

**Mount Blair Community Council
Public Meeting
7.00pm on 25 August 2014 in Kirkmichael Session House**

Present: Andrew Duncan (Vice Chair), Robert Brawn, Bernard Noonan, John Manning, Cllr Liz Grant

Apologies: Tony Thompson, Cllrs Caroline Shiers & Bob Ellis

In attendance: 14 members of the public

1	Welcome and apologies	
2	Minutes of 12 May 2014 Public Meeting Proposed by Robert Brawn. Seconded by John Manning	
3	Matters arising None	
4	Report of the Chair None	
5	<p>Report of the Secretary</p> <p>Thanks to Antonia Malcolm for taking Minutes in the absence of Jenny Brayshaw who gave birth, on 19 August, to a baby boy.</p> <p>Email received from John McKenzie (Traffic/Network P&K) regarding road closures between Bridge of Cally and Rochallie from 30 September – 10 October between 9.00am and 4.00pm. School buses will be able to get through. Official diversion via Dunkeld Road/Pitlochry.</p> <p>Scottish Rural Parliament event on 26 August to raise awareness of the Parliament and its collective vision. Other events at Gateway on 6 September and Birnam on 13 September.</p> <p>Email received from Diane Cassidy regarding training for CCs in planning issues.</p> <p>Email received from Wendy Symington (Police Scotland). There has been little crime. Contacts: PC Patrick.donnelly@scotland.pnn.police.uk or Sgt Karen.harrison@scotland.pnn.police.uk</p> <p>Email received from Crawford Taylor (Scottish Woodlands) regarding the extraction proposal at Tullochcurran Wood. To be discussed further.</p> <p>Email received about “Avec”, which is looking for projects for offenders to carry out free of charge. It was generally agreed that they do good work.</p>	
6	<p>Report of Treasurer</p> <p>Robert Brawn (RB) reported that the balances were as follows: Main account: £ 586.40 Drumderg: £1,387.79 One recent application was successful and has been taken into account in the</p>	

	above figure.	
7	<p>Police report</p> <p>Disappointment was voiced that no representative from the Police had attended, particularly in light of the new Police set-up. Local policing has not been helped by the numerous changes and problems that have arisen as a result of the new set-up. Agreed to ensure that the Police are represented at the next meeting.</p>	AD
8	<p>Broadband updates</p> <p>It was reported that Tony Thompson (TT) was still pushing for super-fast broadband in Glenshee.</p> <p>There have been a lot of problems recently with very slow speeds, although the main response from BT appears to be that it must be the fault of the owners' equipment.</p> <p>Everyone encouraged to continue to monitor this.</p>	
9	<p>Access for timber extraction at Tullochcurran Wood</p> <p>A meeting had been arranged between Crawford Taylor, the Forestry Commission (FCS) and TT and, although Mr Taylor declined to attend, the meeting went ahead. Discussion continues about the extraction via Williamston and past the school.</p> <p>Williamston residents have been advised to contact their own legal representatives.</p> <p>Mr Taylor's reticence to attend needs to be addressed.</p>	TT/AD
10	<p>a. Ground Maintenance</p> <p>TT is in overall charge.</p> <p>b. Play park</p> <p>Andrew Duncan (AD) reported stalemate.</p> <p>c. Verges</p> <p>Verges were cut this year, but they were badly done, as were the hedgerows (the same equipment is used for both jobs) with the flails catching young trees and hedging, as well as leaving sharp spikes. The work was also badly timed (viz. wild flowers). Cllr Liz Grant (LG) offered to report this back to Nigel Taylor (Greenspace).</p> <p>John Manning (JM) recommended little, if any, cutting was required on the A924 and the link road as (i) there was negligible interference to vision and (ii) the wildflowers are excellent.</p> <p>JM has offered to produce a guide to where the wild flowers are, to be provided to P&K to inform their verge cutting programme. This may take some time.</p> <p>LG reported that verge cutting policy was being updated continually and that the verges were cut when budgets allowed.</p> <p>There was discussion about the importance of keeping road signs clear, rather than cutting verges.</p> <p>d. Glenshee laybys</p> <p>Cllr Bob Ellis (BE) was dealing with this and the Development Trust has been in touch with Cairngorm National Park in order to get plans produced and get the work done. A competition had been arranged for architectural students, but no practical solutions resulted. LG offered to email BE, but JM suggested</p>	<p>LG</p> <p>JM</p>

