

Forth and Endrick News – Killearn – Wednesday, 15th February 2017

*Arnprior Balforn Buchanan Buchlyvie Croftamie Drymen Fintry Gargunnoch **Killearn**
Kippen Strathblane*

Councillor Lambie Report

- **New Waste Collection Service:** There have been concerns raised about changes to waste and recycling collection policy. The new policy will see residents given 5 recycling boxes under the following collection timetable:
- **2 Week Collection:** Brown Bin (Garden & Food Waste); Blue Bin (Plastic, Cans & Cartons); Grey Bin (Non-Recyclables); Blue Bin Small (Glass)
- **4 Week Collection:** Green Bin (Paper & Cardboard)
- The service are keen to work with residents and CCs on this. For example with people living in flats sharing of bins will be a preference which should cut down on the number of bins. The service are also planning on running collections on a 7 day week basis – what time will this be – early Sunday mornings may not be appropriate. The service will be investing in new, rear loading collection vehicles which are easier to operate. **Update:** George Sommerville (Waste Services Manager) attended Balforn CC on Thursday 2nd Feb and updated the meeting re. the current position with the collection service. The main issues are listed below:
 - The new vehicles will be arriving in Feb/March 2017. Part of the delay was due to engine cut out switches which had to be installed after the Glasgow bin lorry tragedy. The 9 new vehicles will be leased and we are assured reliability will improve when they are all in service. Bin lorries can be tracked at <http://my.stirling.gov.uk/binlorries>
 - The service had lost about 30 staff via VS (Voluntary Severance) and valuable route knowledge was lost. As staff familiarise themselves with the new routes along with support from the new routing software collection efficiency will improve.
 - The 4 days on 4 days off shift pattern may have faced some resistance from some of the workforce but has now been enthusiastically embraced by collection crews. The shifts are 10 hours per day.
 - Road End Collection Points: The service are looking to install screening at some locations to hide bins. There are no plans at present to introduce universal road end collections.
 - The pull-out and return service for bins and boxes for residents with mobility problems remains – **Tel: 01786 404040**
 - Sunday Collection Issues: Some residents have commented on this. I would prefer to let the service work on the improvements above and then review it over the next months.

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- **First Bus Changes and DRT:** First Bus have changed or withdrawn a number of routes in the Stirling area. The council will be extending the Demand Response Service DRT to accommodate some of these changes to the scheduled services. Elected members are looking for the views from residents on these changes. At Croftamie CC the feeling was the DRT should be given the chance to work with a review if residents were unhappy with the service. All 6 rural councillors met with FirstBus and Council Transport officers on 19th Oct. A number of suggestions were made including establishing a reverse loop route using smaller buses: Balfron > Drymen > Croftamie > Bearsden > Milngavie > Strathblane > Killearn > Balfron. This looks like an extension of the Number 10 service and has support from Drymen CC. The First Bus representative did not dismiss this idea, but smaller buses are not always the more economical. What the council transport officers said was that scheduled buses services in rural areas may be difficult to sustain over the longer period. It may be that DRT could be applied over the wider rural area with agreements with neighbouring councils for crossover routes e.g. Drymen <> Milngavie; Fintry <> Lennoxton; Killen <> Aberfeldy etc. The other area we are investigating is using the **City Deal Programme** under the Connectivity category to lever resources for – roads maintenance, public transport, and broadband for the rural areas.
Revised Bus Timetable Jan 2017: See Appendix 1
- **Road Maintenance Programme 2016 – 2017:** Forth and Endrick programme:
A Roads: A811 (Redlairston – Buchlyvie) Inlay = £60K; A811 (Strewiebank – Kippen) Structural Inlay = £40K; A811 (Glinns Road on Kippen Gargunnoch Straight) SD + Patching = £45,000; A811 (Touch Bridge – Cambusbarron Turnoff – Ward 5) SD + Patching = £27K; A81 (Garrauld Balfron Station) SD + Patching = £35K*; A81 (Balfron Station) SD + Patching = £65K*; A81 (Devil’s Elbow – Strathblane) Inlay = £55K*; A809 (Finnich Blair – Croftamie) Structural Inlay = £45K
B Roads: B818 (Loch Walton – Fintry) Overlay = £50K; B822 (Balafark – Kippen) Overlay = £50K; B818 (Bogside – Fintry) Overlay = **£40K**; B837 (Milton of Buchanan) Overlay = £50K
C Roads: C54 (Ballochruin Rd – Balfron) Structural Inlay - Passing Places = £20K; C56 (Mugdock Country Park) Overlay = £30K; C21 (Station Rd – Balfron) Inlay = £40K
Unclassified Roads: Barnsford Rd. (Gartness) Full Reconstruction = £100K* Streets: Kirkhouse Rd/Crescent (Strathblane) Inlay = £50K; Glinns Rd (Kippen) Overlay = £40K
- **Notes:** Key: SD = Surface Dress; * Questions to Roads officers
- **Killearn Roads:** Apart from some footpath resurfacing near the kirk there were no road/pavement improvement projects in Killearn for 2016/2017. Having walked around the village recently I have noted a number of roads/pavement issues which need addressed including: Trees Estate Roads and Pavements, Station Road, Branziert, Drumbeg Loan, Main Street Coop to Branziert etc. I understand that the new Director of Localities and Infrastructure Alastair Brown has met with Community representatives and we would like to make Killearn a priority with respect to roads and footpath improvement. We have seen the benefit of this approach in Strathblane.

