



Ardersier Community Liaison Group

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 26 July 2017

Location: PACE Café, Station Road, Ardersier

Present:

Chair	Kevin Reid (KR)
The Highland Council	Councillor Roddy Balfour (RB) Councillor Trish Robertson (TR) Robbie Bain (RBn)
The Ardersier Foundation	Abigail Reardon (AR) Lesley Smith (LS)
Ardersier Community Support Group	Tricia Macpherson (TM)
Ardersier residents	Hilary Scholes (HS) Sally Weller (SWe) Clive Meredith (CM) – in part
Scottish Water (SW)	Paul Morley: Customer Delivery Team Mgr (PM) Gavin Steel: Regional Communities Team Mgr (GS) Trish Wilson: Project Communications Advisor (TW)

Apologies:

Councillor Glynis Sinclair, Brian James



Community Liaison Group Objective

'The aim of the community liaison group is to minimise any negative impact and maximise the positive impact on the local community.'

The group will provide feedback and guidance on Scottish Water's programme of engagement and communication with the local community, elected representatives and other stakeholders throughout the construction element of the approved projects. This will facilitate feedback and enable informed debate that will help Scottish Water identify areas of concern, explore solutions, aid communication and progress the projects.'

Minutes

1. Welcome & introductions

Kevin Reid welcomed all members to the meeting and invited Sally Weller to introduce herself.

2. Scottish Water update

KR proposed that Scottish Water provide its update on the projects before reviewing the previous minutes.

GS acknowledged before the main project update that there was an ongoing issue relating to Scottish Water Horizons' proposed installation of pipeline on a short section of the coastal path. A group of people had prevented work from taking place safely and the appropriate legal process was therefore being pursued to resolve the situation. GS explained that the process under way was not something that PM, TW and he were able to discuss with the meeting. There were also some private matters relating to individual residents which, as previously, it was not appropriate for Scottish Water to discuss in the context of the meeting.

GS also reminded attendees of the remit of the CLG. He noted that there was recognition from all participants that there was disagreement about the principle of Scottish Water's development. The particular purpose of the CLG was not to revisit that disagreement, but to enable issues in relation to the project activity under way to be discussed and addressed collaboratively.

AR indicated that she felt the land / access issue that had been encountered on the coastal path should be discussed and indicated that she had questions she wanted to raise about this.

PM explained that Scottish Water was not prepared to discuss the matter which was subject to appropriate legal process.



RB commented that the community was aware of the issues and he understood that people wished to discuss them. He recognised that there could be difficulties with this where legal processes are ongoing.

(a) Scottish Water Horizons / pipeline update

PM indicated that work on the pipeline installation had continued to make progress. Since the previous meeting, a further short section of the pipes had been completed south of Cromal Terrace.

PM explained that work had then been carried out from the Ship Inn Pumping Station, progressing north towards the Pocket Garden. This section was now largely complete, with most remaining work focused on reinstatement. PM explained that a short section had been left between the Dolphin Bay Suites (from where pipes had already been laid back to Stuart Street) and the Ship Inn Pumping Station. This final section would be completed at a later date in order to mitigate the impact of this work on the tourist season.

PM indicated that, since pipeline installation across the top of the slipway had been completed, the slipway had been opened each evening to minimise disruption to its use. The site team had also accommodated requests for access during the daytime where possible.

Reinstatement activity was ongoing and Morrisons had recently carried out grass-cutting along the reinstated area of the bund in order to enable them to carry out further stone-picking and other ground work where required.

Subject to resolving access issues, it was hoped that work would be able to continue over the next few weeks.

(b) Waste Water Treatment Works update

PM explained that all civils work was now complete for the UV plant at the Waste Water Treatment Works. Mechanical and electrical work was now well under way and commissioning was expected to take place in the coming weeks.

