

MOUNT BLAIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING

Draft Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 34th Session of Mount Blair Community Council
held in the Session House, Kirkmichael on Monday 21st February 2011

Present: Andrew Duncan (Chair), Mike Purdie (Treasurer), Sally Fenner, Cllr Elizabeth Grant,
Cllr Caroline Shiers, Cllr Bob Ellis, Donald Michie, Fiona Calvin, Susan Scott
and 5 public members

Apologies: Doreen MacIntyre

In attendance: Constable Carol Cameron (Tayside Police)

1. A Duncan welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were recorded.
2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** Proposed by MP and seconded by FC, the draft Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

3. **Matters Arising**

New Guidelines for Community Councils (update) – Cllr Grant noted this would be raised at a council meeting imminently. AD confirmed nothing further to report at present.

James Small Memorial (update) – It was previously recommended that a letter of thanks be forwarded to Perth & Kinross Council (PKC) however highlighted that no Secretary was currently in place on the Community Council. Cllr Grant indicated that a monument would be listed via Historic Scotland (rather than PKC) however offered to follow-up directly with the Conservation Officer and formally advise of this outcome.

Broadband Enabling Technology (update) – MP confirmed no upgrades had taken place on local exchanges. It was stated that a further initiative had been undertaken by PKC without success. A discussion followed on download issues experienced by some members of the public. It was recommended that individuals report issues directly to the exchange provider. Cllr Shiers offered to work in collaboration with individuals to take forward upgrade works required (with the backing and support of the Community Council and councillors).

Council Run Services which could be run and sourced locally – A discussion followed on possible areas where locally sourced services could be offered to the Council as a more economical option e.g. grass cutting and road gritting. It was also suggested that individuals with local knowledge and interest might prove the most suitable. Following a recent review and government budget cuts, BE confirmed PKC were now aware of where short falls lie. In order to progress, it was proposed that a notice be placed in *Across the Glens* inviting the community to offer practical suggestions and identify potential opportunities (BE stated the next council deadline is July). It was stated that services such as tree-felling and grass verge cutting require certain certificates to be in place, and on this basis may not be suitable options. **It was noted that Minutes of this meeting will be available in the public domain for the community to put forward ideas.** BE offered to assist AD in taking forward.

Concerns surrounding snow clearing (particularly school run routes) were also discussed. It was noted that local farmers have assisted on a voluntary basis in the past, however understood this was not always achievable due to time constraints and resources. Cllr Grant proposed to review the 'school run' and snow clearing appliances available.

Recycling Issues (update) – It was noted that BE followed-up with Lucy Garthwaite (Environmental Health, PKC) who advised she would review the situation personally. Awaiting response. BE to update at next meeting.

Glenshee Signage (update) – Following on from public objections, and concerns raised by the Cairngorm National Park (CNP), it was stated that the PKC Enforcement Officer had removed illegally placed roadside signage. It was noted that PKC have written to offenders stating that the council will remove any further unauthorised signs and members of the public were asked to report any contraventions to Cllr Shiers. It is anticipated that the Council will work together with the CNP to look at the introduction of official signage.

A member of the public noted signage which looked to be posing potential danger to motorists by blocking the view of a junction. AD recommended that any hazards be reported directly to the Roads Dept immediately.

4. **Tayside Police Report**

AD welcomed Constable Carol Cameron to the meeting. The following update was provided as follows:

- Several instances of hare coursing were reported. A note was made that persons involved in poaching activities can often be very aggressive if challenged.
- Heating fuel (specifically oil) thefts are in operation. Members of the public were asked to report any suspicious activity directly to the Police.

Constable Cameron noted some car vandalism instances during December 2010, and an assault within the Spittal of Glenshee detected during January 2011. To date, there have been no further local crimes reported.

A summary of the **Transforming Tayside Project** was provided. This initiative has been introduced to establish the best way that the Force can balance the financial demands with the needs of its communities. Constable Cameron stated that it is proposed non-essential roles would be trimmed back, emphasizing if a police officer is required for policing reasons, there will be one available. Comments and suggestions are welcomed, and more information is available on www.tayside.police.uk/About-Us

Message in a Wallet Scheme – Constable Cameron advised this is a voluntary emergency information scheme. The scheme provides Emergency Services Staff with vital details of any illness or allergy and contact as a result of sudden illness or accident. The personal details are stored in a plastic wallet, stored in your wallet/handbag. Small stickers on the wallet, unique to the scheme are known to Emergency Services and other caring agencies. **For further info, Tel. 01738 473146 or to obtain a ‘message in a wallet’ contact Lesley McDonald Tel. 01738 892642.**

Possible re-introduction of the Glenwatch system – Constable Cameron was not aware of this previous initiative and a history of the *Glenwatch* community alert system was provided; an in-depth discussion ensued. It is believed that Tayside Police previously expressed their wish not to re-instate this facility (it is understood *Glenwatch* previously ran by informal arrangement with the community police). A member of the public confirmed a contacts list was still in existence but stated that Tayside Police would be required to originate any alert (with cascading system thereafter in place to ‘spread the word’ across the community, by the community).

Cllr Shiers agreed to follow-up with the Inspector of Tayside Police and ascertain any plan to replace the unsuccessful VIP Informer System. It is proposed to approach Tayside Police with a view to restoring a simple phone alert system, seeking the support and involvement of the community police if agreeable.