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- **Killearn Services:** The village has lost a number of critical service and facilities including: Hotel, Bank, Spar/Post Office, and Butcher. The only service we have been able to retain is the public toilet, a facility I regularly use. I have copied this information to Carol Beattie (Senior Manager Economic Development & Regeneration) who I have also met re. the Killearn Hospital site.
- **Beech Tree:** I met with the owner recently and discussed the new car park plan which will be an improvement on safe access with longer sight lines. She is very appreciative of the support she received from the local community and also Stirling Council, particularly Richard Barron (Senior Access Officer).
- **Dumgoyne Hill Parking:** This has been raised a number of times. Some years ago Duntreath Estates applied for a walker's car-park on land opposite the main path up to Dumgoyne and Earl's Seat. Permission was granted for 12 car spaces although having visited the site it looked as if it could hold more. Unfortunately, the carpark wasn't developed and the planning permission has now expired. Some possible solutions could include:
 - Contact Duntreath to see if they would be willing to reapply.
 - Contact Distillery to see if they have available land.
 - If road safety is a serious issue could the council and/or another agency purchase land for a carpark.
- **Road Safety A809:** The 40 mph signs were erected in December, and hopefully will help to curb the inappropriate speeds on this road. I had asked previously if the camera safety van could be deployed on this road and was told that +60 mph speeds are not the main issue on this road, as many of the collisions/fatalities are down to driver error and not necessarily breaking the national speed limit. **Update:** I have inspected the signs and the Edenmill signage appears to be in the wrong place i.e. before the Edenmill turn off and not after as was agreed. The roads officer has been asked for the rationale behind this.
- **Roads Inspections:** Last year I met with roads officers to look at two jobs. A81 (Devil's Elbow) and Kirkhouse Rd/Kirkhouse Crescent at Strathblane. The overall impression I got was these were two very good jobs, ably supervised with a motivated, hard-working team who took a quiet pride in their work. The challenge now is to provide the resurfacing team(s) with sufficient resources to keep this good work going. Another area of concern is the quality and frequency of the white lining. This is carried out by a contractor who I understand services more than one council area. I've suggested that the white lining is brought in-house.
- **Balfron Station – Meeting with Scottish Water Balfron High School:** This was a very well attended event with CC representatives, and no less than 6 politicians, including 4 Cllrs and MSPs Bruce Crawford and Dean Lockhart. Three options for the 3 month closure period were presented. **Option 1.** Full closure for 3 to 4 months over the summer period with a predicted completion in late July early August. **Option 2.** Partial full closure over the summer with contra flow over the busiest part of the summer to cater for coaches and summer visitors with a predicted completion in late summer/early autumn. **Option 3.** Full closure after summer with a predicted completion in October. After a detailed Q&A session the meeting came to a broad consensus on **Option 2** and this was to be relayed back to CCs. A liaison group was to be formed and made up of CC representatives and other stake holders.

