



## BLAIRGOWRIE & RATTRAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13 December 2018

Held in the Small Hall, Rattray Hall, Balmoral Road, Rattray at 7pm

<p><b><u>ATTENDANCE</u></b>          Mr I Richards (IR)          Mr B Smith (BS)          Mr R Duncan (RD)          Mr S Nichol (SN)          Mrs D Cushnie (DC)          Mr I Cruickshank (IC)          Mr G Darge (GD)          Mr A Donald (AD)          Mrs M Young (MY)</p> <p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b>           Mr A Thomson (AT)          Mrs C Thomson (CT)          Mr L Seal (LS)</p> <p>Mrs Bev Leslie (BL)</p> <p><b><u>ABSENT</u></b>           Ms Hazel Harris (HH)</p>	<p>Chair          Vice Chair          Treasurer          Secretary</p>	<p>Cllr C Shiers (CS)          Cllr B Brawn (BB)          Cllr T McEwan (TM)          Ms C Damodaran (CD)</p> <p>5 members of the public</p> <p>Mr C Smith</p> <p>Clare Mailer          Michelle Dow</p>	<p>Councillor PKC          Councillor PKC          Councillor PKC          Press</p> <p>Fire Scotland</p> <p>PKC          PKC</p>
<p><b>Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies</b>          IR welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Clare Mailer and Michelle Dow from Perth and Kinross Council’s housing team. Apologies were received from AT, CT and CS.</p>			<p>IR</p>
<p><b>Item 2 - Adoption of minutes</b>          The draft minutes of the November meeting were considered for adoption. HH was marked as being in attendance and as have given apologies. HH was not present to clarify. AD proposed the adoption of the amended minutes; IC seconded.</p>			<p>All</p>
<p><b>Item 3 – Matters Arising</b>  <b>Cycle Racks</b> – IR said that CT was to report back on this issue but as she wasn’t present it would be carried over to the next meeting in January.  <b>Roads</b> – SN emailed PKC about activating the beeps at the pedestrian crossing on Gas Brae at the Wellmeadow. He received a response which stated that the council had done all the testing they needed to do and were not prepared to switch the beeps on. SN added that he had also requested an update on all the roads issues in the town but had not received one. With regard to the junction of the High Street, Perth Street and Reform Street, CS said that there were two options. One was to signalise the junction and include the pedestrian crossing within that. The other was to introduce a</p>			<p>CT           SN</p>

