

MOUNT BLAIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING

Draft Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the 35th Session of Mount Blair Community Council held in the Session House, Kirkmichael on Monday 13th February 2012

Present: Doreen McIntyre (DM) (Chair), Tony Thompson (TT), Bernard Noonan (BN), Cllr Bob Ellis (BE), Cllr Liz Grant (EG) Cllr Caroline Shiers (CS), Sally Fenner (SF), John Manning (JM)

Apologies: Andrew Duncan (AD) (Vice Chair)

In attendance: Constable Sandra Burgess (Tayside Police), Lynn Moore (Admin), 2 Members of public

1. **Welcome and Apologies:**

DM welcomed everyone and apologies were noted as above. DM advised that nomination forms had been required to complete the requirements for co-opting new Community Council Members at the last meeting. These forms had now been duly processed and Sally Fenner and John Manning were formally co-opted from this evening's meeting.

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:**

Bernard Noonan proposed the minutes as an accurate record of the last meeting and this was seconded by Tony Thompson

3. **Matters Arising:**

Broadband – Councillors Shiers had copied correspondence from Perth and Kinross Council to Tony Thompson on this issue and advised that it would continue to be brought to the attention of the Scottish Parliament. Councillor Grant advised that work was being done locally on a broadband plan which would help to deliver on the Scottish Government's vision. This would include provision of better access to online education and skills support, public sector mobile and flexible working and the delivery of tele-health. An overall picture of current coverage had already been developed which identified numbers of residential and business users in each area, as well as slow spots. The final plan will include further details on funding, customer and community engagement as well as more details on timescales. Councillor Grant also advised of £75,000 funding which would be available next year for technical support to help finalise the funding package and for a digital participation campaign to help raise awareness with local communities and businesses. It was noted that Perth and Kinross Council was working to obtain a share of the funding. TT noted that he would still encourage individuals to write to MSPs regarding the local broadband issues and that he had written to Alex Neil MSP himself. An update on this item will be given at the next meeting.

Council Run Services Which Could Be Run And Sourced Locally – DM suggested that perhaps grass and verge cutting could be organised locally. However, it was pointed out that any locally run service would require to be Health and Safety compliant. Note was also taken of potential issues around maintenance of path networks as this is currently not a council run service. BE and DM undertook to meet to discuss this further.

Recycling Issues (update) – BE advised that, to his knowledge, most of the issues around recycling had been resolved. A question was raised about whether or not it would be possible to obtain stickers stating "No Glass" which could be put on the smaller bins for the benefit of visitors. BE confirmed that he would look into this matter.

Mount Blair Community Development Trust – JM spoke of the Trust's application for funding to facilitate a Community Consultation. JM also provided an update on the application for funding of the Archive Project. The initial application for the full amount had been unsuccessful and he advised that partial funding would now be sought from Heritage Lottery and Drumderg Community Development Fund.

Paths Network Report - BE updated those present with regard to the proposed extension to the CATERAN Trail from Enochdhu to Pitlochry. The identification of the route was almost complete and the progression of this extension was looking hopeful. With regard to the maintenance of the CATERAN Trail, as it exists at the moment, BE spoke of areas that are in need of specific attention including work to be done on the Lunch Hut. BE went on to provide an update on this year's CATERAN YOMP, which he had promoted recently in London, and which already has 300 participants registered. It is hoped that this number will reach 500. He also advised that local hotel and B & B accommodation would be in demand with some places already fully booked. The Pictish Way which was spoken about at the last meeting had now secured funding for a Consultant and it is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of walkers visiting the Kirkmichael area.

30 mph proposals for Kirkmichael, Ballintuim and Bridge of Cally – Notices had been seen attached to posts in these areas and these were understood to be part of the notification process prior to signage being put in place. Concern was raised that the potential danger to road users in Bridge of Cally was increased due to the

number of visitors to the Ski Centre at this time of year. It was pointed out that local people know to be aware of large vehicles straying into the middle of the road on corners but that visitors would be unaware of this and at least signs warning of this would go some way to addressing this hazard. Cllr Grant acknowledged that this issue had been ongoing for some time but pointed out that it had to go through the necessary Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) process. Cllr Grant would continue to follow up on this issue with PKC.

Discussion then went on to vehicles speeding through the villages. DM raised a question on behalf of a resident about whether or not "Sleeping Policemen" could be utilised to slow down traffic. It was noted that these would be unlikely to be implemented as they would impede emergency response vehicles. Cllr Grant spoke of the pros and cons of rumble strips which can be effective but are also noisy for properties close to them. It was pointed out that sometimes the speed of a passing vehicle from a pedestrian or resident's point of view can be perceived as being faster than it actually is and Constable Burgess volunteered to target areas of concern with the "speed gun" to verify the speed of passing vehicles. Discussion moved on to the Debate to take speed down to 20 mph in some places, currently under discussion in the Scottish Parliament. BE suggested that Councillors could raise this at their next Traffic Meeting.

James Small Memorial – There was nothing further to report on this matter.

New Plaque for the Church Wall – After some discussion, it was noted that Netherton Church memorials and tomb stones would be retained.