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- **Stirling City Deal:** This has now been approved and indeed was referred to in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. Elected members attended the 'official' launch of the **City Deal Programme** at the Scottish Parliament on 29th November and it was pleasing to see among the over 300 guests, many business owners, small and large, urban and rural. More details about the city deal on the following link: <http://www.investinstirling.com/why-stirling/city-development-framework/> **Comment:** The concern rural councillors have is the almost exclusive focus on urban Stirling, with all of the main projects focused on the city. There is mention of urban/rural connectivity within the City Deal documentation without too much detail. Under this connectivity umbrella Cllr Muirhead and my-self will be looking for city deal resources to improve – Road Maintenance, Public Transport, and Broadband. With respect to Road Maintenance the service is currently treating 2.6% of the network per annum. However we need to treat 4% just to 'tread water'. To bring our network of some 1,100 Km up to the Scottish council average will require £90 million (approx.).
- **Stirling Council Budget 2017 – PBB Year 4:** According to PBB (Priority Based Budgeting) Interim Report Jan 2017 the current funding gap is estimated to be £10.8 million by 2021/2022. However, due to PBB savings made in years 1 – 3 budget options have not been brought to the public – savings will be made within internal council departments. The council's revenue and capital expenditure is summarised in the following 4 sections: **General Fund (Revenue Budget) £208.395 Million; General Fund (Capital Programme) £28.162 Million; Housing Revenue Account (Revenue Budget) £19.732 Million; Housing Revenue Account (Capital Programme) £13.833 Million.** Proposed savings options for 2017 include Fees/Charges and Stop/Reduce. **Fees/Charges** options include: Additional commercial property rental income; Removal of 10% council discount on second homes; and increase all council tax bands by 3%. **Stop/Reduce** options include: Maximise class sizes by changing pupil/teacher ratio; Reduce consumer advice function; Migration of community paper banks onto domestic collection service; Reduction in civic budget. **Council Tax Notes:** At this stage it looks unlikely that the full increase in all council tax bands, up to 3%, will be implemented in the Stirling Council 2017/2018 budget. However, it does look likely that the 4 top council tax bands will see an increase, nationally, where an average band E household will pay £2 per week more and the average band H household will pay about £10 per week more. This has still to be formally passed by the Scottish parliament. **Comment:** The impending Scottish council elections on Thursday May 4th could be a factor as typically Council administrations and oppositions are reluctant to bring contentious budget items months before an election. If the national CT band increases are approved and given that many Forth and Endrick properties are within the top bands E to G it gives us a stronger case to lever more resource for rural priorities – this has already been requested of fellow councillors. Cllr Muirhead and my-self have also requested a significant increase in the roads maintenance revenue budget and subsidy/support for rural bus services, especially servicing the hospital at Larbert. At this time we do not know the allocation for the capital programme. This could be used for road alignments and major bridge reconstruction.
Budget Meeting Thursday 23rd February
<http://www.stirling.gov.uk/documents/pbbjan2017.pdf>