	waiting until the plans had been produced.	
11	<p>Highways matters</p> <p>Resurfacing RB reported that the resurfacing work, south of the landslip on A93, was rumoured to start on 30 September, despite several dates having been put forward in the past.</p> <p>Landslip There was discussion about the landslip itself. The money is there for the work, but the programme needs to follow a process, otherwise the contracting companies will sue P&K. RB reported that they are still working on how it will be done, after which it will go to consultation to make sure that there is a good engineering solution. Although it has already taken two years, LG said she would get an update on the situation.</p> <p>Blairgowrie traffic lights Due to the number of complaints about delays, resulting from the new system, LG reported that another company would be addressing the configuration problems. Discussion ensued about (a) the fact that money is repeatedly being spent on the same problem, when those in charge should have found the solution before putting in the current system (b) the system works better without lights and (c) the volume of traffic on the bridge could cause a strain on the structure. LG offered to get the P&K traffic manager to speak to the CC.</p>	<p>LG</p> <p>LG</p>
12	<p>Windfarm proposals The CC distributed a questionnaire, via News Group, just before this meeting in order to gauge local opinion, in order to better represent the community at future discussions with P&K and windfarm developers.</p> <p>The questionnaire is also available at Bridge of Cally PO, the Session House and Kirkmichael Village Shop. They are to be returned to secretarymountblaircc@gmail.com</p> <p>Discussion ensued about the effectiveness of the questionnaire, the method of rating the responses in a meaningful way and how the CC would take this information forward. Hugo Holland Bosworth (HHB) offered to meet with JM to help collate and rate the responses.</p> <p>It was proposed that the results would then be passed to the planning authority and a public meeting would be called, at which ABO/Wind Prospect Developments would be invited to state their case.</p> <p>TT had asked for, and received, a plan outlining all current and proposed windfarm sites, but this was indecipherable. The CC has asked Graham Essen to provide one. Ali Petrie (AP) has agreed, with HHB's help, to produce such a map and send it to the CC for distribution. John Steel suggested that the map should include an indication of planning issues.</p> <p>There was much animated discussion about the pros and cons of windfarms in</p>	<p>JM/HHB</p> <p>AP/HHB</p>

	<p>general and it was agreed that LG would arrange a meeting for Graham Essen to come and outline/clarify the planning issues with a small group, as the planning issues are the only criteria on which P&K will permit/disallow a windfarm proposal to proceed.</p> <p>As there is no closing date for the questionnaires, JM will take responsibility for reminding people to complete and return them.</p>	<p>LG</p> <p>JM</p>
13	<p>AOCB</p> <p>Motorbikes: Georgina Spiers had contacted P&K about the issues of speeding and deaths. Bridge of Cally, Ballintuim and Soilzarie are the worst affected areas, although Rory Stormonth-Darling reported that stones had been flicked into the gardens of houses right on the road at Balvarran, by speeding vehicles. AD reported that the Police had positioned unmarked cars on A93 for a while (between Ballater& Perth) and this had been very effective. LG said speed bumps were unlikely as a solution, as they impede emergency vehicles. Flashing electronic speed signs were agreed to be effective, particularly as they are moved from time, so drivers don't get complacent and ignore them. AD pointed out that speeding was a Police issue and that concerned parties should continue to address this with them.</p> <p>CC representatives JM remarked that it was good to see such a turnout at the meeting and welcomed new members on the CC. Anyone interested should contact him on: secretarymountblaircc@gmail.com</p> <p>Travellers Charlie Brown thanked TT for his efforts, and AD thanked LG for hers, in getting the travellers moved on from the village car park. Generally agreed that the reinstatement of the sandbags wasn't a good idea. Various other suggestions were offered and LG has agreed to take forward the idea of a height barrier at the entrance and railings round the edge so that the travellers can't gain access via the Bannerfield. Access is required to carpark for uplift of recycling bins and also access must be open for fire station. Colin Massey reported that the travellers' horse, and a dog, had been taken away by the SSPCA. Agreed that it was good to have been warned, on News Group, of the name of the company the travellers were advertising (Paving WorX).</p> <p>Picnic Area AD reported that the picnic area was a bit 'jungly' on Games day. LG will contact AD to get this sorted.</p> <p>Kirkmichael in Bloom JM thanked the Bloom committee for the great job they have done with the planters/baskets.</p> <p>Area reports Straloch – None Bernard Noonan (BN) – Roads</p>	<p>LG</p> <p>LG</p>

	<p>RB – None</p> <p>AD – War Memorial.</p> <p>In a letter from Sir Michael Nairn, following Games day, he pointed out that various works needed to be addressed, namely: steps need to be re-set, the cairn is covered in ivy, iron railing needs repair, some tree-cutting is required, a sign at the bottom of the steps would be an advantage. He suggested that the Gathering Committee might be able to offer some support.</p> <p>Colin Massey reported that he and Henry Montgomery had been doing some remedial work.</p> <p>AD reported that the cairn is of dry stone construction and, the last time P&K cut ivy back, the cairn collapsed.</p> <p>It was agreed that elderly people found it difficult to climb the steps and that some kind of alternative memorial in the village would be a good idea.</p> <p>Suggestions were made to apply for funding from the War Memorials Trust (http://www.warmemorials.org/grants/) or from Drumderg.</p>	TT/AD
14	<p>Date of next meeting: Monday 10 November. Session House. 7.00pm</p>	