



BLAIRGOWRIE & RATTRAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 August 2018

Held in the Adult Resource Centre, Jessie Street, Blairgowrie at 7pm

<p><u>ATTENDANCE</u> Mr I Richards (IR) Mr B Smith (BS) Mr S Nichol (SN) Mrs D Cushnie (DC) Mr I Cruickshank (IC) Mr G Darge (GD) Mr A Donald (AD) Ms H Harris (HH) Mr A Thomson (AT) Mr L Seal (LS) Mrs M Young (MY)</p> <p><u>APOLOGIES</u> Mr R Duncan (RD)</p>	<p>Chair Vice Chair Treasurer Secretary</p>	<p>Cllr C Shiers (CS) Cllr B Brawn (BB) Cllr T McEwan (TM)</p> <p>Ms C Damodaran (CD)</p> <p>9 members of the public</p> <p>Mr C Smith</p> <p>Cllr Roz McCall (RM)</p> <p><u>ABSENT</u> Ms E Forrest (EF) Ms C Sutherland (CS)</p>	<p>Councillor PKC Councillor PKC Councillor PKC</p> <p>Press</p> <p>Scottish Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p>Councillor PKC</p>
<p>Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies IR welcomed everyone to the meeting including MY who returned after a six month leave of absence. He also welcomed Lorna McCulloch, the new development manager for Blairgowrie and Rattray Development Trust, who wishes to be as involved as much as possible in matters relating to the town. He also welcomed Councillor Roz McCall, convener of Perth and Kinross Council’s (PKC) planning and development management committee and said that due to the length of time being devoted to discussing planning issues other items of the agenda would be held over until the next meeting. Apologies were recorded for RD.</p>			<p>IR</p>
<p>Item 2 - Adoption of minutes SN proposed the adoption of the minutes of the July meeting; BS seconded.</p>			
<p>Item 3 – Matters Arising Stewart Milne/Maple Place – A meeting was held with Richard Fawkes (RF), land director with Stewart Milne, on July 30. RF visited the area and spent a couple of hours with members of the community council, local residents and local councillors. It was a very long meeting, the minutes of which are recorded below. The thrust of the discussion was that the community felt very strongly that once again a number of houses had been specified in the development plan but the proposed development was for many more houses. IR said that RF was prepared to listen to the points that were made but that he could not be sure whether any of them were actually taken on board until see the application, which was now due to be considered at the next meeting of Perth and Kinross Council’s planning and development management committee on August 29th, 2018. A drop-off zone and creating a layby for parents to</p>			

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<p>drop off their children at the school was discussed. The number of properties proposed was the main problem with the development, as with other developments in the area. The other issue that was raised was the wildlife in the area - roe deer, buzzards, heron and aquatic life - and the fact that it is used by young people to play there. RF said that Stewart Milne has discussed this with PKC's environmental officers who seem to be happy with it. A wildlife corridor was discussed. The play area, which has been designed by consultants, was also discussed, in terms of the possibility of maybe making it a bit more spread out and rustic.</p> <p>Georgie Kidd - Georgie Kidd (GK) from the Strathmore Centre for Youth Development came to the June community council meeting and was keen to come on board as a young ambassador. IR had then been informed that the community council does not have any more vacancies for co-opting new members but could offer Georgie an associate membership of the community council whereby he could still make a valuable contribution to the discussions but could not vote. It was agreed to do this at the last meeting. GK could not make this meeting but hopefully would be able to attend the next meeting.</p> <p>Community Market – LS had made some suggestions as to how the community council could get more interaction with members of the public on the community council's stall at the community market. At the market in July this included having pictures of the big guns which the community council is trying to find out whether the community would like to restore the guns and bring them back to Blairgowrie where they would be put on display. Other initiatives included having maps of Davie Park and survey forms from the community greenspace ranger at the stall, a few of which were filled in so it seemed to have some value. Thinking ahead it would be good to collect views on the proposals for the new recreation centre in possible at the September market, and maybe the riverside at the August market. BS who is part of the Riverside Venture Group said that he would have a presentation on that.</p> <p>Reform Street/Perth Street junction – SN spent some time at the junction recording all the examples of problems he had seen which he then sent to PKC. He said that CS had suggested a meeting at the junction to look at the issues and that was still to be arranged but would take place in due course.</p>	<p>IR</p> <p>LS</p> <p>SN</p>
<p>Item 4 - Subjects raised by members of the public that are not related to planning None.</p>	
<p>Item 5 – Police and Fire reports</p> <p>Fire – Chris Smith from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service said that they had been mobilised 20 times in July including six primary fires, four secondary fires, four false alarms due to cooking, one special service call (a lift rescue), three road traffic collisions and two standbys at other stations. Incidents of note included an RTC on the A9 at the Dalguise junction and an RTC on the Coupar Angus to Meigle Road involving three cars where three people were injured. The open day on July 14th raised £5000 for various local charities and the PoppyScotland 1918 appeal. Four local businesses took part o the Firefighters' Challenge and basic CPR skills were taught on the day. Seven home fire safety visits were carried out in July, two were high risk, three medium risk and two low risk.</p> <p>Police – IR said that he had been in touch with the police who were prepared to send a senior officer to the meeting but given that the convener of the council's planning committee was attending the meeting for a discussion about planning matters it was thought better to hold off and arrange for the police to attend the next meeting.</p>	
<p>Item 6 – Planning discussion with Roz McCall (RM) convener of PKC's planning and development management committee IR said that it was good to see so many members of the public at the meeting. He asked that the meeting be treated as a formal discussion with all questions going</p>	

