted through Neilston, such as if Lochlibo Rd is shut for any reason which happens quite frequently, the roads will be under huge additional pressure and road safety for vehicles and pedestrians will suffer the direct consequences
- Noise pollution
- The potential danger for children who do not have the best road sense, other pedestrians, cyclists, pets and animals
- The likely structural damage that the houses along the route will suffer from the vibration from the lorries will inevitably cause the need for costly repair work and will reduce property values.
- Residents who moved into the village after 2019 have been unaware of this issue until now, and the influx of cars connected with the proposed new housing site in Kirkton Road will add to the problem
- The bridge at Neilston Station could be weakened and be damaged, as could the bridge at Commore Dam
- The roads will deteriorate more quickly with the impact of the lorries and, as ERC has a poor record of maintaining and repairing roads as it is, the quality of roads in the village, and in Barrhead and other roads in the local authority area, can only realistically become substantially worse.
- An incident with a lorry getting stuck at Kingston Road/Kingston Avenue on Monday (24 March) was discussed. It took a lot of time and effort for the lorry to get back on track during which it mounted the kerb causing a great deal of alarm and clearly highlighting some of the issues there will be with these vehicles.

Various suggestions were made regarding what action could be taken and these included:

- Holding a public meeting with representatives from ERC (e.g. Councillors, Head of Environmental Operations, Head of Roads), MSPs, Local MP, the press etc invited to attend
- Putting pressure on elected representatives (Councillors, MSPs, MP) by as many residents as possible writing letters/emails of objection.
- Publicity is key and it is important for everyone to spread the word about this issue with family, neighbours, friends, businesses in the village
- Make contact with the PTAs at the school campus; the church hall and others
- Barrhead will also suffer the impact of this and they don't have a CC currently to advocate for them
- There was consensus that ERC had seriously let the community down on this issue and that it will be pursued even if the lorries start rolling before a solution is reached.

NCC requested that the visitors keep us informed of any issues that may arise with the traffic movement when it begins and take photographs if warranted.

Neilston Community Council

The **current traffic survey** being carried out in the village has been identified by ERC Roads as being 'part of a wider survey programme which the council conducts each year throughout the road network to enable us to regularly monitor traffic patterns. These surveys collect traffic volumes, vehicle classification and speed data.' The likelihood is that the survey is connected with the Dareduff lorry traffic and Jim agreed to check if this needs to have been completed before the lorries will start to move. (Action: Jim Sheriff)

Actions for NCC

- Post copies of the Transport Management Plan and 2019 NCC document on Facebook page (Action: M.Briggs)
- post councillors' and MSP's, MP's contact emails on Facebook page. (Action: M.Briggs)
- prepare a template letter for contacting councillors and make it available on Facebook, at The Bank etc (Action: G.Squires)
- liaise with Jacqueline Drennan at NDT re offer of photocopying assistance and other support.
- begin the process of organising a public meeting (Action: G.Squires)

5. Matters Arising

Dareduff Quarry lorry traffic

Addressed at 'Visitors' Issues' above

Railway Station reduction in staff hours

This subject is still unresolved and NCC remains supportive of resisting the proposed changes. A number of new points were raised including:

- the alarm in the WC rings in the ticket office, therefore ineffective when no staff present
- waiting room will become a venue for anti-social behaviour as it (and the WC) will remain open even if staff are called to other stations.
- Length of time to recall staff from other stations to deal with urgent issues
- Concession tickets cannot be bought on the train
- if there is no Ticket Examiner on board, the driver can technically refuse to run that service.

School Campus

The lights issue has worsened. Lights have been coming on at midnight to 7pm the next evening.

The ASHP on the roof is still causing widespread noise pollution especially during nighttime hours. It is understood that acoustic shielding will be installed, this will be monitored.

The fencing has still not been put in place.

NCC sent an email to Joe McCaig head of education but there has been no acknowledgement or reply yet.

Douglas Currie will update NCC.

6. Treasurer's Report

The current status of funds are:

Bank of Scotland: £3,461.67 [C/fwd Bal: £693.77; Paid in: £2814.00 (grant); Paid out: £46.10 (ink)]

TSB: £1,449.25

Cash in hand: £7.43

Grand total: £4,918.35

The annual audit will be arranged in time for the AGM which will take place at the April or May meeting.

7. Standing Items

- Expansion of CCTV in the village centre: the need for expanded coverage was again discussed and will be followed up.
- Local Development Plan 3 (LDP3): follow up at next meeting

Neilston Community Council

8. **AOCB**

- Promotional video on CCs: no volunteers to take part came forward.
- AGM: to take place prior to meeting in April or May when audit is complete.
- Vacant Chairperson role: to be followed up.
- Recruitment of new members: The need for parents of school children and younger people was highlighted. To be followed up.

9. **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 29 April 2025.