<p>pedestrian crossing at the Post Office. Both options would result in a reduction of car parking spaces there. CS said that CS and SN had said that removing the car parking spaces was unacceptable. No work would be done before the 2019/20 financial year at the earliest. IR asked if they discounted the idea of a raised platform there. CS said no, the whole area would be a raised platform but there would be a loss in parking spaces. IR asked if the community council was happy that Chic Haggart (CH) from PKC was hiding behind the inclusive living team when it came to the beeps at the pedestrian crossing. MY said that she didn't think the inclusive living team were listening to the people they are supposed to be looking after. SN said that it wasn't the fact that no one was asking for the beeps, but that the two pedestrian crossings were so close to each other that having beeps on them may result in people hearing the beeps of the other crossing and cross the road when it was not safe to do so. CS said that CH had said he would do it if the community was willing to take on the risk. IR said that the council was accepting a risk by not having the beeps and proposed inviting CH back to the next community council meeting as it had been a long time since he attended a meeting and he was always slow to respond to emails. GD said that he had also been in conversation with members of the public who have to use that crossing as there is no crossing at Tesco and that while he understood the reticence to turn on the beeps, there was no indication of when to cross so perhaps they could add another green man on the traffic light pole. IR asked SN to write to CH to invite him to the January meeting and to suggest GD's idea to him. CS said that a crossing at Tesco was to be included in the next batch of work.</p> <p><b>Recreation Centre</b> – IR asked if there was any update. CS said not at the moment. IR asked if there was any hope of a resolution. CS said she can't say any more than that.</p> <p><b>Defibrillator location plan/map</b> – BS said that there were two websites and an app on the Discover Blairgowrie page and that PKC had a list. He had a list of 13 defibs around the town but not all of them are open to the public. He thinks only three of them have access 24 hours a day, one of which is at the Davie Park changing rooms. Some of the defibs you have to dial 999 and they will give you a code to open the box. All ambulances and fire appliances carry them and if you dial 999 you could get a fire appliance on the scene if it was closer than an ambulance. There were several defibs in the medical centres and the cottage hospital but they are only available to members of staff. BS asked if anyone knew of any other defibs in the town that were not on the list to please let the Resilience Group know. Member of the public Ken Kemp asked if they knew which types of defib were available as some could kill a patient if not used properly. TM asked if BS knew how accurate the PKC list was. BS said it was very accurate but is only as good as the information they are given. Davidsons the chemist and both Rattray and Blairgowrie Bowling Club were also suggested for adding to the list. BS said he would check those out. AD suggested including the list in a future edition of the Hib magazine so that people could cut it out and keep it. The list will also be posted on the BRCC website and Facebook page.</p>	<p>CS</p> <p>BS</p>
<p><b>Item 4 - Fire report</b> Blairgowrie firefighters were mobilised to incidents 16 times in November. Incidents of note included a two car collision on the A923 at Hills of Bendochy Farm junction, rubbish on a fire at Davie Park, providing medical attention to an elderly male with serious head injuries sustained after a fall, and a chimney fire. 12 personnel attended the Remembrance Parade in Blairgowrie, two firefighters attended a careers fair at Newhill Primary School, three firefighters from Blairgowrie assisted operationally in Dundee on Bonfire Night and five firefighters took part in Safedrive in Forfar, Dundee and Perth as part of the SFRS's presence at community safety events. Firefighters carried out eight home fire safety visits (HFSV) in November, five high risk, two medium risk and one low risk. IR asked if they followed up the HFSVs. CS said there was no legal obligation to do so but they do go in a fit smoke alarms for example as and when required. They also work with partners in other organisations and departments such as social work where necessary. AD said that he would like a formal vote of thanks recorded for the hard work the fire crews do, particularly in light of recent tragic events in the town that they had been involved in.</p>	<p>CS</p>
<p><b>Item 5 – Subjects raised by members of the public</b></p>	

None	
<p><b>Item 6 – Clare Mailer and Michelle Dow</b></p> <p>Clare Mailer is the heading of housing at Perth and Kinross Council and Michelle Dow is service manager for housing. CM said that she wasn't sure if there were any specific areas that the community council wanted to discuss and said that they had wanted to show a really nice video that brought to life the impact that the Blackthorn Place development was having on people's lives. However, as there was no screen or laptop to play the video they encouraged everyone to watch it, saying it was very heart-warming. She said that housing is the biggest service within the council, and that they have 7500 tenants, a five-year capital programme and a £30 million budget. Their aim was to ensure rents were as low as possible to make housing as affordable as possible. MD said that there was a common housing register that people could apply for including PKC properties as well as Hillcrest and Caledonian Housing properties. PKC is quite unique in that it manages all three portfolios. The council has a statutory duty to accommodate homeless households which includes anyone who applies and is assessed as homeless or has been given notice to quit property. She explained that the tables detailed in the presentation/briefing which she handed out to members of the community council encompassed overall demand, social housing stock and the council's new build programme. The total housing stock was in Blairgowrie and the Glens ward was 773 and the overall demand is currently 368 people. She said that PKC worked very closely with partners like Hillcrest Housing Association for example to ensure that all the tenancy contracts expected the same levels of responsibility. 11 houses have been sold at Blackthorn Place on a shared equity basis with only two still available. IR asked what the difference between social rent and mid-market rent was. CM said that social rent was affordable rent, mid-market was bit higher but not as high as private sector rental prices. Council rents are the most affordable in the region. The actual difference in price could not be given as it varies depending on private rental values. Social rents are set in consultation with tenants and are set across the region so they are the same in Perth or Pitlochry or Blairgowrie. AD asked if Hillcrest provided social rent at Blackthorn Place. MD said no, it was a mix and some were PKC. CM said that following feedback from the community there was a significant increase in the number of properties at Blackthorn Place available for shared equity. KK said that the community was told that if 72 properties were not built at the site the development would not go ahead. BS said that it was presented that Stewart Milne were building the houses for Hillcrest. MD said that the locality team for the north of the region, which is based in Leslie Street in Blairgowrie, also manage properties in Dunkeld and Pitlochry, and that it was one of the highest performing areas in terms of tenancy sustainability. MD said that targets were agreed with tenants for timescales for issues or complaints to be resolved in and these had been set at 20 working days. The service is regulated by the Scottish Housing Registrar. 83% of cases are resolved from a PKC perspective within 20 working days. The teams understand that some cases are more complex than others and will take longer to resolve. Most are one complaint rather than recurring or repeating complaints. MD said that a drop-in day was held in Blairgowrie recently which was attended by 82 people. This was a trial event to see what the demand was like and is something that they would like to replicate again in Blairgowrie and in other areas. SN said that the biggest issue in rural areas was the hidden waiting list where no one bothers to apply because there are no houses available and asked how active the team was in rural areas. MD said that they were looking at a building programme for the coming years and trying to get the word out that houses would be coming up. CM said that the waiting list they have is just one indicator of housing needs in the area but that there were other indicators as well which inform the new build plan, such as the specialist needs analysis in rural areas which gives a better picture. MY asked if they were building developments with particular groups of people in mind, such as the elderly or those with mental health issues. CM said that they worked very closely with colleagues in health and social care and what the housing needs were across the region, but that there absolutely were building in terms of specific needs such as mental health issues. She said they were also working with</p>	CM and MD