PM indicated that, as no HGV deliveries to the site were expected during this phase, the C1005 had been opened to traffic, although the TTRO and the associated 30mph limit remained in place along the delivery route. As the road closure was not expected to be required for some time, the signage had been removed. The closure would be put back in place if and when any deliveries were required. PM thought it likely that the road would be able to remain open for at least the next few weeks.

KR asked when there was next expected to be a requirement for the road closure to be put back in place. PM indicated that commissioning of the UV plant was the main focus of work until around the end of August, and HGV deliveries were unlikely to be needed before then.

3. Review of previous minutes and actions

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and no amendments were made. Actions were reviewed as follows:

- 1) *SW to investigate whether there has been an impact on road drainage during wet weather at the above locations on Stuart Street and follow up as required.*

PM asked whether the concern related to the area of Stuart Street alongside the start of the coastal path.

TR indicated that the locations of concern were near 20 Stuart Avenue and by Corbett Gardens, although both on Stuart Street.

PM apologised that this had been noted wrongly in the previous minutes. AR offered to send photographs of the areas affected and PM confirmed that this would be helpful.

Action 1: SW to follow up concern raised about road drainage during wet weather at the above locations on Stuart Street

- 2) *SW to follow up concerns about firmness of reinstated sections of the bund with Morrisons in the course of its ongoing reinstatement activity.*

PM confirmed that reinstatement activity was continuing, where required. He encouraged members to highlight any particular areas of concern so that they could be checked.

AR raised an issue on behalf of a particular resident who remained concerned with the quality of reinstatement by his home. PM confirmed that he had spoken to the resident and that some further topsoil would be put down at the location in question.

Action 2: SW to provide update on planned remedial work on the bund at the location described

- 3) *SW to set up meeting involving PM, John Beaton and a representative of the community to agree next steps (for gifting / installation of speed indicator display (SID) signs).*



PM advised that a meeting had not been necessary, but that progress was being made. Highland Council was in the process of identifying suitable street-lighting columns at the 3 locations that had been identified by the community.

PM informed the meeting that the conclusion of discussions had been that the SID signs would be gifted to the Hall Committee, so that they could be retained for use in Ardersier after Scottish Water's work is complete.

PM noted that Highland Council would need to be involved in moving signs. Current charges for this were approx. £100+VAT for moving signs to a new location and approx. £40+VAT for revisiting an existing site. There was no requirement for signs to be moved, but Highland Council offered the advice that moving them periodically increases their effectiveness.

TMacP expressed concern about the potential cost to the Hall Committee if signs needed to be moved. TR confirmed that the intention was not that the Hall Committee should bear any cost and that they should be reimbursed if the Community Council wished to incur cost by moving the signs in the future.

Action 3: SW to follow up with TMacP to confirm what details are needed from the Hall Committee to make progress

- 4) *SW to contact farmer to ensure suitable arrangement for accessing land on the C1005 is in place. Anyone experiencing issues was encouraged to contact Scottish Water directly so that they can be addressed.*

PM confirmed that, as the C1005 had been opened following the previous meeting, the issues with access were not current. He indicated that SW would speak to the individual concerned to ensure appropriate arrangements were in place when the road closure was put back into operation.

AR and LS apologised that they had not picked up messages from TW seeking to follow this up following the previous meeting as they had been away.

- 5) *SW to speak to Shane Spence to see if replacement benches can be supported on a fast-tracked basis.*

GS confirmed that contact had been made with Shane Spence and he had passed on details of the bench which had been used near the entrance to the village.



PM noted that SW was proposing to order benches and there were options of a black or brown finish for the seat itself. The consensus of the meeting was that the brown finish was preferable.

PM also noted that there was an option between benches being fixed by bolts to a concrete or paved base; or a below-ground 'anchor'.

RB commented that his experience was that metalwork below ground suffered from corrosion over time. While the main priority was to ensure that benches were well secured in place, the consensus was that fixing on to concrete was preferable.

Action 3: SW to get replacement benches ordered as soon as possible.

