

## **Mount Blair Community Council Public Meeting**

Held in the Session House, Kirkmichael on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2013

Present: Tony Thompson - Chair, (TT) Andrew Duncan - Vice Chair (AD), Bernard Noonan (BN), John Manning (JM), Robert Brawn (RB)

Apologies: none

In attendance: Sandra Burgess – Police (SB), Cllr Bob Ellis (BE), Cllr Caroline Shiers (CS), Scott Symon - Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SS) and 6 members of the public

### **1. Welcome & Apologies**

None

### **2. Minutes of 2012 AGM**

AD proposed minutes of previous meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013. BN seconded.

### **3. Matters arising**

None

### **4. Report from the Chair**

Nothing to report

### **5. Report from the Secretary**

Nothing to report

### **6. Report from the Treasurer**

Opening balance on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 at £1585.44, plus a grant of £2400. 5 micro grants awarded so far this financial year.

### **7. Notice of changing standing orders - abandoning area representation**

A discussion was had regarding the importance of keeping the local areas represented by local people, with the Straloch and Blacklunans positions being currently vacant. CS suggested that each of the 5 areas be itemised in the minutes of each meeting to encourage volunteers for the aforementioned vacant positions. It was agreed that the panel trials abandoning the sub areas.

### **8a. Community Police Report**

SB stated she sent PM information regarding improving security to prevent fuel thefts for onward distribution through newsgroup. A cannabis cultivation was discovered in the area, however there has not been any other reported crimes in the area since last meeting. SB drew attention to counterfeit currency being used in Blairgowrie, namely Scottish £20 notes being most common.

Following up from previous meetings, SB and other members of the police have been monitoring Bridge of Cally, SB confirmed the problem. Highest speed recorded was 45mph in the 30mph zone with peak times being between 4.30pm and 6.30pm on week nights. The education and warning periods have been completed; persons detected exceeding the prescribed speed limit will be dealt with by means of Conditional Offer or other such appropriate means. SB also drew attention to the fact that most persons detected exceeding the prescribed speed limits were local residents.

SB was pleased to report that we have been experiencing the lowest crime rate in 35-37 years and that affords Police greater time for foot patrols, vehicle patrols and greater involvement within the community.

There was an initiative on bogus callers type scams in the last 4-6 weeks, with lots of work being done about this. 'No cold callers' stickers and leaflets were given to PM for distribution.

Following discussions at the last meeting, SB was pleased to report that all the mileage numbers for the Blairgowrie Gate Closure sign have been located and secured within the signage box ready for use.

SB told the panel that she was being transferred to Pitlochry area, with her last shift being on Saturday 18 May. Andrew Watt, who currently works in Blairgowrie will be taking on SB's community Policing role in the area, and will also take over Glenwatch.

A discussion was had about the speeds of motorcyclists in the area.

The question was asked about the school signs by the Straloch Primary School, and when they will be taken down. Pending the building being put up for sale.

The panel gave thanks to SB for all her hard work.

Scott Symon represents the fire service responsible for Blairgowrie and surrounding areas will be attending local community councils. Kirkmichael Fire Station has responded to 18 calls with and added 17 home fire safety visits in the area. SS will be working with local business to reduce calls from fire alarms being set off accidentally. SS said that all homes that have had fire safety visits are recorded and alarms flagged up for renewal. The fire service also uses this data to record risk areas during bad weather, as long as the householder agrees we can share their information with relevant local authority partners. This information can then be used to identify vulnerable persons with adverse weather being an example of when a list of vulnerable people could be used to prioritise actions. However not all houses in the area have had these surveys done.

#### **8b. Possibility of extending Glenwatch**

TT said that Glenshee Glenwatch has been very successful, and suggested moving it through to other areas. A separate contact list for each area would be best, as one list would be too lengthy. Possibility of a micro grant for making some Glenwatch signs.

#### **9. Broadband update**

A discussion took place regarding the upgrade of Broadband in Mount Blair as part of the Scottish Governments overall improvement of Broadband in Rural Scotland. A minimum of 20 Mb is the target for all but it seems that because of the geographic situation and population of some areas within Mount Blair a speed of only 2Mb will be achievable. The successful tender for the works will be announced in June/July when a better idea on how this will impact on Mount Blair will be known. Outwith this project BT are about to upgrade the town to fibre optics.

#### **10a. Perth and Kinross Maintenance Review**

##### **10b. Maintenance of public areas**

TT expressed concern that these things will be further abandoned, had a discussion with BE regarding which areas are PKC's responsibility. BE said Blairgowrie will be largely affected, many areas only being cut once a year. The more cuts each local authority makes, the more time/money it will take to get the maintenance back up to a good standard. AD said that the council used to look after the memorial steps, but now those are being stopped. BE spoke to council and asked for the councils to pass on their budgets to local councils to enable them to take care of their own areas, but to no avail. TT asked if we should be appealing. BE said that other areas are taking equal cuts. AD said at the very least the war memorials should still be maintained, as tribute to those who gave their lives. TT suggested we explore looking after the area ourselves and asked what areas are maintained by the council? What cash is allocated to this? BE will look into it.