developers so that their new builds were future proof as well and that the demand analysis that feeds into the five-year plan was continuously refreshed. MY said that social needs as well as physical needs should be built in. CM said that they had developments that address these needs and that they also have a housing support team. Where specific support is needed they link with colleagues in other departments. It is very person-centred and depends on what an individual's needs are and the strategy takes this into account. MD said that the team was thrilled with the results from a tenants' survey earlier this year which rated PKC's housing department as the best in Scotland for the overall service they provided. The survey was an independent survey of 1300 face-to face interviews. CM said that they also got a lot of data and information behind the headline stats which will help form policy. For example, they need to do more work in terms of digital technology to encourage tenants to report their problems online. MD said that while the council provides other avenues for people to report issues, many other departments such as the DWP are going entirely online so the housing team is helping some of their tenants to go digital. IR said that they were certainly passionate about their job. CM said the staff and team are really committed and focussed on the needs of tenants. There are some cases that they struggle with but it absolutely comes down to the teams on the ground who really want to make a difference. She said they currently have just under 3000 people on the applicant list but a few years ago it was 6000. They are trying to find innovative ways to meet the needs of tenants such as the buy-back scheme – last year 42 properties were bought back. AD asked why the council had said they weren't interested in buying back a house on Harriet Row. MD said they would need to look at demand. GD asked if there was a reason why they only bought ex-council houses. CM said it was because it was easier to manage the properties that way, they knew the stock type, and it helped with managing communal properties if they owned the whole block. She said they could purchase some properties through the Scottish Government's mortgage to rent scheme to keep a family in a property for example if they were at risk of becoming homeless. GD said that there was a problem throughout Scotland of empty flats above shops. Hillcrest have purchased flats, done them up and then rent them out which brings people back to live in town centres and that buying back properties on council estates does not re-populate town centres. CM said they can do that if it is economically viable and that there is also the empty homes initiative. Both of which are things they can look at going forward as they match stock with demand. She added that there are processes that have to be gone through but it would be something they would consider. IR said that it was great to hear that Blackthorn Place had been such a success as it was a controversial project. CM said that they have to work with communities as well as meet demand and that the community was right, and PKC listened to the community when they suggested that the number of units for shared equity be increased. CM said they had many meetings with MY and CS who said that the units would sell and they were right. Early indications are that it is working, PKC wants tenancies to succeed, they don't want them to fall apart. A number of key aspects from the feedback they received from the community were taken on board and the team will listen and do what they can to make them work. SN said that he would urge councillors to take a much harder line on affordable housing policy in developments rather than let developers buy their way out of their obligations which would go a long way to alleviating the issues that arose around Blackthorn Place. KK said that he was one of the main objectors to Blackthorn Place because of the density of housing in the development but said the houses looked quite nice as it stands at the moment. He said integration not segregation is key and he still believes the number of houses at Blackthorn Place makes it segregation and that when private developers are building the affordable housing element should be scattered throughout the development. CM said that she couldn't disagree with the comments made. IR asked that Castle Water employed 200 people in the town and that number could significantly increase further. He asked if that sort of thing had an impact on housing. MD said it could potentially although they had not seen it yet. CM explained the points-based system for allocating housing. She said that they have got government guidelines that they have to follow. Applicants get points for overcrowding

