

MOUNT BLAIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING

Draft Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 35th Session of Mount Blair Community Council held in the Session House, Kirkmichael on Monday 21st November 2011

Present: Doreen McIntyre (DM) (Chair), Andrew Duncan (AD) (Vice Chair) Tony Thompson (TT), Bernard Noonan (BN), Cllr Bob Ellis (BE), Cllr Caroline Shiers (CS), John Manning (JM), Fiona Calvin (FC), Sally Fenner (FS), Mike Purdie (MP)

Apologies: Cllr Elizabeth Grant

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

1. **Welcome and Apologies:**

DM welcomed everyone and apologies were noted as above.

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

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting. This was proposed by Sally Fenner and seconded by Andrew Duncan.

3. **Matters Arising:**

Broadband– This was still felt to be a significant problem and discussion took place on broadband and landline issues in the Glen. It was pointed out that upgrading of telephone lines was a statutory obligation but did not apply to internet access. As significant investment would be required, it was felt that the Scottish Government should be asked to fund. Note was taken of the fact that broadband access was required by both adults for work and children for schoolwork and was therefore a necessity and not a luxury. TT advised that he had already written to John Swinney MSP regarding this issue and BE suggested that the Community Council should also write to the Chair of British Telecom and copy to Murdo Fraser MSP, John Swinney MSP and Ian Shanks (BT Head of Scottish Affairs) and also to Ofcom and Martha Lane Fox, who is the UK Government's Digital Tsar. Cllr Shiers and Cllr Ellis confirmed they would continue to support and pursue this matter. Discussion took place on whether or not a petition would be useful and a suggestion was made that, when gathering information for Glenwatch, people could be asked about their personal experience with broadband. In addition, mention would be made of this in Across the Glens to encourage people to raise any further issues.

Council Run Services Which Could Be Run And Sourced Locally – There was no update at the present time and this item will be brought forward to the next meeting.

Recycling Issues (update) – Note was taken that Erin Scott from Perth & Kinross Council would be visiting the Session House on Wednesday 30th November at 7 pm to give a talk on Household Recycling. Everyone would be encouraged to attend to raise any recycling issues they may have.

Failure of Road Dressing on A924 – BE advised that, although there were still some areas which were not quite resolved, in general the repairs were holding up.

Mount Blair Community Development Trust – MP advised that the Trust's application for charitable status had been successful and that other applications in the pipeline comprised an application for funding for a community consultation and one in respect of the Archive Project which was to be resubmitted with amendments. With a 6 week turnaround period, the decision on this should be known in the New Year.

Drumderg Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund MOU – DM advised that this had now been signed off. She had retained one copy and the other had been sent to the Scottish Community Foundation.

Paths Network Report - BE advised that £280,000 had been raised at the Cateran Yomp with one couple alone raising £19,000. A question was raised as to how much the local community had benefitted from this and a figure would be sought. BE advised of a video made at the Yomp which could be viewed on the internet and showed some wonderful views of East Perthshire. The dates for the next Yomp are scheduled to be the same weekend as the Summer Fair – 30th June and 1st July 2012. Progress was ahead of schedule with people already signed up and it was anticipated that numbers would be greater than last year. BE noted that the Alliance Trust was committed for next year and also for 2013. The maintenance on the Cateran Trail had increased due to its popularity and volunteers had been assisting with this. The stile on Pitcarmick Estate

was being made easier and the possibility of putting a raised footpath there was being investigated. The weather damage to the viewing point at Mount Blair would be addressed and the small car park at the foot of this Corbett would be under consideration for improvement and signage. With regard to the 2 new routes referred to at the last meeting, BE advised that a link between the Cateran Trail at Enochdhu and the Rob Roy way at Pitlochry had been identified and it was hoped that this would be finalised next year. The new route commencing in Deeside had been finalised and would be named the Pictish Way and BE advised that a domain name had been obtained for this and information would be accessible on the internet. BE again emphasised Kirkmichael's importance in all of the planned recreational opportunities. This item will remain as a standing item on the agenda.

30 mph proposals for Kirkmichael, Ballintuim and Bridge of Cally – DM confirmed that she had written to Perth and Kinross Council but, as yet, had not received a reply. It was Cllr Shiers' understanding that suggestions had been taken on board and that limits would be put in place later this calendar year. Cllrs Shiers and Ellis advised that they meet every 6 weeks with Senior Council Officers to discuss road issues and electronic signage had been discussed but was extremely expensive to install. AD pointed out that some traffic calming measures implemented in other areas were not particularly well thought out and the speed bump at the pedestrian crossing in Stanley was given as an example.