- **Income Generation:** The PBB document appears thin on Income Generation opportunities, and indeed historically this has proven to be a challenge for the council. One potential area for both council and communities to look is renewable energy – to this end there are two solar projects that we are looking at – Polmaise (Landfill Site) and Mugdock Country Park (Kyber Pass Site). Nationally, through the Scotland’s Towns Partnership <http://www.scotlandstowns.org/> the former mining town of Cumnock (Ayrshire) – Pop: 13,000 is being targeted as Scotland’s first “Green Town”. Could a similar project work for a smaller towns or villages in the Stirling area?
- **Stirling Council –Boundary Commission - Westminster:** There are plans to reduce the number of constituencies for the next West Minster election, from **59 to 53** in Scotland. This includes Stirling where the city would be split according to the boundary proposals - into **Clackmannanshire and Stirling North and Stirling South**. The consultation on the proposals ran until 11 January 2017. I submitted a statement covering a list of objections to this proposal and I believe others have also submitted objections. To date I have not seen any support for this boundary proposal. We are hoping that the sensible rationale applied to a previous proposal to merge Forth and Endrick with Cambusbarron is followed, where the proposal was rejected, although that was under the **Local Government Boundary Changes (LGBC)**
- **Planning – Stirling Council:** Both the Park of Keir Tennis Centre (Dunblane and Bridge of Allan), and Airthrey Kerse (Graham’s Dairies at Bridge of Allan and Causewayhead) are now subject to appeals by the applicant as they were both rejected – Park of Keir by the planning panel and Airthrey Kerse by full council. Cllr Muirhead and my-self supported both applications. **Update:** A public enquiry for the Park of Keir application was held in Dunblane chaired by a planning reporter with findings now with Scottish Government ministers.
- **Stirling Council – Active Stirling:** The proposal to award the “Supply of Sport, Physical Activity, and Well-Being Services” to a new supplier was refused, unanimously by the council and the current provider Active Stirling will continue as supplier with changes to their management/governance structure to be implemented later.
- **Rural Forum Monday 20th February 7 pm – 9pm in Balfron High School:** The main agenda items are Localities and Infrastructure delivered by Alastair Brown, Director and Margaret Wallace, Service Manager, Transport Update delivered by the Public Transport Co-ordinator Team Leader - Derek Parry and Transport Scheduling officer Robert Plewes, Community Updates written reports – Strathendrick Care Home & Developing Care Hub- Marion Lever , Broadband – Doug Ashworth and Community Partnership – Mrs Tracey Patrick.

Appendix 1 – Proposed Local Bus Changes - 2017

- Midland Bluebird Ltd have registered the following changes to local bus services in the Balfron and Aberfoyle areas from **Monday 6 March 2017**. These should help to address some of the issues that have been raised by elected members and other community representatives.
- Service B9 Balfron to Balfron via Killearn, Croftamie & Drymen: New Monday to Friday circular service departing Balfron at 0655, 1009 & 1309, providing connections to Services 10A & B10 for onward travel to Glasgow.
- Services 10A/B10/C10 Balfron to Glasgow:
 - Monday to Friday B10 journey 1555 ex Glasgow: amendments to the intermediate running times;
 - Monday to Friday B10 journey 1640 ex Balfron: to operate from the High School at 1641 for after school clubs (**note that no parking in bus bays to be enforced to allow bus access to the school**);
 - Additional B10 journeys between Balfron and Aberfoyle (via Gartmore): Monday to Friday 1210 & 1350 ex Balfron and 1239 & 1422 ex Aberfoyle; Saturday 0856 & 1606 ex Balfron and 0922 & 1633 ex Aberfoyle;
 - Some Monday to Friday, Saturday & Sunday journeys extended to/from Balfron Cotton Street.
- Service C11 Aberfoyle to Stirling: revised intermediate times on most journeys.
- Service B12/C12 Balfron to Stirling:
 - schooldays only variation via Stirling High School removed from 0740 B10 journey ex Balfron so that this journey will operate directly to Stirling on all Mondays to Fridays;
 - Monday to Friday C12 journey 1710 ex Balfron to operate 3 minutes later and operate via the High School for after school clubs (**note that no parking in bus bays to be enforced to allow bus access to the school**).
- Schooldays only Service 310 journey 1627 Milngavie to Balfron: to be replaced with new schooldays only Service 308 journey 1635 ex Milngavie to Balfron via Auchengillan, Croftamie & Drymen (this journey will connect with the Service 10A journey 1555 ex Glasgow and due in Milngavie at 1630).
- Schooldays only Service 312 Balfron to Kippen: service withdrawn (consisted of two positioning journeys for Service 513 which are no longer required).
- School Service 507 Fintry to Balfron HS: to operate with additional running time.
- School Service 510 Killearn to Balfron HS: to operate in the same direction in the afternoon as in the morning to remove the need for most children to cross the road.
- School Service 513 Kippen to Balfron HS via Fintry: to operate Fintry – Kippen – Buchlyvie – Balfron in the morning and the reverse in the afternoon.

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