

Consultation response context

Introduction

This consultation response from Strathblane Community Council is provided within the parameters of how we see ourselves currently operating and how we feel we could contribute in the future if our operating environment changes.

Strathblane and Blanefield

Strathblane is a mixed community with many residents at the higher end of the economic spectrum. We are wrestling with wishing to be a strong rural community versus a dormitory suburb of Glasgow but being administered by Stirling – we are on the edge in more ways than one! We have many local families and incomers who have aspired to live here but are likely to have both adults working to fulfil their aspirations. Most of our rented housing has been sold under the Right to Buy and local families find it difficult to continue to live here. We have an urgent need for affordable and particular needs housing. We have a vibrant network of community groups and activities but getting volunteers is always a challenge with the constant threat of groups closing. Priorities for volunteering are likely to centre on children's and sporting activities rather than the Community Council. However if there are major issues our community turns out to public meetings in large numbers (100plus).

The Community Council

Our Community Council has 12 ward based members and we have one vacancy. We have not had a contested election since 2004 (a by election). 3 of our members work the remainder are recently retired. We strive to encourage youth members and are conscious of succession planning. Attendance by the public at our meetings varies from 8 to 20 on a regular basis. We have worked hard to have a high profile in our community to increase participation. We keep residents informed through our website and through a hand delivered monthly newsletter. This is a huge commitment for volunteers. We are active in planning matters (we have green belt to protect) and have our priorities set out in our community action plan produced following a survey and extensive consultation. The plan process was led by Strathblanefield Community Development Trust as part of their business planning process. There is confusion in the minds of our residents as to the roles of both organisations.

Our interaction with Stirling Council

There have been significant successes in influencing Stirling Council for example a puffin crossing and other road improvements. There have also been occasions when changes have been made without consultation for example removing a lay by for parking, moving a bus stop and removal of a flower bed. In general Stirling responds well when asked or lobbied but checking with or advising the community does not appear to be engrained in staff psyche.

