

MOUNT BLAIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING

Draft Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the 34th Session of
Mount Blair Community Council held in the Session House, Kirkmichael
on Monday 13 September 2010

Present: Doreen MacIntyre (Chair), Mike Purdie (Treasurer), Fiona Calvin, Sally Fenner, Susan Scott, Donald Michie, Inspector Paddy Buckley-Jones (Tayside Police), Cllr Elizabeth Grant, Cllr Caroline Shiers and 5 members of the public

Apologies: Cllr Bob Ellis, Andrew Duncan

1. D MacIntyre welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were recorded.
2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** Proposed by M Purdie and seconded by S Fenner the draft Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

3. **Matters Arising**

James Small Memorial Work - D MacIntyre reported a delay with the Blacksmith armature (Cllr Grant was not yet present at the meeting). Cllr Grant later advised the stone was ready however the Blacksmith, sub-contracted by the stone mason, had not yet been able to complete the works. Cllr Grant agreed to request that the unstable barriers be removed.

A member of the public noted the Conservation Officer's suggestion to replace the white plastic bollard/reflector sticks with something more in keeping i.e. timber. It was noted that the community could consider this with the money pledged. Cllr Grant noted she would speak with Scott Bruce who would liaise with the Conservation Officer.

Finally, a member of the public noted for the occupants living in the house adjacent, a sign be erected for 'concealed entrance' to make the public aware of this driveway.

Meeting re. Motorbikes - D MacIntyre advised the rescheduled meeting due to take place in May did not go ahead. Cllr C Shiers later advised a date has to be agreed in September/October and will advise accordingly. It has now been confirmed that this meeting will take place on 28th September (7pm) in the Bridge of Cally Hall. All members of the community with an interest in this subject are invited to attend.

Bridge of Cally Walkway Improvements - S Fenner noted work had been completed and offered congratulations to the Council on a remarkable improvement to what had been there previously. It was reported a small section of collapsed fencing had been covered with tarmac and Cllr Grant later confirmed she would request that this be removed.

Review of Standard Rates for Expense Claims - M Purdie proposed that rates in place over the last 4 years no longer best reflect current costs. A revision of rates for standard claims by members was discussed and agreed.

4. **Report from Community Police** - Inspector Paddy Buckley-Jones (Tayside Police) extended his apologies for his delay and joined the meeting. Inspector Buckley Jones advised of new Community Officer, Sandra Burgess, who hopes to attend the next meeting. A summary of reported crime in the area was provided, and the following particularly noted:

Glenshee Pheasantries house break-in and theft of up to 6,000 partridges – it was stated that a theft of this size and nature would be hard to go unnoticed in the community and members of the public with any information, were requested to get in contact.

A further local theft of tools at Bridge of Cally was reported.

4. **Continued:** Inspector Buckley-Jones confirmed the *Chief Constable's Annual Performance Report 2009-2010*, published on 28 June, is now available. For copies, please contact tel. 01382 591735 or download from www.Tayside.police.uk [About Us/Force Publications].
- A summary of the latest crime figures across the divisions was reported highlighting a significant drop over the last 10 years (details available in the Report forwarded to Community Council prior to the meeting). It was stated that although the size of the section is now substantially increased, more Officers are in place. Reassurance was given that all calls are prioritised, adding response times and attendance is monitored and marked against crimes reported to the Procurator Fiscal.
- VIP Informing System – Due to continuing problems this system has not been implemented. A reminder was noted of the email alert system operated by Petrina Menzies at the Session House. An emphasis was made that only those who had previously given their telephone details would be contacted via this means. A member of the public had been made aware of various scams potentially in operation although Inspector Buckley-Jones confirmed no reports had been received.
- A query was raised about traffic accidents where a foreign vehicle is involved; Inspector Buckley-Jones advised all driver information was recorded however stated it is the insurance company's responsibility to obtain these details (available from the Police at a nationally agreed statutory charge) and confirmed this information is not made available to the public. D MacIntyre offered her thanks and Inspector Buckley-Jones left the meeting.
5. **Report from the Chair/Secretary:** D MacIntyre noted it had been a relatively quiet summer. It was requested that the railings be uplifted by the council from the area adjacent to the Kirkmichael Car Park. D MacIntyre extended a welcome to Nicola Liddell who has recently been appointed by the Community Council to provide secretarial support, notably minute taking of quarterly meetings and preparation of the agenda.
6. **Treasurer's Report:** Period 10th May 2010 to 13th September 2010
- M Purdie provided a summary of the financial activity during period May-September pertaining to the *Community Council Main Fund* and the *Drumderg Micro Fund* respectively.
- Although the current balance of the Main Fund stands at £2,327.55, a proportion of this was allocated by Perth & Kinross Council (PKC) for the set-up of the Mount Blair Community Development Trust (with the Mount Blair Community Council acting as banker only to the grant money received). The current Main Fund balance therefore stands at just under £1,000, where known commitments are accounted for.
- Micro Fund – M Purdie summarised the receipts and payments during same period, outlining 7 separate grant payments made totalling £1,195. A closing balance of £143.49 was reported. Letters of thanks have been received from all grant recipients. A further grant of £800 was anticipated imminently. A member of the public queried the possibility of more funding being obtained. It was stated that the current annual limit is under review, and has been agreed at £2,500 per participating Community Council. M Purdie believed the amount received was sufficient for Community Council needs this year.
- D MacIntyre anticipated problems if a change to the framework was requested. It was apparent that an overall awareness of money being available exists and organisations were now applying for grants more widely.
7. Cllr Shiers Report – Cllr Shiers updated the members re. proposed motorbike meeting (see *Matters Arising*). It was reported the upgrade of some warning signs has been programmed for late September 2010 as part of the route action plan with further work scheduled in the 2011 budget. S Fenner indicated a near incident involving a caravan and lorry had occurred on the sharp bend on the A93 just north of the Post Office at Bridge of Cally. Cllr Shiers agreed to look signage (awareness rather than speed signs).
- D MacIntyre reported an imminent road works closure on the Moulin Moor Road (with an official diversion of 40 miles). Cllr Grant confirmed notification of this had been emailed earlier in 2010 stating the road was to be shut due to width restrictions. Members of the public with concerns were asked to contact the Council directly.
8. Cllr Grant Report – Cllr Grant gave an update on the James Memorial works (see *Matters Arising*). It was reported Strone of Cally Primary School was "mothballed" in June 2010. A full appraisal on the 3 other schools in Perthshire with low numbers (Logiealmond, Struan and Straloch) has been requested by the Director of Education and this report will follow at a future date. Officers will start the consultation with the temporarily suspended Strone of Cally (S Fenner to confirm date at Bridge of Cally). Although government budget cuts are imminent, with Scottish grants allocated early November, Cllr Grant confirmed no closures had been decided.