Separately, it was recommended that membership of a local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (as a neighbourhood rather than on a Community Council basis) be considered as an option for members.

5. **The failure of the road dressing on A924 between Kirkmichael and Cally House:** AD referred to an email received from Douglas Kent (Area Roads Engineer, PKC) dated 21/2/11. Following AD’s previous call, the response offered a detailed outline of the surface dressing process as well as explanation on why failures might occur. Mr Kent confirmed the contractor (Tayside Contracts) are currently investigating the situation and indicated that remedial work on the failed sections will be carried out during May, at the earliest. AD noted that the road will be swept to remove loose chippings in the meantime. Similar instances have been witnessed around Tayside, and anyone who considers that sweeping is required was encouraged to contact the PKC Blairgowrie Office directly on 01250 874661. Cllr Shiers noted she would follow-up with Tayside Contracts. BE offered to follow-up with Willie Mahoney (Roads Dept) with a view to a sweeper being put in place until weather conditions improve and a more permanent fix can be carried out.

It was stated that individuals with damaged vehicles, as a direct result of the failed surface dressings, are in the process of making compensation claims.

6. **Mount Blair Community Development Trust (MBCDT):** MP stated a letter was sent out from Doreen MacIntyre (Sept 2010) to notify residents of the intention to set-up the MBCDT. The not for profit, Company Limited by Guarantee, was legally incorporated on 24th January 2011 *to improve the quality of life for all sectors of the community – living, working or visiting the Mount Blair area.* MP outlined the free membership criteria open to all (Full/Associate/Junior categories) and provided a summary of the Trust and Interim Board of Directors. It was noted the MBCDT, during its 1st year of operation, intends to seek grant funding to carry out a comprehensive community consultation exercise to understand community needs and aspirations. The MBCDT also intends to undertake an Archiving Project to catalogue all archive materials telling the story of the community past and present. MP confirmed further detailed correspondence is planned in the near future.

7. **Cateran Yomp (update) – 25th/26th June 2011:** BE provided an update of the event outlining the route, costs, organisers and charity details. Information on this event will be communicated in *Across the Glens*. Early intimations project around 500 participants and it is envisaged accomm. businesses will be predominately full during this period (a large influx of people are also expected to visit the Trail and local facilities in advance). BE stated that *wear and tear* following the event will be 'made good' by Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust. Promotional posters were distributed. Tel. 0845 504 6616 for more info, or visit www.soldierscharity.org/yomp
- It was suggested that local individuals/businesses be contracted, or offered the opportunity to tender, for repairs in due course. It was highlighted that the Cateran Trail was designed to benefit the local economy and this has already been intimated to the event organisers. BE confirmed that a list does exist and local people appointed as much as possible. It was suggested that any new businesses make themselves known to Cllr Ellis.
8. **Report from the Chair & Secretary's Report** Nothing to report.
9. **Treasurer's Report** – Figures were summarised figures from 2 accounts as at 21st February 2011.
- It was stated that the Main Account had an opening balance of £1,864 and following 2 payments out the Current Balance at £1,715 (MP highlighted £1,037 of this was 'Committed Funds'). It was reported the Drumderg Micro Fund Account had an opening balance of £943 with current balance of £773 – Committed Funds showed the available net result of £354.
- MP confirmed the imminent end of accounting period at 31st March and requested that all outstanding expenses from council members were forwarded before this time.
10. **Councillor's Report(s) –**
- Councillor Caroline Shiers
It was noted the stART festival will take place on Saturday 4th June (community arts festival). Attention was drawn to a photography competition also taking place as part of the events.
- Councillor Elizabeth Grant
A summary of the history of the 'mothballed' Strone of Cally Primary School was provided. It was stated that this had gone to committee and appraisal carried out by officers with the recommendation that the school be closed. It was noted the next stage of the process is community consultation and meetings scheduled imminently (in Kirkmichael and Bridge of Cally). Following consultation, details will be submitted to the HM Inspectors of Schools who will make the recommendation back to council and a decision taken thereafter.
- Councillor Bob Ellis
BE noted that a meeting has been scheduled at the end of March between Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust, Councillor Kate Howie (Highland) and the Cairngorm National Park to review path & access situations now that the Cateran Trail forms part of the National Park boundary.
11. **Area Reports**
- Kirkmichael – AD highlighted that it was previously reported a levy would be paid to the community on tonnage for produce out of the Quarry when operating again at Wester Bleaton. It was suggested that the previous Minutes (from 4 years ago) be reviewed and a reminder prompt made accordingly.
- AD noted that local rhododendron bushes required cutting back. Cllr Grant recommended that council officers be contacted who would in turn advise the owner.
12. **AOCB**
- AD confirmed the next meeting will be the AGM whereby all members would stand down and a re-election would follow. It was proposed that notices be officially placed in local press asking for people to be nominated and highlighted that if more than required number of area representatives, a ballot would take place. AD agreed to seek advice from Brenda Lachie to ensure processes were followed accurately.
- A member of the public raised concerns about street lights being on all evening (and through summer period). Although useful to some it was also seen as causing light pollution.
- It was suggested that the school 20 mph/flashing signs be switched off until such time a decision is reached.
13. **Next Meeting** – It was noted the next meeting will be the AGM and 1st meeting of the new session will take place on **Monday 9th May 2011** (2nd Monday) at 7pm. All welcome to attend.