- 6) *SW to approach Highland Council and share the ideas that have been raised for Ardersier Common and seek feedback / engagement via the sub-group that had been agreed at the previous meeting.*

GS confirmed that a useful initial meeting had taken place with John Orr from the Highland Council Countryside Ranger Service at the Common on 21 July. Unfortunately LS had not been able to attend, but a follow-up meeting would be arranged for a suitable time to make progress. John Orr had suggested some further ideas and jobs which he was keen to get done around the Common in addition to the ideas already put forward by members of the community.

TMacP asked whether the 'Green Road' path within the Common could be cut back as this was currently overgrown. GS noted that John Orr had been planning some work this week to trim and cut back gorse encroaching on the path.

- 7) *SW to arrange for Common picnic area car park entrance to be renewed with compacted / loose car park surface material at next opportunity.*

PM confirmed that this was still to be done. Given that SW storage area was currently occupying part of the car park at the Pocket Garden, it was felt better to avoid disrupting the access to the other nearby public car park serving the Common and the coastal path.

Action 4: SW to arrange for Common picnic area car park entrance to be renewed with compacted / loose car park surface material at next opportunity.

- 8) *SW to refer concerns raised about site boundary security to Health and Safety team and report back.*



PM confirmed that this had been done. Morrisons had confirmed that Risk Assessments had been carried out and had identified that 'post and rope' was an appropriate way of demarcating the site boundary, with a banksman in place during all operations. Excavations within the site had been backfilled or otherwise made safe at the end of each working day.

Arrangements and Risk Assessments had been reviewed after a member of the public entered the site and refused to leave when asked to do so, causing work to stop in the interests of safety. The site had then been fully enclosed with heras fencing.

AR commented that the revised arrangements had made the site secure and that she felt this was safer.

- 9) *SW to confirm Traffic Management Plan (TMP) arrangements for LGVs, consider the issue raised about the junction of Stuart Street with the High Street, and report back to the next CLG meeting.*

PM explained that the TMP does not currently restrict the route for LGVs travelling through the village.

SW was happy to revise the arrangement, subject to agreement with Highland Council, to take account of the concern that had been raised; and ensure that construction traffic was not travelling inbound from the Dalcross area to the site along Stuart Street, given the difficult junction with High Street. It was proposed that traffic leaving the site, travelling in the direction of Dalcross, would not be restricted, given that the sight lines at the junction were acceptable for traffic turning right into Stuart Street.

PM indicated that he would confirm with Highland Council the best way to formalise the amendment that was envisaged.

TR noted that Malcolm MacLeod had indicated his agreement with this arrangement via email.

RB noted that there had also been correspondence between Clive Meredith and Nicola Drummond.

Action 5: SW to formalise arrangement with Highland Council to avoid LGV construction traffic travelling inbound to the site from the Dalcross area via Stuart Street (turning left out of Stuart Street on to High Street).

HS felt the junction in question was dangerous in both directions for large vehicles.



KR noted that the TMP required larger construction vehicles to use the C1005 'back road', so the issue of larger vehicles did not arise in relation to site traffic.

TR asked to confirm what traffic the TMP did apply to. PM confirmed that the TMP does not cover operational traffic to the WWTW site.

TR asked for the concern about the junction of Stuart Street and High Street to be raised with SW operational tanker drivers. HS asked for tankers to be asked not to enter Stuart Street at the junction.

PM agreed to raise the matter with the Team Leader for SW's tanker drivers.

Action 6: SW to highlight concern about tankers using the junction of Stuart Street and High Street in both directions to the appropriate Team Leader and respond to the CLG.

TMacP asked about the structures which had been put on the road between Stuart Street and the Dolphin Bay Suites. She felt that these were causing a barrier to pedestrians.

PM responded that arrangements had been put in place in response to a specific concern about traffic speed and pedestrian safety from local residents, while the section of road was in use by construction traffic.

TMacP asked for confirmation that these measures would be removed once the current work in that area of the village was complete. PM confirmed that they would be.

10) SW to include further article on the Traffic Management Plan in the next project newsletter, due for distribution in August.