<p>for example, or if they are living in insecure private sector accommodation, or for medical reasons, or because they have been asked to leave a property. The more points they have the higher up the list they are and the acute end of that is homelessness.</p>	
<p><b>Item 7 – Taxi ranks</b> This was deferred to the next meeting as CT was not present.</p>	CT
<p><b>Item 8 – Suggestion Boxes</b> SN said that seven of the eight suggestions received in the suggestion boxes that month were from one letter. He proposed that if LS collects the suggestions from the boxes, SN, LS and IR can meet to discuss how the community council will deal with them. Not all of them will need to be discussed at a meeting. Items will only be discussed if contact details for the member of the public who raised the issue are provided.</p>	SN
<p><b>Item 9 – Drive-It Day</b> RD said that the Rotary Club of Blairgowrie’s Drive-It Day would be back in 2019. This time it will be a one-day event held on April 28<sup>th</sup>. The idea is that the cars will assemble at Blairgowrie Golf Club and then parade through the Wellmeadow before heading to Scone where there will be a collection of classic cars on display. They will then drive through Rait and up to Pitlochry. 20 per cent of the money raised will go to the Rotary Club and the projects it supports locally, nationally and internationally with the rest of the money going to SCAA and CHAS. MY asked if the Golf Club was the only place people would have a chance to see the cars in Blairgowrie or if maybe they could gather and set off from the Wellmeadow car park. RD said that the golf club was handy for registration. CD suggested using Wellmeadow House for registration. MY said that they might raise more money by being based in the town so more people could see the cars. RD said that he would raise that at the next meeting, commenting that there was a lot still to be discussed.</p>	CT
<p><b>Item 10 – Treasurer’s Report</b> The Resilience Group account has a balance of £4956.33. £1000 had been credited but £500 transferred to the main account as it was donated for the fireworks and credited in error to the Resilience Group account. The main account stands at £3989.93 after paying for suggestion boxes and admin fees which totalled £178.35. Fireworks income £4941.49 with costs of £3774 left a balance of £1167.49 which was included in the main account balance detailed above. The WW1 bench income was £1449.92 and expenses of £1097.80 left a credit balance of £352.12 which is included in the main account balance as above.</p>	RD
<p><b>Item 11 - Local Councillor reports</b> TM said that following PKC’s Ros McCall’s attendance at the BRCC meeting earlier in the year, Cllr Grant Laing had raised the answers she gave to the community council with officers and has been advised that some of the answers she gave were inaccurate. It has been recommended that she contacts the community council with the accurate answers. CS said that she met with Ryan Brown from GS Brown regarding the application for the development at Honeyberry. She mentioned to them the positive discussions the community council had had with Stewart Milne. GS Brown had a drop-in session about the development but no one from the community council was there. She would pass on their contact details. The planning application was likely to be lodged in February. There are still a lot of public concerns about the development. Kirkton Road is only to be a point of access in emergencies. She is looking at whether the sign for Lochy Park can be repaired and replicated in any way and would be keen to hear from any onw who had any suggestions. At a drop-in session at Blairgowrie Library it was raised that there is no disabled parking spot outside the library. Chic Haggart from PKC has said that it would be completely feasible to put a space there and that It could be done in</p>	TM, CS and BB

