

Business Meeting

Monday 22nd May at 8:00 pm in Auchengray Church Centre

Minutes

- 1 Present:** Alistair Marshall (Chair), Stephen Midgley, Margaret Addo, Patricia Tucker; John Tucker (Tarbrax Village Hall Association)
- 2 Apologies:** Ian Aitchison
- 3 Adoption of Minutes of the previous meeting:**
Proposed by: Margaret Addo Seconded by: Stephen Midgley
- 4 Matters arising:**
- 5 Secretary's report:**

Correspondence with WAT IF?: the secretary reported that TCC have been continuing to pursue an informal meeting with the committee or trustees of WAT IF? The most recent exchange involved certain conditions which WAT IF? had proposed. The purposes of such a meeting or meetings would include improving relations and co-operation between the various groups in the community including TCC, co-ordinating communications with South Lanarkshire Council, and other matters of common interest.

Objections have been submitted by TCC to the Fauch Hill wind farm and Tormywheel extension applications.

Patricia and Stephen will be attending workshops organised by the South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 6 Treasurer's report:**

The current balance is £373.89. Due payments were made to Auchengray Church Centre and to TWA Local Newsletter. Annual accounts have been prepared for submission to SLC.
- 7 Updates: Follow-up to December meeting with Big Lottery Fund, TCC and Tarbrax Village Hall Association:** TCC have been informed by Gordon Bow, SLC's acting Liaison Officer, that the meeting he had hoped to arrange between TCC, Councillor McClymont and other parties would not now be taking place. It had therefore been agreed that instead TCC would send a written reply to Cllr McClymont's letter of complaint dated 8th February, which they did. TCC were also now free to answer questions from members of the public.

A member of the public raised the issue of the newsletter distributed by TCC to residents in mid-December, stating that its tone had caused upset among some residents and asking what had been achieved. TCC members replied that its initial purpose was to inform residents of the proposed changes in the use of the Village Hall; that it had helped to bring forward a planned meeting with the Big Lottery Fund, which was immediately arranged for a few days later; that the said meeting had largely achieved its purpose of settling the issues over the use of the hall; that lessons had been learned by all concerned, enabling relations between TCC and TVHA to be restored; and that this improvement was now being fully exercised by both groups. It was agreed that all parties had learned from the episode and it had demonstrated the importance of prior consultation before action.

Criticism was also made about the wording of the above circular, which was accepted. A member of the public added that the circular had not been properly discussed by the full TCC membership. This was also accepted, TCC members adding that they had done their best to consult each other within the very short timescale, which was out of their hands, as soon as it was realised that quick action was needed.

The matter of TCC's second newsletter, consisting of a report on the decisions made at the Big Lottery meeting, was also raised. A member of the public complained that the wording was harsh, and a TCC member who had been present stated that it was an accurate reflection of what had taken place at the meeting.

Discussion moved on to the recent TCC reply to Cllr McClymont referred to earlier. A member of the Community Council stated that she wished to record her dissent from that letter, on the grounds that it had not been discussed by the full membership; that many of the Councillor's complaints were justified; that the wording was unnecessary and hurtful; and that TCC should make an apology to the Councillor. The member (referred to here as Member A) read out her statement to this effect, and distributed a copy to those present.

There followed a lively but civilised debate. On the first issue of full discussion among TCC members, the secretary stated that both openness and discretion were required by TCC's code of conduct, and that sometimes those two principles can conflict. In cases where a named individual is criticised in writing, confidentiality is essential. TCC have to work within the law as well as their code of conduct.

On the matter of the content of TCC's letter, equally lively discussion followed with all those present having the chance to air their views and willing to listen to those of others. The other TCC members present argued that they had every right to reply robustly to unjust comments, while Member A argued that some of the complaints were justified. Some of those present suggested that TCC should be talking with the Councillor, who has done much work for the community and is well regarded by many, rather than engaging in this kind of correspondence. TCC members agreed with this, stating that they had been asking for a meeting with the Councillor for several months. Their first choice would have been to meet and try to iron out all the issues with the councillor in preference to the recent exchange of letters – and it still was.

TCC members stood by the substance of their defence against the Councillor's complaints, and it was suggested that an apology should be made in the opposite direction to that proposed by Member A. However, TCC members accepted that the manner of presentation of their recent letter was harsh and potentially hurtful. It was finally agreed by consensus that TCC could write a conciliatory letter to the Councillor, requesting a meeting to work out the issues that had been raised, and in the hope that apologies might more readily flow in both directions if the Councillor were willing to talk with TCC. The secretary will prepare a draft and offer it to all TCC members for comment.

New SLC councillors: it was stated that since the council elections in May we have two new SLC associate Councillors, namely Julia Marrs (SNP) and Richard Elliott-Lockhart (Conservative). Catherine McClymont is also re-elected.

- 8. Agenda items: Tarbrax Village Hall Association:** their revised constitution was briefly discussed, including reference to the proposed change from all residents being members to people being required to apply for membership. TVHA and TCC secretaries will exchange information and comments. It was proposed that Patricia represent TCC at TVHA committee meetings, and she kindly accepted. For TVHA representation on TCC, John Tucker may be the representative but it is still to be decided.

Progress on TCC website: Patricia reported that this is still in preparation, at present awaiting resolution of some technical issues.

- 9. A.O.C.B.** None

- 10. Next meetings:** Mondays 19th June, 18th September, Auchengray Church Centre at 8 p.m.

- 11. Items for Newsletter:** TCC meeting dates; changes to SLC councillors, contact details when available.

- 12. Close of meeting:** Meeting closed at 9.45 pm