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through the chair. He explained that due to the complex nature of some of the questions they had been submitted to RM in advance so that answers could be given to the questions without RM having to resort to referring back to council officers. IR also stated that RM could not comment on any current planning applications, although RM said that she could take any points raised back to council officers. GD asked the questions.

GD - Please can you explain to the meeting your role, remit, and responsibility with regards to the council's planning function.

RM – My job is to ensure that every application that comes to committee has gone through due process and that I am satisfied that all bodies and organisations have had a chance to comment; sometimes we get a response, sometimes we don't. My job is to ensure that any application has met the required standards. The committee is made up of equal parts of all the political parties in the council and it is quasi-judicial. The committee makes up its mind on any given application on the day of the meeting based on the information given to us. We listen to both sides of the argument and make a decision depending on the information in front of us. We don't discuss it beforehand. Every bit of information has to come to us to make that decision on the day. As an administration we can look at planning and development procedures in Perth and Kinross and put a slant on it but the process sets out very clearly what we can and can't do. We can for example look at increasing the amount of affordable housing or supporting economic development.

GD - We are aware that many of the provisions in your development plans you are required to satisfy by legislation. Can you outline how these requirements come down through the hierarchy of governments to PKC. European legislation, UK, Scottish Parliament and so forth? And what these requirements are?

RM – The process is that the Scottish Government will come up with a plan for the economic development that they would like in Scotland. Part of that is the development side of things as that has an effect on the economy. The Scottish Government will decide how many houses and developments different areas of Scotland can handle. Market forces will have a massive impact on that. Those requirements come down to the Tay Plan in our region. There's a Tay Plan committee made up of representatives from the three local authorities in Tayside – PKC, Dundee and Angus – and they work out how the number of houses and developments set down by the Scottish Government will be split across the region. Then the council comes up with a development plan for their area that has a number houses that is attached to it. An arbitrary figure is applied. That plan goes through a process where communities get involved, local councillors get involved separately, and again after communities come back with their concerns. Then it goes on to the next stage and back to the elected councillors, and then it goes to the reporter who decides whether it meets the criteria that the Scottish Government had put forward. It then goes back to the full council who decide at that point whether it is approved or not. A development plan is accepted right across the board and at that point becomes a legally binding agreement. If as a community you want to go against that then it can go to the reporter. But if a developer comes forward and meets all the criteria then we can't refuse that application although there may be ways we can get around it. I am very aware that Auchterarder is very different to Crieff which is different to Blairgowrie. The Placemaking process is one way to manipulate it, for want of a better word.

GD - The public are often suspicious of how the planning process works, some may say it's a "dark art". Can you explain what processes, and procedures are in place to give the public confidence that the planning process is open and transparent, and how observations from the public and other consultees affect the decision-making process and how this works in practice? Could this be improved and if so how?

RM – We know we have this massive disconnect and as convener my job is to make sure that we get things right within the framework but I am not a planner. Developers see planning as something to get around, and communities see it as something that

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stabs them in the back. The council works within a set of guidelines that they can't do anything about. There is a massive disconnect and it is important that the three sides of this triangle start working together which is one of the reasons I want to come out to community councils. If a planning application meets the criteria it will get through. If it is an application for a major development it will have to go to committee. If it hits six or more objections from the community then it goes to committee. In terms of the communication between developers and communities then it has to be six years before anyone comes forward with a proposal. If community engagement is not there at that point then the local development plan will go through and when the actual application comes forward that is when the community says that's not what we want. And to change the statute at that point is very difficult to do. We have just gone through the process for the Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), communities were asked to get involved, but how do we engage with a community six years prior to an application coming through? It's a big stumbling block and something I am looking for a genuine answer to. Community events are advertised in the press, on the website and on social media but engagement is really very minimal and we rely on our councillors for feedback.

