

**Avonbridge & Standburn Community Council**  
**Monthly General Meeting**  
**Held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 7pm**  
**Drumbowie Primary School Standburn**

Chair Jo Hirst welcomed everyone to the meeting.

At this point an agenda modification was agreed to bring forward a discussion on Scottish Anglo Biosolids Ltd and it was agreed to postpone the website discussion as Ed Chappell was unable to attend.

**1. Present**

Jo Hirst, James Anthony, Doreen Goldie, Dave Cameron, PC Craig Towler, Cllr Gordon Hughes, Alfred Okoro & Debbie Neely (Scottish Anglo Bio Solids (James McCaig Farms)) and 12 local residents.

**2. Apologies**

Ann Wallace, Iain McGillivray, Harry Broadley, PC Derek Wallace, Cllr Rosie Murray, 2 residents.

**3. Community Safety Team Report**

Community Safety Representatives had sent their apologies but we received their report as detailed below:-

Period 11/02/2016 - 10/03/2016

There are no hotspot areas identified in the Avonbridge and Standburn areas at this time.

ASB Concern	No of reports
Dog Fouling	24
Control of Dogs	6
Youth related disorder	11
Other	4

**Further Information**

- Regular checks of play park in Avonbridge due to previous reports of vandalism.
- Patrols of the Avon trail and issuing dog waste bags to dog walkers seen in the area.
- General patrols of the area to deter Dog Fouling and any Anti-Social Behaviour issues.
- Checks of roads leading into Avonbridge for fly tipping and reporting to relevant departments for uplift.

<b>Phone</b>	0808 100 3161	FREEPHONE 24/7
<b>Email</b>	community.safety@falkirk.gov.uk	
<b>Online</b>	Falkirk Council Website www.falkirk.gov.uk	Antisocial behaviour online reporting form

**4. Local Police Update PC 93 | Craig Towler**

**ASB, VIOLENCE & DISORDER**

In relation to both villages of Avonbridge and Standburn there has been no significant incident's of ASB over the previous month and there are currently no repeat or priority locations in terms of ASB, Disorder and Violence. There has been 2 calls relating to minor incidents of Anti-Social behaviour within the village of Avonbridge which relate to noisy music and to a rear windscreen of a car being smashed.

There have been no such incidents of Anti-social behaviour in Standburn

**DRUG DEALING & DRUG MISUSE**

Over the previous month, 1 Drug Search warrants have been enforced within the Upper Braes ward area with a total of 0 drug supply/drug production charges being reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

Specifically for the Avonbridge and Standburn, there have been no Drug Search Warrants enforced.

## **ROAD SAFETY**

There have been no such offences recorded in either Avonbridge or Standburn, however areas such as Slamannan Road and Falkirk Road Avonbridge and furthermore Irene Terrace and Main Standburn continue to be subject to speed checks.

## **DISHONESTY CRIMES**

Specifically for Avonbridge and Standburn there have been no housebreaking offences to residential houses. There has been no Theft of Motor Vehicles.

## **5. Approval of Minutes**

- Thu 14-Jan-2015, Avonbridge Hall: Doreen Goldie proposed; Dave Cameron seconded.
- Thu 11-Feb-2015, Avonbridge Hall: James proposed; Doreen Goldie seconded.

## **6. Matters Arising from Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Included in the main body of the agenda.

## **7. Chair's Report**

### **Correspondence**

- 1) Email re. Falkirk local development plan #2:-
  - Submissions are available for inspection.
  - Full review due Sep-2016.
- 2) Iain Livingstone: Head of Braes High School, looking for opportunities to collaborate with the local community.
  - JH to respond re. training and occupational opportunities.
- 3) Forth Valley Health: update.
- 4) Brian Pirie Falkirk Council has have received a commemorative medal from the Tower Heritage Centre to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. One has been provided per community council.
- 5) Napier University: 'Digi-CC workshop', 22-Mar-2016:-
  - Offering one delegate place, respond by 15-mar.
  - JH would like to attend and raise the issue of rural broadband.
- 6) Braes High: invitation to attend senior awards ceremony.
- 7) CLD, Falkirk Council: Voting Champions training:
  - For anyone wanting to support others with voting and participation.
- 8) A801 Torphichen Bridge (Avon Gorge) Closure 3 weekends in March:
  - We have already requested additional signage to prevent vehicles following Sat Navs down the Blackston Road.
- 9) Possible resurfacing of B825 between Bowhouse and Standburn tbc by Roads FC..
- 10) Glasgow Queen Street rail tunnel closure: warning of delays on Polmont services.

