

BY JOHN HOLLIDAY

My closing comment in the last edition was: "I look forward to a livelier and more interesting Council than we have had for some time". At first sight it hasn't happened yet. The minutes of meetings indicate a jockeying for position as routine business was gone through and appointments made. One innovation: voting will be recorded on a roll-call basis, i.e. who voted for what rather than just the number of votes.

Remember my list of outstanding problems?

## Keir Street Tennis Courts

Having been short-changed on the provision of proper courts, Bridge of Allan has now to worry about Stirling Council's intentions for their future. Given Labour's habit of building on open spaces despite official policy, there's a danger that an attempt will be made to sell off the courts for development. If this happens there will no doubt be a promise of replacements at some unspecified time and location - which will then be quietly forgotten. All this is speculation, so we can expect indignant denials that any such plans are contemplated.

## Museum Hall

Work on the Museum Hall is proceeding apace. But how is the money from its sale to be handled?

Legally, it has to be spent for the good of Bridge of Allan, but examination of the fine print on any proposals will be necessary. The money has been put under the control of the Provost's Panel, a Stirling Council organisation containing no permanent representatives from the village and only allowing the presence of a Bridge of Allan councillor when this issue is discussed. There are several dangers here.

Our councillor (three of our four councillors do not live in Bridge of Allan) may not see the papers until shortly before the meeting and will have no time to consider the proposals properly. Attempts may be made (not necessarily knowingly) to use the money for projects which properly come under the remit of the Council and should be funded from existing taxation.

There is a risk that the money may be frittered away rather than be spent on a major project for Bridge of Allan. The Community Council will be keeping a close watch to see this does not happen. I am glad it's continuing to press the option of a Trust to administer this money, but Stirling Council is unlikely to let control slip from its hands. The public should continue to lobby for this. It's our money, after all.

## Public Toilets

Since January 2007, silence. Then "no decision has been made on the future of the toilets". When the original closure occurred I pointed out that Bridge of Allan was a tourist destination and the season would be upon us the following April. But a year later and still nothing has been done. The temporary portaloos are still there and have been extended slightly. This could be ominous. The news that structural engineers can come to no firm conclusion on the state of the building raises eyebrows. Good on the Community Council for planning an independent survey and the public-spirited individual who has volunteered his services.

## What the Executive Is Up To

Studying the papers for the Executive on Stirling Council, I found some interesting items (see below) of concern to Bridge of Allan.

## Review of Education Provision

This paper adds two new schools to the list of those prioritised for refurbishment. I am suspicious that no full list is included, so our primary school is not mentioned, though it was supposed to be a top priority.

## Management of Flooding

In summary, the proposals are to create two engineering hydrologist posts and ask the Scottish Executive to pay for as much of the cost as possible. The Council is required to keep an eye on watercourses and assess their possible contribution to flooding; maintain their efficiency,

especially where this would substantially reduce the likelihood of flooding; publish a biennial report of flood occurrences and flood prevention works; and promote improvement schemes. Priorities are recommended. One is the establishment of four automated monitoring stations at four 'at risk' locations, which include Bridge of Allan. These might automatically advise the owners of identified 'at risk' properties via text messages, which sounds a good idea.

## Winter Service Policy and Level of Service 2007/08

The usual battle over gritting etc is about to begin. Global warming means that we should have less need to combat ice and snow and more need to combat floods. As we still expect 'marginal temperatures,' i.e. those around 0°C, we still need to grit the roads. The allocated budget remains at £1.045m, as for the previous three years.

## Link Road

I have no recent information on this, unfortunately. However, the Community Council is vigorously fighting the proposal. I recommend you attend their meetings on the third Tuesday in every month at 7.30 pm and support their efforts. Also, ask our four councillors and our new MSP to keep this issue at the top of their agendas. Or how about a petition to our new First Minister, demanding independence from Stirling for Bridge of Allan?

## Clive Ramsay Brucefields Family Golf Centre

### clive's christmas lunch menu

classic vegetable soup served with organic bread  
home made chicken liver pâté with melba toast and chutney  
salar hot roast salmon served on a large blini with a fine herb salad

traditional turkey & trimmings  
fillet of salmon with watercress sauce french beans and crushed new potatoes  
sirloin steak with gratin dauphinois and mushroom sauce  
funky vegetarian roast

pear and almond tart with cinnamon ice cream  
xmas pudding  
dark chocolate gateau with extra thick cream

tea / coffee served with tablet

£17.50

The task of organising a Christmas party is never an easy one. As a thank you for your hard work Clive is willing to offer the named organiser a meal for 2\* for introducing parties of 10 or more dining from the Christmas menu. This gift is available to all parties booking before the 31st December. So book now and don't miss out.

\*Terms and conditions: Meal for two to the value of £30 including food and drinks. Meal must be redeemed before 31st January 2008, Sun to Thu only, booking essential.

### clive's christmas evening menu

canapés on arrival

classic vegetable soup served with organic bread  
home made chicken liver pâté with melba toast and chutney  
salar hot roast salmon served on a large blini with a fine herb salad

mango sorbet

traditional turkey & trimmings  
fillet of salmon with watercress sauce, french beans and crushed new potatoes  
sirloin steak with gratin dauphinois and mushroom sauce  
funky vegetarian roast

pear and almond tart with cinnamon ice cream  
xmas pudding  
dark chocolate gateau with extra thick cream

clive's cheese plate

tea / coffee served with tablet

clive's choice of port

£25.00

Bookings from 3rd December to 31st December  
Closed 25th & 26th December and 1st & 2nd January  
Telephone :- 01786 818805, Fax :- 01786 833903  
Email :- clive@cliveramsay.com