SN – We realise that the plan is the one to engage with and we tried to motivate people to come and comment and we did that in conjunction with council officers. We need to raise awareness that this is the most important part to comment on and we need to get over the apathy people have and try to shape what the community is looking at at a much earlier stage. Placemaking is vital as all towns are different.

RM – I am very encouraged by your comment that greater work needs to be done with the planners. If we are all on the same page and if we all understand where everyone is coming from then the community is informed at the right stage and their views are taken into consideration but when it is at the wrong stage it is very difficult to fix.

SN – In the reports that go to committee, we have reports from the planners, the roads department, the sewage team etc but there's not a sense that's joined up in any one proposal. We are very suspicious as a community that the impact of a proposal does not take cognisance of the overall picture.

RM – Because the whole process is set by the Scottish Government as a whole, if a development has 600-800 houses for example, it will affect a community maybe twice a day in terms of traffic for example when people leave for work and come home from work, according to the national framework that has been set. We have a computer in Perth that models various scenarios. What we perceive in this area as a traffic problem actually isn't compared with Edinburgh, Glasgow or Aberdeen and the framework that has been set nationally not regionally. Every development I have seen for this area does not have 'pinch points' for traffic according to the national framework.

IR – Most people here are quite cynical of computer modelling and that's when we rely on our local representatives to understand the real impact on our towns in relation to them and not a big city. You don't see the detail with computer modelling, we can talk about the scale of the proposed developments on a town of this size and the impact to infrastructure.

RM – This is one of the issues about the way things work. If classed as a town of a certain size then, for example, the NHS looks at how many doctors are needed for a town of that size and until you hit the threshold you won't get any more doctors. Infrastructure issues are something I want more work done on. We are caught in a framework whereby we have to reach a certain point before more services are brought in. It affects teachers, doctors, it is very frustrating. There are some things we can do prior to a development, there are somethings we can't. We can raise it with the Scottish Government but can't actually affect anything. Putting infrastructure first is something I am very interested in, we can put stipulations in a specific development such as put in a road or some trees but when it comes to larger issues we are dealing with other departments outwith the council.

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GD – you mentioned the traffic modelling computer in Perth, do they have a model of Blairgowrie? The West Park development for example is going to have a major impact on traffic throughout the town not just on the Perth Road.

RM – Yes, it is a national model and you input the figures and proposals for any area.

MY – Does the roads department have access to this? We had an issue before with software that suggested installing traffic lights in the town would work.

RM – It doesn't fall within planning so no.

MY – We are the largest town in Perth and Kinross and the biggest headache we have is from PKC thinking of us as just a small town.

RM – I will take on board what you say you are experiencing. That's where communication comes in.

MY – We are really done with trying to play nice with PKC, we've had focus groups and meetings and everything but we are never listened to.

IR – What Morag is referring to is a couple of problems we have had including the traffic chaos in Blairgowrie when we were explicitly told by the roads department that the planners didn't speak to them.

GD - **The next question is about housing needs projections and the provision of housing in the Local Development Plans. The Local Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021 states that 650 houses are required in the Strathmore area of which 600 are expected to be developed in Blairgowrie. Why is the majority allocated to Blairgowrie at the expense of other settlements? The plan also states that 2750 houses will be required over five years in Perth and Kinross, why then so many houses proposed all over the council area, Bertha Park, Luncarty, Scone, Blairgowrie etc which all added together exceeds the housing projected requirement many times over?**

RM – The Scottish Government has revised its figures for housing and they have been revised up. If the number of houses has been agreed legally through the process from the Scottish Government then they have to be built somewhere. We also have to take into consideration what the developers tell us the market is like. So if they tell us they can only build a development if we increase the number of houses on the site so that they will make money then we have to do it or we will be in breach of the agreement with the Scottish Government. This comes into play so often so in LDP2 instead of putting in a number of houses we put in a range of numbers of houses in an attempt to give communities a rough idea of how many houses may be built. Also, we need more two-bedroom houses now rather than three or four-bedroom houses. If we can give a range then if market forces have changed again then the plans can change less contentiously.

IR – Will the upper number of the range be a limit?

