

**Carron Valley Partnership  
Minutes of Meeting 21 June 2007  
FCS office, Hamilton**

**Attending:**

Gillian Barrie (GB)	CSFT
Mike Batley CSF	T
Geoff Brown (GBr)	for Scottish Water
David Russell CVD	G
Richard Barton	CVDG
Angela [REDACTED]	CVDG
Jeremy Thompson	FCS
Rena Tarwinska	FCS
<u>Denis O'Kane</u>	<u>North Lanarkshire Council</u>

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- 1) **Apologies** : Robert Hunter (Stirling Council), John Brinkins (N Lanarkshire Council), Niall Thomson (CVDG)
- 2) **Minutes of previous meeting**  
CVDG sent round an amended set of minutes after reading FCS version sent out by JT. DR said all had seen them and made no comment, and asked again if anyone at the table had an issue with the amended minutes. In the absence of any objections the amended minutes were therefore accepted.
- 3) PID outcome
- 4) Building fire
- 5) Partner Update

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**NLC** – DO'K asked for comments on Paul Masson's report. He reported that the Core Path Network process was progressing, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage due later this year. Access Officer John Duffy keen to get CVDG involved.

**CSFT** – MB talked about Bikebus, a new business offering lifts to cycling sites. Good idea if he went into NL communities to pick up, addressing access to CV for disadvantaged local communities such as Airdrie and Motherwell. RB said the business is in early stages of operation and would probably be willing to operate at various times. Has a calendar of dates & destinations. AW said there is a possibility of funding available (Sportrelief £20k) for making sport accessible for disadvantaged sectors. MB will phone the Bikebus operator. Need mechanism to subsidise users, not the business.

Scottish Water – GBr informed the meeting that new interpretation boards were due to be erected at CV by the end of June and new gates will be installed to replace the locked vehicle access gates near the dam.

**FCS - Vehicle Counter** JT said the vehicle counter now repaired & fitted, so can now get figures including general users, not just mtb trail users. AW asked to see data from the carpark in due course. JT said yes, important to share visitor information with each other.

**Trail Repairs** RB asked about remedial repairs from New Year. JT said damage was not impacting on the safety of the trail, so work programmed to be done in due course. AW pointed out that the trails have been damaged by contractors and as

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such the work required is remediation, not maintenance. RB said RT promised skyline extraction and that damage would be repaired by writing a clause into the contract with the harvesting contractor. Only get action when Jamie [REDACTED] writes in. JT informed the meeting that he was meeting with Jamie [REDACTED] (CVDG resident engineer for the project) on 26 June to review what remedial work needed to be carried out to reinstate the trails to the standard they were at prior to harvesting works.

**Comment:** This sentence doesn't make sense!

**CV Office Fire** JT reported that the FCS Land Agent considered the building repairable, but it needs a new roof, and the back wall rebuilt. FC is self-insured, so costs must come from current budget. RB asked if this was a chance to consider other options. JT said if building pulled down then yes, but if can repair then no. RB suggested expanding building to include other facilities eg shower cubicles as at Drumlanrig, and hose point for bikewash. DR reported that Elspeth English had allegedly said that she was "not a rescue centre for mountain bikers in trouble". Suggested moving the phone box, or putting up signs in carpark giving location of phone box. JT agreed & will also consider one at Andy Gallacher's house, and also the office itself. Also include location of phonebox on map at next print run. DR also raised the point that the reason the building went on fire was because of the amount of rubbish and material left lying around the back of the shed. RT said it had been tidied up and only tree guards were left in that area. DR suggested that in future all rubbish should be cleared away asap and materials be stored away from the building.

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## 6) Funding

HLF – GB & AW sent feedback on meeting with HLF already to partners. Need to focus on Heritage Trail aspect and ignore mtb, before submitting application for £50k. Kelvin Valley group, Kilsyth CC, and Croy Historical Society all keen on Heritage Trail and sending letters of support. They are already looking at themes of water, wood, and natural heritage.

