ARROCHAR, TARBET & ARDLUI COMMUNITY COUNCIL AREA FORUM

3V Hall, Arrochar on 6th March 2017 @ 10am

Present: Jackie Baillie **(JB)**, MSP

 Stuart Mearns **(SM)**, Head of Planning and Rural Development, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park **(LL&TNP)**

 Cllr Robert MacIntyre **(CRM)**

Iain Wilkinson **(IW)**, Luss Estates **(LE)**

 Ronald Ross **(RR)**, Convener, AT&A Community Council **(CC)**

 Ronnie MacDonald **(RM)**, Vice Convener, Community Council **(CC)**

 Mary Haggarty **(MH)**, Secretary, AT&A Community Council **(CC)**

 Dawn Gourlay **(DG)**, AT&A Community Council **(CC)**

Bill Lowe **(BL)**, AT&A Community Council **(CC)**

Mhairi Gardner **(MG)**, Development Officer for Helensburgh and Lomond Cllr George Freeman **(CGF)**

Apologies: Fergus Murray, David McKenzie.

1. **Ben Arthur’s Resort** – SM gave an overview of the situation.

 The BAR Company (developers not owners) have now blocked off the site thus preventing further fly tipping as vehicular access is no longer possible.

 SM has requested a timeline from the owners for tidying up the site but he has not heard back from them. The tidying up would involve removal of the fly tipping and the visual rubble from the demolished buildings.

 SM outlined again that the Park had the authority to carry out the work and charge the owners but he was reluctant to go down this route and wanted to keep the pressure on the owners/developers and give them another four to five months to implement the necessary clean up.

 GF mentioned that it is very rare that the Council take any action that they have the authority to do as the chances of recovering the costs are very limited and can understand why the Park would want to try to get the owners/developers to carry out the work.

 SM mentioned that at least there would be no more fly tipping and with the approach of spring the greenery will cover what is there at present and the area will not look so bad.

 SM also mentioned that there is the possibility that a new application for planning permission is being thought about and that this would be a positive outcome. The developers are still pursuing investment partners.

 CRM mentioned that he had not seen the report on the visit to the site made by SEPA. SM mentioned that they visited the site and looked at the waste. Asbestos has been confirmed as being present but if it is not being disturbed then it is not causing a risk.

 MH mentioned that the owner of the site owns quite a lot of ground in Succoth and this is causing problems as the access path and bridge to Succoth are desperately in need of upgrading and it would seem the owner has no intention of doing anything.

 JB concluded discussion on this topic - the mood is that the community want something done sooner rather than later. She said to ignore the possibility of a new planning application until there is one – she has asked:

 SM to consider whether there is any slippage in the Park’s budget that could pay for the clean-up and if not to look at other opportunities to accelerate the clean-up.

 SM to make contact with the owner/developers to mention that the community are considering a Community Land Fund Application and that herself and Maurice Corry would be happy to raise the issue in Parliament and name the owner in the discussions.

2.  **Head of Loch Long Litter** – MG took the lead with this. She mentioned that she was looking at the long term option and short term.

 The long-term issue involves applying for funding for a feasibility study. In order for her to understand what this feasibility should involve she has made contact with the Marine Science Institute in Oban to find out specific information as to what should be asked for in terms of the scope, skills, expertise and costs of such a study. There are various students carrying out research on similar things and will revert back to MG with the relevant information. Once she has this she will be ready to apply for funding.

 In the short term she is meeting with the Litter Group on Wednesday to try and find a way forward. MH has provided the costs involved – these amount to £6.5K but this is for the method being used at present – this does not remove all the waste from the shore, the bulk of it is compressed.

 MG mentioned that there may be issues with compressing it and these could be legislative and could need a licence. MH said that they had been doing that for the last twelve years and that no-one had complained.

 GF explained again that the Council will not provide skips but would remove litter that has been picked up from shore cleans. The table agreed that it would be impossible to bag the bulk of the debris left on the Head of the Loch after a bad storm. It has been observed that there have been no bad storms so far over the winter of 16 / 17.