RM – Hopefully but I can't say, it is very difficult to say but I hope it won't come up to that level. Large developments have to come to committee and everyone has to be happy that the development is required at that time. I hope that there are enough checks and balances in place.

Member of the public – This is what we are upset about. The numbers. In LDP1 the site at Maple Place was zoned for 85 houses, in LDP2 that increased to between 94 to 148 and that is only for two-thirds of the land.

RM – I am well aware of that application but I can't comment on that.

SN – What are the consequences of not complying with your agreement with the Scottish Government.

RM – If an application goes to appeal it goes to the courts. If PKC has not acted according to the plan then the reporter will award costs. So there is a financial implication. So we have to be sure as a committee that if we are going to refuse something or accept something and it is not upheld it will hit the council's coffers which has implications then on other services.

GD – Could you answer the part of the question about why the bulk of houses required for the Strathmore area are to be built in Blairgowrie?

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RM – Planners look at land where there is a natural progression or expansion. Greenbelt land can't be touched so planners will find plots based on what's coming forward from the community or it could be brownfield sites, and sites where there is existing infrastructure. I don't have an exact answer as to why Blair has been selected but it will be because the infrastructure is there.

GD - **Where major development sites are identified in the development plan, there is often a requirement for these to have a master plan developed and approved. The developer leads on the master plan creation, clearly putting the developer in the lead position. It would be much better for the planning authority to commission the masterplan, have committee approve it thereby putting the council in the driving seat as to how the development should look. It also allows the community an opportunity to have great involvement in the development process. Why does the council not take this approach and can we request most strongly that it should?**

RM – We are not allowed to tell developers how they make money. We can come up with an agreement on design and style etc so that some generic plan doesn't get submitted making Blairgowrie look like other towns. We work with the plans they come up with.

SN – You have the power to do masterplans and developers work within the framework of that. It has been done in other areas.

Councillor Grant Laing (member of the public) – It was done for Stanley.

RM – So we would be looking at a community led masterplan?

GD – When architects are employed by developers the developers call the shots and are actively working towards the bottom line which is not the best option. It would be better to have an architect work for the council and talk to the community. I have been an architect for 40 years and have come across that numerous times, I feel it would be a better way forward for developments such as the West Park for example.

RM – I am willing to take that back to the council.

GD - **On the same theme, infrastructure is considered site by site and there is little recognition of how a development impacts on the rest of the infrastructure for the town as a whole. Sewerage, and water capacity is considered but impact on traffic flows, roads capacity, new rat runs etc. are not considered. This needs to be corrected immediately.**

RM – Every application is looked at on balance with other departments such as traffic which analyse it in the models they have been given and that's put to the committee. The information is taken into consideration. I know that's not how the community will see it though.

GD – Specifically for the West Park development for example, we don't have the confidence that the roads or traffic department are taking the implications on the Wellmeadow into consideration. We would like assurances that the wider picture will be taken into consideration.

RM – If you look at traffic issues here they pale into insignificance compared to Edinburgh or Glasgow. It's my job to ensure that all criteria are met. I ask the questions every time. If you are looking to change the parameters set by the reporter and the Scottish Government then that is not something within my remit.

IR – It seems that the terms of reference are too narrow.

RM – I take that on board but we are tied to a national framework that has financial implications for us as a council if we don't conform to it.

GD - **Your affordable housing policy states that 25% of houses should be affordable on any site. We are talking large developments not developments of small numbers. Frequently the developer is allowed to make a case for not following policy and buying out their obligations. Why does the council not stand firm behind its policy and insist this provision is fulfilled thus creating a more balanced housing tenure mix across settlements in PKC?**

RM – I was told that they do stand by their policy. That figure does not have to be at any one site, it is across the whole area. Developers can come back and ask the

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council if they can increase it on one site for example of if they have paid a contribution.

GD – It has happened that some large developers have paid PKC money and bought their way out of providing affordable housing elements on their sites but then you end up without a mix. We would like to see a balanced mixture of housing tenure.

RM – I will take that back to the council.

AD – With regard to infrastructure issues, does the council take into consideration outlying areas that use services in the town as well? So just because the number of people living in Blairgowrie might not meet the threshold for another doctor for example, when you add in people from Kirkmichael or the glens that use the medical practices then surely that should be taken into consideration?

RM – Yes, it is taken into consideration, the health service for example does that.

AD – Over the next five years we're looking at probably nearly 1000 more houses in Blairgowrie and people moving to the town and using the services, all those involves should be talking to each other about how to meet this increase in demand.