## **8. Treasurers Report**

Current Bank Balance = £195.44 (One outgoing (£10) this month, expenses for visit to SEPA offices)

## **9. Anglo Scottish Biosolids Ltd: Representatives:- Debbie Neely, Alfred Okoro**

ASBL attended the meeting to discuss their request for a 3-month trial spreading of dried municipal sewage pellets, starting 21-Mar-2016.

**ASBL provided a Trial Protocol which is attached to these minutes as Appendix A- ASBL Trial Protocol.**

They also confirmed pellets will come from a PFI plant associated with Scottish Water, e.g. Levenmouth, Fife and will be distributed on the land by means of disc harrowing.

**Scottish Water also provided a response to questions raised by ASCC after the previous meeting:-**

**Sludge Derived Pellets and their Re-use**

### **1. What are the contents of the pellets?**

All the pellets are produced from wastewater. However, the exact content will vary from site to site depending on the composition of the wastewater; the amount of domestic effluent and the types of industrial discharges will vary within each network. Depending on the waste management authorisation, some sites may also be able to import septic tank sludges; water treatment works sludges and/or other industrial liquids directly into the sludge treatment process.

### **2. How are the pellets made?**

Sludge from the wastewater treatment processes is first dewatered to produce a sludge that is about 25% solids. This is then fed into dryers and heated to a very high temperature (approx. 450°C). This process results in a fully pasteurised pelletised product of about 92% solids with no detectable pathogens and low odour levels.

### **3. Who produces sludge pellets in Scotland?**

Pellets can be produced at 5 PFI-operated sludge treatment centres. These are: Meadowhead (near Irvine, Ayrshire), Daldowie (near Uddingston, Glasgow), Levenmouth (Fife), Hatton (near Dundee) and Lossiemouth (Moray Coast).

### **4. Is it only Scottish Water who makes and supplies them?**

Pellets are only produced from the five sites listed above. These are operated by Scottish Water's PFI Contract Partners. Scottish Water does send sludge from some of its wastewater treatment works to the PFI sites for further treatment.

### **5. \*\*Do Anglo Scottish Biosolids store the pellets?**

Anglo Scottish Biosolids Ltd (ASBL) has advised Scottish Water that pellets are not usually stored on its land. The pellets are stored at farms where they are to be used. However, during the proposed trial of re-introducing pellet recycling to the Falkirk area, the farm on which the pellets will be stored is owned by James McCaig.

### **6. \*\*Do the farms store the pellets and for how long?**

Similar to treated sludge cake, pellets can be stored at the place where they are to be used for a maximum duration of 6 months. This is in accordance with exemptions issued under the Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations.

ASBL has advised Scottish Water that it intends to trial stockpiling and spreading pellets within three months.

### **7. Are the pellets stored in secure buildings to be kept dry before being dug into the ground if the weather isn't dry?**

ASBL has advised Scottish Water that pellets are stored on farms, in the fields where they are to be used. The pellets are not stored in buildings. The stockpile locations are identified following a risk assessment which includes criteria such as dwelling proximity and prevailing wind direction.

### **8. How much odour is given off from the pellets?**

This is very difficult to quantify, however, odour is likely to be very low as the sludge has been completely pasteurised into a pelletised product with very high dry solids content. It is generally recognised that sludge pellets are less odourous than sludge cake.

**\*\*Scottish Water highlighted responses to these questions had been provided by ASBL and not by them.**

#### **A lively discussion ensued with comments from the floor including the following points:**

- Unlike ploughing, disc-harrowing leaves the waste exposed on the surface. Rain turns it back into sludge, releases strong odours and leaches contamination into watercourses and surrounding land.
- Once in bulk pellet form, who can say where the waste actually came from and what it actually contains?
- Once the dried pellets are stock piled on a site and then come into contact with water/rainfall the pathogens will re-emerge and the product becomes a contaminant once more.
- The odours are sickening. Children cannot go out to play. Washing comes in stinking.
- The land in question, Lower Redbrae Farm, is such low-grade land that is unlikely to benefit from extra fertiliser, e.g. field #5 supports no crops, only rough grazing for some sheep and horses.
- The 450 degC process is insufficient to kill human pathogens. To do this effectively requires autoclaving at 1300 degC. Neither process extracts heavy-metal content.

- Previous experience of spreading operations in this area has been negative. There has been evidence of protocols being bypassed.