<p>the new year. BS asked if there was any news on whether an additional electric car parking space was to be provided at that car park. BB said that the council was waiting for SSE on that. CS said that numerous objections had been received to the proposals to widen the path on Elm Drive. A report was going to the environment committee. CS congratulated the community council on another lovely Christmas Tree.</p> <p>BB said that the contract for the new CCTV systems in Perth and Dundee had been awarded and that a survey of possible locations for the siting of a camera in Blairgowrie would be needed. He said that one possibility would be the Development Trust office in the Wellmeadow. SN said that he would write a letter of support. BB said that there was to be a meeting at Blairgowrie Community Campus on Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 11am about parking. The police were going to be there and they were hoping to get a solution to the issues there.</p>	
<p><b>Item 12 – Pending Planning Applications</b> None.</p>	GD
<p><b>Item 14 – Secretary’s correspondence</b> None</p>	SN
<p><b>Item 15 – AOCB</b></p> <p>AD formally thanked a number of people for their support in getting the Christmas Tree for the town in the Wellmeadow. The tree was donated by Sholach Trees, delivered by Howe’s Removals and decorated by Something Special Flowers, The lights were donated by Blachere Illuminations, the cabling was by Mike Proudfoot and the tree base was supplied by PKC. SN said he would draft formal letters to thanks to all involved. IR thanked MY for all her efforts in organising the tree once again.</p> <p>AD asked how the community would feel about planting a permanent tree in the Wellmeadow where the Christmas tree is currently located. MY said it could be themed for different events throughout the year and having a permanent tree there would avoid a lot of hard work and faff each year putting the tree up. GD said that the Wellmeadow is a conservation area and that they wouldn’t want a tree that would grow too high. MY said that they would obviously need to consult with other groups. IR said it could not interfere with other events. MY said it might affect Braemar Day. BS said it would take too much area away from events, it is currently a nice open area and a permanent tree would create a lot of dead ground. GD said that he didn’t think a conifer would be appropriate. DC asked if they could get one in a pot each year. IR asked community councillors to give it some thought and they can revisit the idea in January.</p> <p>RD said the well in the Wellmeadow had not been fixed and that needed to be addressed. He also said that he thought a balanced view was required regarding the discussions around CCTV for the town. CS said that she had a concern that if a camera was focussed on one part of the town the risk was that all that would happen was it would just move the problems elsewhere. She said she had seen that before about 20 years ago when the police cracked down on issues in the Wellmeadow but it just moved those issues to other parts of the town. She was also concerned that people were lulled into a false sense of security by having cameras there and that the police could use the camera’s presence as an excuse to pull resources from the town and put them elsewhere, saying that they will see it as a way of providing cover. GD said that the police like CCTV as it brings convictions. CS said that convictions are only secured for incidents where the cameras were, if incidents occurred elsewhere there would be no convictions from CCTV. She said that she wasn’t convinced that everyone wanted the camera. GD said that as a resident of the centre of the town he would welcome it. CS asked if he took on board her point that that it just moves the problem elsewhere. GD said that the police were not going to be hanging round the Wellmeadow. RD said there would probably not be any problems while all the lights were on as having a well-lit area was critical. TM said there was not a lot of crime in this ward and that his personal view was that the money could be used for better things. If the source of money for this was to be the community then the community should be consulted about what their priorities are. IR said that the question was how they consult with the</p>	

<p>community on this in a meaningful way. CS said that it was important to try to get an understanding of people's feelings and quality of life. RD said that it was worth having a discussion. IR said that it was worth having it on the agenda if the general consensus was to consult more widely. KK said that he had heard about the tree being vandalised and the wishing well too, that the Wellmeadow is the centre point of Blairgowrie. He asked what it was going to take to stop these despicable acts. He understood the point about privacy but said that you have got to protect the centre of the town.</p> <p>GD raised concerns about the junction at The Croft and Leslie Street, saying that had had to attend two accidents there in the last six months, that the paint of the junction was non-existent and that the street lighting there did not seem to be working. CS said it was on Chic's list.</p> <p>BS said that otters had been seen crossing the bridge over the Ericht and a member of the public had asked if there was any possibility of getting a sign warning people. IR said that the sub-group of the community council that organised the Citizen of the Year awards was missing a person since Pat McGregor had stood down from the community council and asked if anyone was willing to join the group. DC volunteered. SN has emailed the council about the garden centre in the Wellmeadow but has not had a response. He asked CS to chase it up.</p> <p>AD asked if there was anything that could be done to slow traffic on William Street down following an accident there. SN said he would add it to Chic's list.</p> <p>MY said that due to being so busy they had been unable to organise a Nativity scene for the town but would look into it for next year. She also said well done to everyone involved in getting the rack for the Remembrance wreaths.</p>	
<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b> Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 7pm in the Adult Resource Centre, Jessie Street, Blairgowrie.</p>	All

Distribution (email unless specified):

Community Council Members:

Mr I Cruickshank  
Mrs D Cushnie  
Mr G Darge  
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