RM – I think you are right but that is not a council level thing, you're talking about a Scottish Government framework.

DC – Why is a rural area treated the same as a city? It's crazy, it's unbelievable.

RM – It is so that the same rules apply and we have the same standards. The reporter agrees all the development plans from all over the country so there's no disparity and that's what the planners have to work towards.

IR – There's clearly a conversation that has to be had at a national level, it creates a disparity of its own by applying the same rules in very different situations.

MY – Why is there more assistance given to people who want to self-build?

RM – I agree absolutely, the support side of that is an interesting one but it's not a planning issue.

MY - How would you make it easier for people to self-build?

RM – It's not the council's remit to change the planning framework. I can write to the Scottish Government to raise it as a concern or we could go through COSLA.

MY – Why does it take so long to rectify changes in the local development plan when officers have got the zoning, for example, wrong?

Member of the public – Following on from what Morag was saying, I am 80% of the way through a self-build and one thing that is quite unfair is the contribution of £6,500 that I was asked to make to the council to build a family home in the area I have lived in all my life. I took the council at their word when they told me Newhill Primary School was over-subscribed but if I had built at Rattray then there would have been no levy. Planning has the responsibility to ensure that primary schools are not being over-subscribed by children coming to a school from outwith the catchment area.

RM – I can answer the planning side of that not the education side. Where a family home is being built planning will look at that and say there will be children there and they will be going to school so a contribution is required.

Cllr Laing – Looking at that is part of scrutineering, it is part of PKC's remit, but it seems to me to be unfair that if you build a six-bedroom home you pay the same as if you build a one-bedroom home. There needs to be some sort of grading scheme. You should also take any children that come from outwith a school's catchment area out of the calculations, so Newhill for example is not over-subscribed if you take those children that go to the school from outwith the catchment area out of the equation.

RM – I am more than happy to look into that.

Member of the public – Looking at the strategic document for 2016-21 which is intended to address future population growth, statistics since the Brexit vote seem to show greatly reduced predictions which might be worth looking into to help with planning.

Member of the public – What can you do to restore public trust in the planning department at PKC, which is so low at the moment that several people have called for an investigation into the department?

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RM – I think there is a massive disconnect and I want to try to bring the three points together which is why I want to go round community councils and get issues that I can take back to the department. I want to go round all the communities in Perth and Kinross. We can change focus, we can adapt certain things but have to work within the framework. I will see what issues there are and then get the developers to engage with communities more and earlier to find out if they are happy with it and what would work and what wouldn't.

Member of the public - The community consultation about Blackthorn Place was no advert for local authorities. We were not objecting to housing there just to the number of houses but the man from the planning department who came to the public meeting took no cognisance whatsoever of what people in that meeting said. You can't do that in a democracy. Hopefully you can do something about that because Blairgowrie is going to hell in a handcart and it's in the hands of PKC.

RM – I am more than happy to go back with your concerns about numbers. Would you be happy with the numbers if the communication was better and the infrastructure was ok?

Member of the public – We are at a tipping point in terms of the infrastructure here, the congestion is horrendous, the school is oversubscribed, it takes two weeks to get a doctors appointment, something has to be done now.

RM – I'm not trying to belittle this but in the whole of Perth and Kinross the number of new houses being sold is 35 a year. Developments don't get built all at once, developers only build if they are selling. Yes, you are looking down the barrel of 900 houses but it will happen over a long period of time. Yes, the infrastructure situation is a bit grey and woolly – we could put another doctor in or another teacher but it could be ten years before you hit the tipping point. Infrastructure is a massive one though and its on my list.

Member of the public – 250 houses are proposed on the doorstep of the campus which already has congestion issues. Why would they do that?

RM – I will raise the transport issue. It might be a local issue but it is a national framework that we are living with.

Member of the public – Can placemaking be used to justify transport and infrastructure issues? We don't have an area that is comparable to the likes of St Vincent Street in Glasgow for example.

RM – Yes. Every member of the committee has to agree on placemaking. That's something that can be taken into consideration.

BS – The traffic problems outside the campus, parking outside schools is not a local problem, it is a national problem where drop-off facilities are not provided.

RM – There is a national push for not taking cars to school. That's the framework that the planning department has been given. We have an obesity problem and that's behind the push to get people to walk their children to school.

BS – It will never happen.

RM – I'm not defending that position.