4. Report from the Community Police:

Constable Sandra Burgess (SB) advised that crime was at its lowest level for years. With the exception of a theft of fuel and a house breaking in Bridge of Cally (both of which were undetected), there was little to report. Constable Burgess wished to remind the Community to be vigilant and to report any suspicious activity to the Police. With regard to fuel theft, it was noted that thefts were more likely to occur within one week of storage tanks being refilled and, again, vigilance was advised. SB also warned of potential bogus workmen, metal thefts (metal from gardens), cable thefts and cold callers (particularly telephone callers). The advice given was never to give out bank details and to report any incidents immediately to the Police. SB went on to explain that the only other incidents in the area had been a few road traffic incidents, only one of which had resulted in various road traffic offences being reported. In addition, SB spoke of staffing changes at Blairgowrie and confirmed that she would remain there. Finally, SB wished to remind everyone that she holds Surgeries in Kirkmichael and Glenshee, details of which can be found on the Police website as well as the Glens and Tayside Community websites. In addition, she will soon be providing updates through Facebook and Twitter.

Community Watch – TT advised that he had contacted everyone on the previous list to ensure that they wished to be included in the new Community Watch. The new list had now been agreed, subject to discussion with Tayside Police and TT and Constable Burgess undertook to meet to discuss the various options for the implementation of the system.

5. Road Improvement on A93 (The Hutt/Dalhenzean Farm)

TT explained that, last year, a problem with a rock on the road at the Hutt had been highlighted. Mike Purdie had looked into this matter and it had now passed to TT. It had been anticipated that the issue would be resolved in July 2011 but it was still causing incidents with cars. TT advised that he had been in contact with Brian Main (BM) to assess the current situation and was awaiting a reply. TT would contact BM again and also Douglas Kent, Area Roads Engineer in Blairgowrie. TT will progress this matter and update at the next meeting.

6. Report from the Chair & Secretary's Report

DM advised that there was nothing to report from the Chair. However, DM was, again, undertaking the post of Secretary and in this capacity, she highlighted the proposed Local Development Plan. DM noted that news of this had been in the Courier on today's date and she provided some printed information for those present to view and advised that further information would be available on the Community Website.

7. Treasurer's Report

TT reported as follows:-

- Main account stands at £650.41
- Microgrant stands at £1449.45

Discussion took place on Microgrant awareness and it was felt that there was general awareness that this funding was available. It had been featured in Across the Glens and on the Community Website for a few years now and all information on grants over £250 was put on the website.

8. Councillor's Report(s)

Cllr E Grant – Cllr Grant spoke of the A93/B951 Junction improvement north of Blairgowrie at the Lair Bridge. There had been a previous plan to re-align the Lair Road immediately after the completion of the Craighall bypass road but, due to delays in commencing the works, the original plan became unaffordable. Cllr Grant asked the Roads Officers to re-visit this issue last year and a new proposal was accepted by committee last month. It has now been decided and approved by Council that a 280 metre section of the A93 and 100 metres section of the B951 at Lair Bridge will incorporate replacements for Lair and Cray bridges. The proposed cost of this is £2.566m. The timescale is likely to be 2013 at the earliest as there is a great deal of preparatory work to be done. Cllr Grant then went on to mention the proposed Windfarm which was still in the early planning stages.

Cllr C Shiers - Cllr Shiers had nothing to report other than having received a lot of communication around the proposed Windfarm, discussed at the last meeting.

Cllr B Ellis – Cllr Ellis advised that Perthshire Archeology from 18th – 30th June to assist with a project involving an early medieval building at a site at the Lair near Glenshee pottery. Petrina Menzies will disseminate information on this via the website . BE noted that there will also be more geocaching in the area and, therefore, an increase in the numbers of visitors looking for accommodation.

9. Area Reports

JM enquired about whether there would be any concerted celebrations to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. He had received information about the lighting of beacons on 4th June 2012 and wondered if this would be considered for the Mount Blair area. BE and CS advised that there would be some events going on around Wellmeadow and Rattray areas. However, nobody was aware of any plans to light beacons and it was agreed that this would be a good idea. A suggestion was made that the top of the middle ridge on Ben Earn would be a suitable location and it could also provide an opportunity to raise funds for charity. JM also noted that there were flashing lights still operational at Straloch School and that these should now be switched off. EG will look into this.

SF noted that part of the bridge at Bridge of Cally had been repaired 4 weeks ago and since then no further repair work had taken place. The drains on the bridge were now felt to be posing a potential danger and EG volunteered to follow up on the programme of repairs. It was also pointed out that there were a great many potholes remaining on the surface of the A93. BE advised that there were ongoing resurfacing repair works being carried out.

BN advised that there was still an issue with the bin not being emptied at the Post Office. He also mentioned an issue with a wall on the A924 approximately 100 yards from the Post Office in Bridge of Cally which had been monitored by means of a monitoring stick. The structure of the wall had deteriorated and had resulted in the monitoring stick becoming detached. EG would look into this matter. BN went on to highlight a number of potholes in the stretch of road by Steps of Cally.

It was noted that Kirkmichael shop had been successful in obtaining an award from Scottish Countryside Alliance for shops and post offices for the whole of Scotland and was now going forward for UK nomination.

Concern was raised about road gritting during the winter and, in particular, the A924 which had not been good this winter. BE would follow up on this with Tayside Contracts as it is a school route. DM suggested that road gritting could be discussed under locally sourced services and BE agreed, suggesting farmers with fertiliser spreaders could be asked to assist with salt spreading in the future.

10. **AOCB** - There was no other competent business raised for discussion.

11. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting will take place on **Monday 14th May 2012** at 7pm in the Session House, Kirkmichael. All welcome to attend.