Forward Scotland EJP – outcome known 27.6

Forward Scotland CERS - outcome known 11.7

AW suggested Funding Strategy needed. Does PID address this? JT said project submitted as 3 phases, and funding was being sought towards the 1<sup>st</sup> phase. CSFT will lead on funding & project management. GB suggested incorporating marketing and funding into the Concordat review.

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7) PID. FES Management Board met 11.6, and the CV PID definitely raised but RT & JT not been informed. Awaiting meeting minutes to be agreed for feedback.

AW asked when they would be issued. JT expected them next week (i.e. week commencing 25 June 2007) and the CVP would be informed of the outcome as soon as it was known by JT. MB asked why the delay. JT said FESMB had a lot of other business to consider too. DR asked which version of the PID went to the Board. JT said the version he described at the last meeting. JT advised that the PID would be retained as an internal document and would not be circulated to the partnership. DR complained that CVP had not been sent the version that went to the Board as agreed at the previous meeting. JT said that after the outcome was decided, it would be circulated to all partners. FCS maintains it is an internal document. GB<sub>r</sub> asked for timescale of decision. JT said it was probably already made, or a steer given, but awaiting minutes. RB said the PID developed by the partners was butchered by FCS, and partners should see latest version. JT said the outputs had not changed. Two key issues for FCS, the national picture and the financial impact. Revenue costs of maintenance and running the facility are more relevant than capital. DR wished it noted that May's minutes recorded JT agreeing to send the PID, and once again FCS agreed to do something and it's not happening. GB<sub>r</sub> asked what FCS contribution would be over the lifetime of the facility. JT said capital plus the revenue as landowner, proportionate to the length & type of trail, and wear & tear. GB<sub>r</sub> asked how this was derived and expressed concern that if maintenance costs were estimated as excessively high that this could prevent the PID being agreed by the FESMB. Standard costs? Experience? JT said FCS has good idea of costs, but legislation and best practice ratcheting up costs eg H&S.

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GB<sub>r</sub> asked if project knocked back, could FCS lease area to CVDG for them to manage? JT said not impossible, but not straightforward, with timber and environmental outputs to be generated. If the maintenance is considered to be too high, FCS will not enter into project. One key expense is staff time to manage site. MB said that CSFT Chief Executive Simon Rennie had discussed CV with MB & GB. The issues as he sees it are very much revenue, H&S, and FC staff time. Given choice of investing in Drumchapel or CV, decisions must be made. JT said he's spoken to Michael Wall after the last CVP meeting, and MW said that the PID process is the mechanism by which we get Alan Stevenson's view, instead of AS attending the meetings himself. Subsequent feedback will be the FESMB's view.

AW asked again, if project turned down, is leasing possible. JT said once we get feedback from the board, we can consider the position, possibly look at other options. MB said a chance to monitor and review, can use this period to advantage.

DR asked MB for his view on the current situation regarding the PID, with respect to the fact that as a major partner in the project he is not allowed to see the document that will dictate project timescales, outputs and costs. DR commented that he found the situation incredible. MB questioned whether JT had actually agreed to send the PID out at the last meeting, and DR pointed out that the meeting minutes reflected this, so it must have been said. MB advised he did not wish to get into technicalities and advised that he has worked on project where various factors were uncertain.

#### 5) Media Protocol

JT met FCS Press Officer, and said the protocol should include the need to agree messages to push, and to drip feed stories to increase awareness of the site/project. JT advised that Claire felt it was unlikely that the project would get any national press coverage and that local press was more likely. Need to agree main correspondent for any story, agree changes & circulate to partners before issue. JT suggested CSFT lead on CVP press releases. Still to confirm. JT confirmed that if FCS not leading on a story, does not go on FC website as a news release, however information can be added to the FCS website within the CV section. But for any speculative stories, it's a chance for FCS to promote certain projects/angles, and possibly send the enquiry to DR. Similarly, if an enquiry to DR, send on to JT/RT ie via the Forest District. If any Minister is on FC land, the story has to go via FC Press Office. There are problems if another MSP or another Minister visits FC land. RB advised JT that this was not correct as CVDG had permission from the forestry minister for the sports minister Patricia Ferguson to open the trails in March 2006. DR noted his disappointment at the FCS press officers assertion that national coverage would be unlikely and pointed out that at the original launch made the national press.