MY – You're not accounting for what you actually need. There needs to be a provision for dropping off and picking up children that isn't on the main road like it is at Rattray for example, it's an accident waiting to happen, in fact there, have been several accidents just thankfully none too serious yet. You have to step up and say this is not going to happen on my watch.

RM – I can raise that issue with planning and education and get them to speak to each other about this but the guidelines that are set down are not set by the council, I know that's frustrating.

MY – What you are sanctioning is fundamentally unsafe.

RM – The guidelines have been set down.

HH – The issues at the campus were all raised at the time, the campus was supposed to have a traffic management plan in place.

Member of the public – I am under the impression that the council is toothless, if there is no two-way communication how can the council have any say and how can

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the public have any faith in their consultations? The methods by which things are judged have to change – 20 cars in Glasgow is not the same as 20 cars in Blairgowrie, there is a different pace of life here. I went to the public meeting in Perth about the West Park development and was surprised that one of the main landowners next to the site had not been informed about it. They are custodians of the land all around the site but as the castle where they live is not within 20m of the development they had not been informed. The council has applied a city rule to a rural area. At the meeting I had to correct the council officers – it is not the Ardblair Woods, it is the Muirton Woods, which in itself is a wildlife haven as well. The councillors at that meeting had no human connection with the area. I grew up in a city and moved here for a reason, there comes a point when you reach saturation levels in a city and it becomes unbearable and we are getting to that point here now.

RM – I am happy to take those concerns on board, I will take them back.

Member of the public – I have a question about the sustainability of rural schools. Kettins Primary for example has a school roll of 34 but there is no plan for development there and if the number of pupils enrolled there falls then the school will close and if the schools close the communities die. It is difficult for people to get affordable housing in rural areas so why not develop there rather than in Blair?

RM – I would need to go and look at the settlement boundary for Kettins.

LS - We sometimes feel pretty powerless and I think it is healthy to have this sort of communication but it is important that something comes of it. What plans do you have to ensure that the kind of dialogue continues and that it is listened to? Do you have a plan to come with a way that you can have a continued conversation that will include everyone's awareness and highlight the indefensible things that are happening?

RM – I do have a plan but I don't know if it will work. There's an agreement that there will be more workshops around placemaking. It would be good if communities could engage with that. I know that community councillors are all volunteers and are all busy but we hope to have two or three meetings a year but that depends on how many people come. The next part of the plan is to open communication with developers around PKC and to get them to change communications in the area and start to work with local communities earlier.

BS – The workshops take place in Perth, is there any chance of taking them out to communities?

RM – We could look at that. Perth and Kinross is a massive area and Perth is a central point but we are more than happy to make it a roadshow if people would travel to take part.

Member of the public – We raised a petition about a certain development which got almost 600 signatures and around 98% of the people we spoke to were against it. We are not against building houses but these estates are not fitting in with the local communities. The problem is the density of the housing. You mentioned that 35 houses a year were being built, in 10 years that will be 350 houses. There is up to 1110 houses in LDP2 if that is accepted. The community council was against the development at Blackthorn Place but not according to the report to the committee drawn up by council officers. The feeling in Blairgowrie is that it is getting all these houses to stop them being built in Perth. We only have one councillor on the planning committee to speak for us.

RM – The figures proposed in LDP2 and the length of time are not factual. We cannot predict over the next ten years what the market will do. We have to look at building a number of houses in that time.

Member of the public – At the next meeting on the 29th you are going to be voting on a development that is going to cause more traffic congestion, there is a ransom strip of land involved, and when we suggested creating a wildlife strip behind the houses we were told by the developers that the police advised against that sort of thing.

RM – I take on board the concerns you have as a community. I tried to explain that we have no control over some aspects of the process and not others.