4. **Report from the Community Police Community Police Report:**

Constable Jim Lorimer provided an update on behalf of Constable Sandra Burgess. He advised that Inspector Liam Morrison had taken over from Inspector Ged Fitzpatrick and that crime figures for the area were low. Constable Lorimer went on to speak of the increase in the area that was now being covered by the Police in Blairgowrie. Discussions then took place around the setting up of Farm Watch in addition to Community Watch and it was emphasised that the Police were happy to support these community initiatives and that any suspicious activity should be reported to them immediately.

Community Watch – Cllr Shiers had been in conversation with Inspector Morrison and confirmed that he was happy to support but contact would require to be made with him first. TT reaffirmed his willingness to manage the Glenshee Tree and was eager for this initiative to be implemented and Constable Lorimer agreed to discuss this further with him. In addition, Constable Lorimer advised that he had some Neighbourhood Watch signs that he would be happy to give to the Community upon request. A suggestion was made that people could easily contact one another by text with any number-plates of vehicles acting suspiciously and Constable Lorimer advised that the Police would also like to have this information shared with them. Since the last meeting, FC had spoken to Constable Sandra Burgess with regard to set-up of the system but there had been no further opportunity to progress. Petrina Menzies would send any further information out via the community email.

5. **Report from the Chair & Secretary's Report** – A report had been given at the AGM and in addition, DM advised that interest had been shown from potential guardians of the telephone kiosks at Blackwater and Enochdhu (which will be painted early in 2012). A suggestion was made that a formal agreement should be drawn up with guardians and DM will look into this.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

This report was provided at the AGM.

7. **Councillor's Report(s)**

Cllr Caroline Shiers – Cllr Shiers advised of an issue that had been raised regarding parking on the A93 at Balmoral Road which compromised traffic flow. This was a difficult issue as residents have the right to park outside their properties and improvement measures could be extremely expensive. Traffic surveys would be carried out during the ski season and summer to determine the options and to ascertain if traffic signals would be effective. A question was raised regarding the yellow bollards at the end of Balmoral Road and whether or not they are necessary. Cllr Shiers agreed to look into this.

Cllr Bob Ellis – Cllr Ellis reported the successful opening of the pod accommodation at Ecocamp, Glenshee. The opening had been very well attended and note was taken of the significant effort that had gone into developing the pod site which BE anticipated would be popular all year round. It was noted that pod and bunkhouse accommodation could become available at other sites in the area.

8. **Area Reports**

Bridge of Cally – It was reported that pavements were not being adequately maintained. There were weeds coming through and, although the road had been swept, the pavements had not. Debris from a fallen tree from last November was still there and leaves were causing a hazard on path from the Village Hall. At the

Hall itself, damage to the wall required attention as it was also causing a hazard. It was noted that the area at the bridge had not been repaired but sandbags had been put in place temporarily. There were also problems with new drains on the bridge which were already crumbling. Attention was drawn to the lamp posts which display a number which can be quoted if they malfunction. There were 2 lamp posts by the school which had no numbers and a request was made for these to be switched off. BE and CS would look into this. Other comments included the emptying of Bridge of Cally Primary School, potholes around drains in the road from Bridge of Cally to Blairgowrie and refuse collections. It was suggested that the last issue could be raised with Erin Scott during her forthcoming visit.

Glenshee – AD spoke of previous road safety concerns regarding lorries and motorbikes but that recent issues centred around delivery drivers who were more prevalent on local roads due to increased online shopping. A suggestion was made that the best course of action was to take registration numbers of vehicles and report them to the relevant company office or, if necessary, the Police. AD also advised that the road verges on the B950 were in a poor state due to a combination of very bad weather and vehicles driving on them. It was noted that there were other roads similarly affected.

9. **AOCB**

AD volunteered to discuss the Christmas lights with Donald Michie.

JM advised that he had been in contact with both Historic Scotland and Conservation Officer, Richard Welch with regard to the James Small Memorial. It had previously been deemed unsuitable for listing by Historic Scotland as it was not old enough. However, it had come to JM's attention that a standing stone, which he understood to be 20th century, had been listed and he advised that he would pursue this issue.

Petrina Menzies (PM) drew attention to the War Memorial outside Kirkmichael which had become a focus for people engaged in the activity of Geocaching (similar to treasure hunting using GPS or other navigational device). The Memorial had attracted approximately 80 people in this pursuit and several comments had been made that it appeared neglected. The previous removal of ivy had caused damage but it was suggested that cleaning the plaque and steps would greatly improve its appearance. PM advised she would be happy to organise the Brownies to assist with this in the Spring. It was also suggested that it would be desirable for another plaque could be put on the Church wall. FC would find out if this would be possible.

10. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting will take place on **Monday 13th February 2012** at 7pm in the Session House, Kirkmichael. All welcome to attend.