 MH asked MG to send the CC the Minutes from the Meeting with the Litter Group as she believed that Stuart McCracken was going to be attending it and MH had a recent discussion with him in which he told her they would provide skips – this needs clarified once and for all!

 JB concluded discussion on this topic by saying that the meeting on Wednesday is critical in finding options to move this forward. SM said they should come up with recommendations and directions as it may be that the Litter Group cannot make decisions as it is not them that will are funding the outcome.

 IW mentioned that Luss Estates is happy to contribute but would like to know what he is being asked to contribute to.

3. **Viewing Platform**

A meeting has been held between the Community Council, Transport Scotland, National Park, A&B Council Roads Department and 7N Architects. The Council have paid for a short study and the National Park have procured it using the same architects that were involved in the Charette planning in 2013. 7N were asked to look at what could be done and when it could be done and the Council have asked them for costs.

 SM presented a slide show of the architects draft short report and he will email members of the forum a copy of this report. The architects thought it should be a reasonable height so that it was visible. It had to have a presence and it was to be intriguing to encourage people to stop. The design is centred on the heritage of the village with the structure in the shape of an upturned boat reflecting the importance the Loch contributed to the history – Vikings, Steamers, and Torpedo Range etc. This is a simple initial design made from wood and is just an example of what could be achieved. The platform could be produced in phases if need be. The architects will produce initial costs later this week.

 Much discussion then took place about the regeneration fund as to whether it exists or not. It would appear it does not exist but that there is a rural regeneration initiative that can tap into some funds.

 RR asked if our Charette plans were still viable and if this tied in with this viewpoint project and the answer from SM was that both were the case.

 JB concluded this topic by saying that the CC like the design, and we would like to see options for a stepped area from the seawall i.e.down to the shore itself?. There would need to be signs to direct people to park at the Village Hall. She urged everyone not to delay this and get costings/options and find out where funding could come from. SM suggested a collaborative approach and mentioned there would be funds to tap into soon at the start of the new financial year.

 RMcD suggested that the Loch Sloy Hydro scheme, Forestry Commission Luss Estates and the MacFarlane history should also be considered.

 RR asked SM if this potential viewpoint could be mentioned openly to the community and the answer was affirmative.

**4. War Memorial Extension**

 MH gave an overview of where we are with this project. We have used the Park grant to purchase the required materials, and end of grant financial accounts sent to LL&TNP for inspection. IW has delivered the pipes and aims to have the trees removed this week. The Community Payback Team will fill the Gabion Baskets for us. We have a have a degree of money to find as Landmarc withdrew their services however we hope this will be achievable through donations and fundraising.

**5. Pontoon**

 DG outlined where we are at. We have been successful in our application for the Moving Forward Grant from the LL&TNP which will fund an Otter Survey and additional plans both of which need to happen before applying for planning permission. JB mentioned that she had spoken to HIE but that we are on the wrong side of the water.

 DG mentioned that she has been in touch with LEADER and they are happy to come and discuss the project further.

 DG also mentioned that she had put together a document which outlined the difficulty of finding funding for annual costs such as insurance, maintenance etc. SM mentioned donation boxes and charges but it was thought these wouldn’t produce much. DG mentioned that she intended to approach local businesses as a potential option.

RR asked SM about costs if someone were to set up a small business transporting kayaks from Loch Long to Loch Lomond – would there be a charge for the vehicular access to the launching area at Tarbet? SM will confirm.

**6. AOCB**

SM mentioned that the owners of some of the ground where the old Visitor Information Centre was in Tarbet, had suggested they may be willing to tidy up the site. There is no guarantee anything will be done, but views were invited that would be shared with the owner’s agent. It was mentioned that it could be resurfaced and used for (temporary?) car parking but it was thought that this would be worthy of discussion at the next Community Council meeting.

 MH asked IW if he had managed to find out about who owns the shore to the (looking from the A814) right running from the pier along the front of the proposed Viewing Platform – IW said he has started trying to find out but has no information at present.

 JB mentioned the booklet produced by the Community Council and thanked all involved. She mentioned Cleland Sneddon’s response and suggested he be invited to the next Forum Meeting.

**Date of Next Meeting**: 15th May 2017 @ 2pm