GS confirmed that this point had been noted and further information on the TMP would be included.

11) SW to send on information on Croy WWTW capacity to TR when available.

TR confirmed that this had been received.

12) SW to seek to book either the Hall or the PACE café for future meeting dates, dependent on availability.

This had been done and August and September meetings were planned to take place at the PACE café.

4. Discussion / feedback from members

(a) Noise and vibration concerns

AR indicated that she had been asked to raise an issue on behalf of an individual whose health had been impacted by noise and vibration linked to the current work on the coastal path.

PM explained that SW had been approached directly about this and had made efforts with its contractor to agree a Method Statement to minimise noise and vibration as far as possible.

(b) Section of work near Dolphin Bay Suites

HS asked if SW could confirm the timing of a short remaining section of pipeline still to be installed close to Dolphin Bay Suites. She noted that the current work had restricted access to her garage and that this work would also prevent access along the coastal path.

PM indicated that a commitment had been given to leave the short section until the very end of the pipeline installation when pressure testing would need to be carried out from this location.

SWe commented that she hoped the work would take place outside the main tourist season, in October or November.

PM said that he would ensure HS was informed in advance when this final work was planned in light of the impact on access to her garage. He could not guarantee the timing of this work, but SW had committed to leaving it until the end of the pipeline's construction.

Action 7: SW to ensure that the need to notify HS in advance of plans for section of pipeline between Dolphin Bay Suites and Ship Inn Pumping Station is recorded and acted upon when timing of this work is known.

(c) Ship Inn Pumping Station

AR asked whether SW had any future plans to upgrade the Ship Inn Pumping Station.

PM indicated that he was not aware of any significant plans, but that the Pumping Station was part of the existing network serving the village. The current project would divert some of the flows currently passing through the local network from beyond the village, so should alleviate pressure on this infrastructure.



PM noted that he was not aware of future investment or maintenance plans and agreed to ask relevant colleagues about this and confirm.

Action 8: SW to confirm whether there are currently any plans to upgrade or invest in the Ship Inn Pumping Station.

(d) Leaving a legacy

GS noted that, following the paper discussed at the previous CLG, steps had been taken to progress both replacement benches and to explore ideas for Ardersier Common further with Highland Council.

The paper had included criteria which SW would use to prioritise the ideas that had been put forward and identify what it would be able to support.

RB asked about the slipway, where Highland Council had been exploring the potential to make improvements. He understood that the work involved might cost in the region of £100,000 and he asked if SW would consider contributing to this.

GS indicated that the slipway was one of the ideas that had been put forward to SW alongside many others. He thought it was unlikely that SW would be in a position to make a significant contribution towards this cost, but the criteria would guide SW's decision-making process. GS indicated that SW would complete its prioritisation of the ideas put forward before the next CLG meeting and this would provide greater clarity.

Action 9: SW to complete prioritisation of legacy ideas on the basis of criteria previously discussed and circulate a prioritised list ahead of the August CLG meeting.

Clive Meredith (CM) joined the meeting.

(e) Traffic Management Plan

KR noted that discussion had already taken place about traffic routes through the village, following on from the action which had arisen from the previous meeting.

CM expressed his concern about LGVs travelling to Scottish Water's site through the village. CM had argued that the route from the B9039 to High Street was not appropriate for this traffic. He had received feedback from Highland Council that this junction could be used by traffic leaving Scottish Water's site.

CM expressed strong concern that the TMP that was in place would see 20,000 LGV movements through the village and that this presented a



significant risk to safety. He indicated that he was opposed to this aspect of the TMP.

GS responded that SW had followed the process that was asked of it in preparing, consulting upon and then agreeing the TMP with the planning authority. He explained that the 20,000 movements referred to counted journeys into and out from the site individually over a significant period of time. The daily average figure was equivalent to 18 LGVs (below 3.5 tonnes) travelling to and from the site each day; and the peak month figure was equivalent to 34 LGVs travelling to and from the site each day. These numbers would make up a relatively small proportion of the total daily traffic on the roads through the village.