## **ASBL then asked how they could proceed and work together with the Community and ASCC.**

### **The ASCC position was confirmed via the following comments with the full support of the floor:-**

- Despite having been chosen as the subject for the recent Scot Gov't review, odour is not the sole problem, but merely one of the consequences of sludge spreading. Recent scientific research raises concerns about the harmful content of sewage products, including neuro-toxins, prions and hormones persisting in sewage solids. Independent experts recommend that this material should not be spread on land. (JH)
  - Until science demonstrates that it can be done safely, ASCC is not happy to see spreading in any form anywhere in Scotland. (JH)
  - There are viable alternatives already operating in the EU. (DG)
  - Is our area being used as a sacrifice zone? (Least impact solution to a recognised problem).
  - Scottish Water and SEPA have failed to regulate the industry; the Scottish Government expected that they would do their job. (DG)
  - It would be reasonable to defer this trial until the current Scottish Government review has been completed and the resulting legislation has been enacted, due ~2018. (JH).

## **10. Burnhead Moss Wind Farm Community Fund & Foundation Scotland update**

- The wind farm is now officially called "Burnhead Moss Wind Farm".
- Linda Harrison, EDF's Asset Manager, has confirmed that they have lodged a £390,000 bond with Falkirk Council for reinstatement of the site. This is in the form of insurance.
- EDF has now agreed to pay the full £5,000 per megawatt per year from the outset, which removes many of the conditions that were initially causing us concern. This amount is index-linked.
- With 13 turbines, each rated at 2MW, the fund receives £130,000 per year. This is held in trust by Foundation Scotland and split equally between three community council areas: Blackridge, Limerigg / Slamannan and Avonbridge / Standburn. The ASCC area will therefore have access to around £43,000 per year.
- The first slice of money will become available in April, 2016. The mechanisms for application, authorisation and distribution of grants have still to be finalised; Foundation Scotland have provided advice and draft documents. They would anticipate forming a local panel to consider applications, with 2.5% of the funds (£1,000) ring-fenced for its administration. They would hope to have a formal memorandum of understanding in April – May 2016.
- Foundation Scotland has suggested that a community-wide discussion / consultation would help us form a common understanding of the needs and priorities of residents throughout the catchment. This would lead to a community action plan identifying some longer-term goals for the fund and also help 'sell' the fund around the area.
  - Their previous experience leads to a recommendation that this is a 'paid-for' exercise (they have identified some external funding); that it is performed by locals rather than external consultants; and that the focus should be to seek out community groups that might benefit from the fund and encourage: involvement, awareness, connection, consensus and communication.
  - They have asked if ASCC would consider managing this consultation exercise and if Jo Hirst and Doreen Goldie would consider undertaking at least some of the work. There was no objection to this from the meeting. It was agreed to put out a general call for contact with local groups.

- While all this is being finalised, Foundation Scotland are keen to see the fund start to make a difference so have proposed some interim grants (conditional on sight of a constitution and audited accounts):-
  - Avonbridge and Standburn Primary Parent Councils: £2,500 towards transport for extra-curricular activities.
  - Avonbridge Village Hall Committee:- £3,000 to support the various groups and activities they host.
  - ASCC: £1,500:- Micro-grant scheme for small community projects (max. £150). JH displayed a very simple draft application form to be confirmed by Foundation Scotland.
- EDF have requested (and it was agreed) that a portion of the Fund (how much is still to be determined) is used to support education and training for the Renewables sector.
  - JH and DC attended an open day at Forth Valley College, to find out about their 3-year Modern Apprenticeship courses in engineering. FVC were very enthusiastic and offered to help in any way.
  - We have fed this back to EDF and asked for more detail of what they hope to achieve and whether they have an existing apprenticeship scheme. DC will champion this with EDF, FS and the other areas.
  - Steve McGuire offered to help and support in this area.

### **AOCB**

- JH confirmed the ASCC response to the Scottish Government's Review into Odour from the Spreading of Sewage Sludge had been submitted for consideration. We are pressing for a one on one meeting with the Government officers to discuss the matter in detail.
- JH & DG also attended the final Petitions Committee meeting on 8.3.2016 at Holyrood and confirmed the Petition relating to Sewage Sludge is to remain open until the next Parliamentary Session.
- JH & DG are planning a media campaign to raise awareness of the issues associated with Sewage Sludge so appealed for any media contacts anyone might have.
- JA: Confirmed the dustbin schedule sheets are out – in Falkirk Herald today. Services have been drastically reduced and during the winter months a special uplift is required in respect of the brown bin which will now only be emptied once a month.
- DC: Avonbridge/Drumbowie Parent Councils are planning a kids' fun day after school on Friday 17-June-2016 at Avonbridge playground. This might be an opportunity to extend to a broader community event.

**Next meeting Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016 in Drumbowie Primary School Standburn at 7pm**