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<p>Member of the public – It makes it more clear in my mind that the builders are doing what they want.</p> <p>Cllr Laing – I take my hat off to Roz for coming here tonight but the council is not as toothless as made out to be. There was an application in my ward that was voted down by councillors. It went to the reporter and they agreed with the councillors over the developers. Sometimes we just have to say no, make a stand and make a point – that is the only way to get things changed. I should also point out that a petition only counts as one objection.</p> <p>Member of the public – Yes but it shows the strength of feeling in the community.</p> <p>IR – On the subject of the traffic lights and Oakbank Road we showed that people power does work.</p> <p>RM – If a planning application has six or more objections the committee is not allowed to discuss that prior to the meeting. It is my job to ensure both sides are heard and that councillors make up their own mind. It can go either way.</p> <p>Cllr Laing – It is worth pointing out that that committee is not political.</p> <p>TM – One of our local needs is that we have 350 people on the housing list and 40 people on the medical housing list which is almost 400 people. These people exist right now and to meet the affordable housing element of 25% about 1400 houses need to be built now, so could you look at changing that ratio?</p> <p>RM – So far I have heard very strongly that the number of houses is too much.</p> <p>TM – There is a local demand that is happening right now.</p> <p>RM – Would it be possible to look at changing the stipulations so shops could become accommodation? I don't know. There are other alternatives to meeting these needs. I know this is a contentious issue and we're not going to fix everything but I will do my best to follow up the issues.</p> <p>IR – The very fact that you are here is a step in the right direction. It would be nice to talk again and see what changes have been made. Thank you.</p>	
<p>Item 7 – Treasurer's Report</p> <p>RD emailed the following report which IR read out: I am pleased to report that the wishing well at the Wellmeadow was emptied mid-July by RD and Pat McGregor. £65 from the well was deposited in the bank account on July 19th. Other transactions have been payments to the minute taker for three months at £35 per month and a deposit from PKC for their annual grant. The account is currently, in credit, with a balance of £2783.38 as at August 5th, 2018. A bill for the engraving of the metal plate at the berry garden, arranged by Ian Cruickshank, is expected. The second account is in credit with a balance of £7090.58 as at August 5th, 2018.</p>	RD
<p>Item 8 – AOCB</p> <p>LS – It was agreed LS would take on looking after the suggestion boxes. He said that it was clear the current system wasn't working and that he wanted to come back to the next meeting with some proposals to try to rectify that.</p> <p>ST – Proposals for the recreation centre are to be discussed at the next meeting of the Eastern Perthshire Community Sports Hub on August 30th at Rattray Bowling Club.</p> <p>MY – The Canadian Pipes and Drums were coming to Blairgowrie on Braemar Night and will be performing as part of the Massed Pipe Band parade. She had secured funds from PKC for a reception for the band which will take the form of a meal at the Angus Hotel.</p> <p>BS – The Resilience Group had received a bill of £2134.25 for installing a plug-in system in Rattray Hall and needed the community council's approval to pay the bill. GD proposed, MY seconded and it was approved by all present.</p> <p>GD reminded the councillors that the briefs for the recreation centre from both previous and current administrations had been requested. He said that they really want to see the information as quickly as possible.</p> <p>IC has paid the bill for the plaque at the Blair in Bloom bed that the community council looks after.</p>	

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<p>AD said that Blair in Bloom had done a fantastic job preparing the town for the Keep Scotland Beautiful and Take a Pride in Perthshire judging. He also expressed thanks to DC's husband for building a wreath holder for the Wellmeadow.</p> <p>BB said that he had received complaints from residents on Ashgrove Road about cars using the road as a 'rat-run' and driving through the area at high speed which was concerning as children play on the road. There had also been complaints about horse manure on the Ardblair Trail.</p> <p>IR asked for a sign at Oakbank Road to say that it is for cyclists and walkers only, not motorcyclists.</p>	
<p>Date of Next Meeting Thursday, September 13th 2018</p>	<p>All</p>

Notes of meeting on Monday, July 30th regarding the Maple Place development.

Present: Richard Fawcus (RF) from Stewart Milne, Councillor Caroline Shiers (CS), Councillor Bob Brawn (BB), Ian Richards (IR), chair of Blairgowrie and Rattray Community Council, community councillor Brian Smith (BS), local residents Ken Kemp (KK), Martin Smith (MS) and Chris McLeery (CM), and Clare Damodaran, Blairgowrie Advertiser.

RF started by saying that 20 spaces were planned for a layby area on Elm Drive and that Stewart Milne had made a contribution to that.

KK - We have come up with something which we think is a much better idea but you will lose about four houses on the development. The problem is a turning point, we need somewhere for cars to turn round. That's where children will be hurt when they are being dropped off and picked up.

RF – That might be alleviated by the new road.

KK – It won't and we all know that.

CM – There are only two policemen in the whole of Blairgowrie, they can't do anything about people speeding or driving dangerously.

BS suggested a car park, saying that a turning point or drop off zone won't work. There are 80 to 100 cars there at any one time, I think we have to take the cars off road and in to a car park.

BB pointed out that in the US they have a drop-and-go system in the morning and in the afternoon class finishing times are staggered so not all the children leave at the same time. Not sure how this would work with buses for children of all ages going to different areas.

RF suggested the group looked at the landscaping plan for the site further down towards the Gamesie. He said Stewart Milne had been working with Perth and Kinross Council's greenspace and environment teams and they were happy with the proposed landscaping plan.