GS stated that SW was keen to work with the CLG and with its contractors to minimise risks associated with all site traffic as far as possible. The discussions about addressing the concerns about the junction of Stuart Street and High Street; and the purchase of speed indicator display signs were examples of this approach. This work would continue, but SW was not willing to revisit the core principles of the Traffic Management Plan which had been agreed with Highland Council via the appropriate process.

CM read out extracts from an email that he had received from Nicola Drummond at Highland Council, referring to the Traffic Management Plan and the role of the Community Liaison Group. The email indicated that the Liaison Group was in place to enable issues about the TMP to be raised.

GS indicated that he did not take issue with the text that had been read out in relation to the CLG's remit. However, he indicated that the CLG also had a defined membership that had been agreed in order to allow the community's views to be represented and productive discussions to take place. It was recognised that there were strongly held views about the principle of Scottish Water's development, and aspects of the planning process, which the Group would not be able to resolve. SW had been flexible about attendance of other residents at meetings, but that approach would not be sustainable if it prevented the Group from having productive discussions where it could make a difference.

GS indicated that he understood CM was representing the Ardersier Foundation, in addition to AR and LS. AR and LS clarified that CM was not representing the Foundation. GS apologised for this misunderstanding.

CM stated that he did not feel he was achieving anything through his attendance at the meeting. He expressed strong dissatisfaction with Scottish Water's conduct and left the meeting.



AR stated that she felt that CM had some very valid points. KR agreed that CM had some valid points, but he felt they were not issues that the CLG would be able to resolve.

TR noted that progress had been made about the traffic concerns earlier in the meeting. Even so, she felt that the roads in Ardersier are not suitable for the amount of traffic they are currently receiving. She felt that traffic issues should have been addressed earlier in the planning process.

TMacP asked if there was any way that the impact of traffic could be shared between the different available routes. KR explained that the Traffic Management Plan did this by requiring HGV construction traffic to use the C1005 'back road' and LGVs to use routes through the village.

TR hoped that SW would learn lessons from the way the project at Ardersier had been planned. RB echoed this point and felt it raised issues about the planning process.

HS noted that the village had narrow streets and areas where there was no footpath for pedestrians. She asked that drivers visiting SW's site be appropriately briefed and told to take all appropriate care. She particularly noted that there were locations within the village where it could be very difficult for pedestrians to cross main roads.

PM indicated that the points raised about traffic volumes and speed were noted and taken seriously by Scottish Water. He explained that work had been done to reduce total traffic volumes, via use of off-site manufacturing processes where possible. Toolbox talks were conducted with all staff on site about driving safely and with consideration to pedestrians in the village and on the C1005. This would continue; and SW would continue to take reasonable steps to address any particular concerns that arose, in addition to the measures already in place.

5. Any other business

KR asked all attendees whether there were any other matters they wished to raise.

HS asked about membership of the group in light of the discussion that had taken place under item 4(e). TMacP and HS both felt that links between the community and the CLG were important and that all those attending were able to contribute to making the wider community aware of the Group and its purpose.

GS apologised if anyone had been made to feel unwelcome by the discussion.



PM confirmed that SW was happy for attendance at the CLG to be flexible, as it had been over recent months, so long as the Group was able to focus upon and fulfil its objectives.

HS noted that it was important for members of the Group to be able to highlight negative points where it was necessary to do so.

GS agreed that the Group existed to discuss all issues with Scottish Water's ongoing work and to enable them to be addressed collaboratively. PM added that SW was seeking wherever possible to address issues that were raised by residents with them directly so that they did not need to be dealt with by the CLG. Ultimately, the CLG provided a back-stop if issues were not being resolved and also allowed wider areas of concern to be addressed.

6. Future meetings

It was agreed that future meetings would take place in the PACE café at 5:30pm on:

Wednesday 23 August

Wednesday 27 September