##### **10c. Tree Preservation order – Oakbank**

JM spoke to Richard Brough, who is well acquainted to this particular issue. The owner of the trees wants to keep the trees, and it isn't an issue of TPO, Richard made an aside that the real problem was that a house had been built within 30 meters of the trees, and planning permission should not have been granted. The council ought to look at the development plan that land is suitable for building on. TT asked if the trees need to come down? AD said if a TPO is passed then you still have to look after the trees. JM said further discussion with Richard Brough is needed, as it's not a suitable situation for a TPO.

#### **11. Report of progress of construction work on A93 at Lair**

TT said the Lair Construction work has been postponed to 1<sup>st</sup> July. Tender yet to be named. Provisional work has started, but should still finish by the end of the year.

#### **12. All weather sports court – KPS**

Kath Booth not present. AD said the Bingo night at Ballintuim raised £1107.50 to go towards resurfacing the sports court. The Youth Club have been using it for a few weeks, large patches of leaves were around the edges which needed clearing, used to be done by the community. The leaves have since been cleared and the surface is much better. BE said he had been communicating with Sue Smith, who suggested forming a group to look after sports activities in the area.

#### **13. MBCDT Report**

JM said that there's activity on the different focus areas, one of which is working with forestry commission in Kindrogen, the archive project has an open day on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, which has been quite successful. Richard Stratton is the archive officer.

#### **14. Reports from Councillors**

BE brought up the landslip on the A93 south of BOC, saying that it's in quite a dangerous situation. BE spoke to officers about repair timescale, but are awaiting technical approval as well as trying to find funding. Traffic lights will be remaining for a while, as a date for repair has not been set. PM asked if the council know that the side the traffic is on is the side the water is collecting. BE said yes, they've got engineers looking at the whole thing. The problem is the drainage.

Devil's Elbow on Invercauld Estate. BE was at a meeting with a Cairngorm National Park Officer, PKC officer, GTA and members of MBCDT. Permission from the landowner has been obtained, but funding needs to be raised for works. BE has been meeting with local businesses to get a tractor through to level the ground and are discussing putting in two big boulders on either side to stop larger vehicles going in.

Yomp numbers hope to reach 500, the CATERAN Trail is the first trail in Europe to have geocaching, which should bring in a further head count of 1000. MBCDT and others are looking at putting in a car park just beyond the gate. Loch Mharaich needs lots of attention, but have been having very positive meetings regarding this. Looking at developing a walk with easily maintained signs to be erected, awaiting a signed agreement with forestry commission. Forms nearly completed.

AD said regarding laybys if you open up laybys there will be fly tipping. BE said it will up to the group to continue with maintenance. BE trying to make the glen road between Blair and Braemar more of a scenic area for tourists to stop in. Layby in Ballintuim could be reused. Laybys on the road to Pitlochry look awful for the litter, BE noted.

CS said road officers are working on traffic management on the bottom road into Rattray. The book festival is progressing, and Air ambulance is due to be launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. CEO Gavin Davey is keen to come out and talk to locals about a quicker route to Perth/Dundee hospitals. There currently isn't an AA for this area, but there is search and rescue.

#### **15. Area Reports**

AD said that the Bannerfield car park needs maintenance, BE has been chasing the council. Dounie Bridge is in dreadful state. Traffic lights at Raharley, road is dreadful. Regarding the field by Sillerburn Road, a conversation was had with the owner. JM an article 4 could help the situation, in the power of planning department.

JM said that the Dirnanean Garden opens on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

BN Council is sorting out the drainage and will resurface the road at the next financial year. BN said the BOC post office and Corriefodly bank is bulging. BE said the council is aware and investigating. Will be re-tar and chip from Cally lodge to BOC. BN the pothole repairs keep needing to be redone, and the snow plough last winter was driving the plough quite high off the ground, wasn't clearing the snow adequately. AD agreed that the road wasn't well kept this winter compared to other years.

PM read about night time gritting in Auchterarder area, and asked if that would affect our day time gritting? BN asked if the council could repair the telephone exchange at BOC?

RB nothing to report

TT nothing to report

PM said she had noticed along the graveyard wall someone has moved the branches onto the banking, but further along there's a tree that's fallen; will soon fall into the graveyard. AD will have a look.

#### **16. AOCB**

Hercules crash anniversary 27<sup>th</sup> May (bank holiday Monday), there will be a walk to the crash site and anyone welcome to join.

#### **17. Date of next meeting -9<sup>th</sup> Sept 2013**