#### 6) AOB

- Concordat Review - RB said paras 5 and 5a referred to an annual review meeting, so this due. CVDG feel it is not working. Partners come up with good ideas, but they go into the forestry machine, and now no further forward than a year ago. JT said FC has power of veto, and this unlikely to change. Concordat shows how if partners cannot agree, the majority of partners can make decisions and move forward. It was a mechanism to work out how things happen on the ground. RB said no common goal. CVP sit round table once a month and nothing happens. FC says 'no news'. So not working. JT said we all want something to happen, but need the FCS national picture to be resolved. Planning and funding stages take 2-3yrs, and this may be difficult for CVDG to accept. MB said he's dealt with projects where they met for years before work started. CVP rightly ambitious in October, but we need to accept that the goalposts have shifted. The Concordat was written prior to the PID process, and suggested it needed explaining as part of any Concordat review. Things had changed a lot since October, and all disappointed that no agreement as yet. But still functioning as a group. CVDG bring a lot of ideas to CVP and MB said CVDG are critical to the functioning of the group. DR said they were kept in the dark by FC throughout the process. MB said the PID is an internal FCS document. The process would be helped by better understanding of FCS and other systems. He suggested redrafting of Concordat to include the PID process. RT suggested FCS incorporate PID process into Concordat as a draft for discussion by CVP. DO'K agreed, and suggested reference to the FCS Recreation Strategy and the FCS mtb strategy. JT said the mtb strategy was not published, and would check on status of Recreation Strategy. GBr said Scottish Water had some difficulties with the handling of the project itself, and with the CVP. He appreciated the goalposts

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shifted, but concerned that FCS not communicated this well enough. RB said CVDG had said all along that they were prepared to contribute to maintenance.

- RB said Bikefest feedback all good. CVDG/CV did not get Finest Woodlands Award for community project. Agreement needed with FC about CVDG helping with maintenance. JT reminded them of need to ask beforehand.
- GBr said the access upgrades were due by end June & included new gates and signs. Will install buoys too, but not by end June. He repeated Scottish Water's concerns about lack of information from FCS about PID. There was some uneasiness about the spirit of the CVP. Scottish Water is committed to the CV development, but every partner needs sight of documents affecting to workings of the CVP.
- JT said still to complete branding & signing work. RB concerned at time it was taking. MB said Kelvin Valley groups and Waterways Trust Scotland are developing mutual branding. Good to develop collective promotion of area? Worth talking to them as the final draft develops.
- RT confirmed that the forest road accessing timber from the non-FC land to east of Tak ma Doon road is going ahead. Legal agreement still to be negotiated.
- JT keen to trim desire line along lochside to encourage access by summer visitors. AW asked if Paul Masson been instructed to continue, which would overtake the desire line by a built trail.
- Toilets. Can FCS provide portaloos over the summer. Increasing problem, and with volunteers coming from Glasgow to work, will be needed. JT said a lot of work had been done on the toilets. FC organising the outlet work and the reedbed, and work should start next week.

#### 7) Dates of Next Meetings

RB, DO'K, GB agreed monthly meetings appropriate.

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Wed 25 July  
Thurs 23 August  
Thurs 17 September  
Wed 24 Oct  
Thurs 29.11

All starting 2pm, and at the FCS Hamilton office (*dates booked & confirmed - RT*)  
Any papers to be sent a week in advance.

RT – 27 June 07