9. **New Guidelines for Community Councils** – D MacIntyre summarised guidelines discussed at a meeting held with Brenda Lackie (PKC), Cllrs Ellis and Grant, and Blairgowrie & Rattray Community Council on 10 August. It was reported the Council are seeking to administer the whole election process and various highlights were noted: possible change to the electoral cycle, period of term, quorum required, financial administration, access to community information channels, training, duration of office bearer posts and minimum age restrictions of membership. Feedback is being sought by PKC throughout September. Members were in agreement that it was useful to have representation of the different sub-areas.
Ward Boundaries– D MacIntyre reported a possible slight realignment to the Community Councils boundaries. Cllr Grant advised no-one would potentially be placed where they did not want to be and this exercise was purely to iron out any anomalies on poor ward boundaries.
10. **Broadband Enabling Technology** – M Purdie provided a history of a recent email exercise informing the community of a possible grant opportunity from PKC LEADER funding to improve technology on 4 local exchanges namely Strathardle, Bridge of Cally, Glenshee and Blacklunans at no cost to the users (participants would be required to subscribe to the Scotnet Internet Service Provider for a 12 month period). Email responses were received from across the areas however it was later identified that certain criteria had to be met in order to be eligible which had not been stated at the start of the exercise. M Purdie noted his dissatisfaction on the short notice request and incomplete information initially provided to PKC, extending his own apologies to members.
D MacIntyre commented it was important to understand what broadband facilities are available and an awareness of discrepancies across areas. D MacIntyre proposed to send a statement out containing details of maximum performances and suggested there were possibly measures people could take to improve performance from their home. If anyone wishes to obtain specific area test results to follow up directly with BT, please contact D MacIntyre. S Scott reported potential BT line speed capping issues.
A PKC representative had stated a future opportunity may arise and M Purdie stated the information gathered would prove useful. Concerns over funding were raised if this was a rolling programme. It was highlighted that ‘Glenshee’ did not appear on a BT proposed upgrade list for late November. M Purdie suggested funding was already in place and agreed to request confirmation of this. It has subsequently been discovered that the Glenshee exchange is not included in BT’s current plans, but the exchange will be covered in a feasibility study which PKC hopes to carry out some time early next year.
11. **Area Reports**
Glenshee – M Purdie reported the official opening of Glenshee Visitor Centre with John Swinney on 2 August. It was noted this facility is already proving a great success and all were welcomed to visit. Details of the 1st Heather Festival event (August) were summarised and it is anticipated to grow this event in future years.
Kirkmichael – Petrina Menzies reported she had to contact Environmental Services on 3 occasions to have the paper bin emptied, commenting members of the public were leaving recycling at the side of the bin. D MacIntyre noted some reports of rats and other related issues to this ‘dumping’. It was reported that similar issues exist at the bins located outside the shop. D MacIntyre to request a site visit with the Environmental Officers (request to c.c. Cllr Grant). Petrina Menzies noted the ‘Litter Bin’ falls under a different department. Concerns were expressed with regard to PKC time and management of resources required to carry out certain tasks. Cllr Grant encouraged any concerns to be raised at the time directly with the Council and advised she would contact Alec Gill with regard to littering issues and agreed a site meeting should be set-up asap to ensure efficiency of services.
12. **AOCB** – A member of the public raised concerns with winter approaching and considerations to salting school bus or taxi routes reporting severe issues on a number of roads last season. It was noted calls have been made to PKC suggesting that worse affected roads are gritted on the previous afternoon or evening however advice has been given of roads “not qualifying for a pre-grit”. Members suggested that if resources were the issue, potential was there of local farmers being able to assist. It was emphasized that no suggestion was being made to have extra money spent, but simply to revise current resource/capacity arrangements and look at doing something differently for future. Cllr Grant agreed to raise with Douglas Kent (Area Roads Engineer).
A member of the public noted flooding issues with bricks left by Council, Cllr C Shiers to check outcome.
13. **Next Meeting** - Monday 22 November 2010 at 7pm. All welcome to attend.