KK said that no one was against building more houses but they were against the number of houses and the way the developments were done.

RF – The site has been zoned for housing for quite a number of years now but I appreciated that there are a number of other applications in the offing now.

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MS – When we told people about the plans for this site they were absolutely horrified. It's a wildlife haven and once you lose this there is little or no green space left and the people who live here are horrified.

RF – The road to Piggy Lane from Elm Drive will be two-way and adopted. Alternative access to the Gamsie will be provided during the construction work. The existing SUDS pond at the top of the site will stay. There will be riparian and species rich planting and the green areas will be adopted by the council after construction. If that is to be changed then I am happy to work with the council and the community on that.

MS – There will still be large scale displacement of animals such as deer and the buzzard that live here during the construction period.

BS – They will have to get rid of everything here now, all the trees will be lost before they can build something new.

MS – I understand you are going to do more planting but the community is still going to lose this amenity.

KK – You can build a play park but it's not the same as what the kids have done themselves. They will lose their 'Swallows and Amazons' play area, they love it here, they adore it, they spend hours playing out here every night, building bridges and dens. The animal habitat is phenomenal here and we're losing that, the children are losing that. The other thing is the size of the plots – you are not adding to the community with these houses and the people who will live here are not getting the houses they deserve. You are planning to put 117 houses on two thirds of the site that was originally Zoned for 85 (indicative). And to which LDP2 proposes to increase that number to be between 94-148 and that is too many.

RF – We are looking to bring smaller family homes because we have looked into the market and that's where there is demand.

KK – That's not in keeping with the principles of the Tay Plan, why can't you give people a bit more land.

RF – There would be a financial implication to that as the houses would be more expensive.

IR – Our argument on that is with the local authority.

BS – There's an opportunity here for the planning department to show that they are cognisant of the problems.

MS – The planning department could be seen to make some sort of concession on this, The loss to the community is considerable and the planning department is held in deep suspicion by the community. It would be good brownie points for Stewart Milne and PKC if they made some concessions.

KK – Why are the developers going for the maximum number of houses allowed? There's no argument against Stewart Milne making a profit but it's got to take into consideration the community.

RF – Stewart Milne has won awards for how much we have taken areas and worked with them. We can look at what we can do here and will have to go back to the council with any revisions.

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KK – We are happy to see this but when we were speaking to people about this over 90% of the community has so many concerns, something needs to be done.

RF – We are trying to provide a mix of housing types for people in this area and help people get on to the property ladder. Local authorities are encouraging higher densities of housing so that developments take up less greenfield space.

KK – But the quality of life of the people who are living there is not great.

RF – More and more people don't want big gardens, they are time-consuming to maintain. And a lot of older people are looking to downsize.

IR – One of the problems that we have with the council is that our local authority doesn't put a maximum cap on the number of houses in a site. We are a very active community and comment on and object to applications and then the council do whatever they suggested in the first place.

RF – Our policy is very much to get the landscaping done early for our purchasers.

MS – Is it possible to amend the plans?

CS – Is there scope for the play area to be maybe less conventional? We have been working with the parks department on something more rustic for another area and make it more of a community area.

RF – We have to strike a balance between what the council wants to adopt after the building is complete. Our consultants have come up with this plan but we are always happy to have that discussion and we will have to involve community greenspace as well.

The discussion then moved on to issues around parking at the school.

RF – We have raised this with the education department at the council. We offered previously to put a layby for parking opposite the bus stops but we don't own the land there. We proposed a layby on the Blackthorn Place side of Elm Drive, and would keep the footpath.

KK – I believe it could be three years before this development is complete and the link road to the Perth Road is complete. Could I suggest it is one of the first things that is done to avoid heavy construction traffic coming in to the site past the school.

RF – We have offered to put that road in but the land owner is refusing to allow it. We are working to try to resolve this issue.

CD – Is it possible that the development could be completed and the through road is never completed?

RF – Yes.

KK – So as it stands at the moment the development of this site is going to be dangerous.

RF – There will be less construction traffic than there is for Blackthorn Place as the building will be at a slower pace.

MS – There is no way in the world that anyone should be building 200 houses in such a small area and were there are already huge issues in terms of traffic congestion.

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KK – This is a contentious issue, we got nearly 600 signatures against this development and could have had more if we had more time but we were spending 10 to 15 minutes talking to each person about what was going on in and the concerns they had about the wider lack of infrastructure in the town.

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