

Minutes of the Blairgowrie and Rattray Community Council Meeting

6th February 2020

Minutes prepared by K Wood

Attendance

Cllr Bob Brawn (BB), Phil Seymour (PS), Robin Duncan (RD), Kim Wood (KW), Sandy Thomson (ST), Brian Rickwood (BR), Cllr Tommy McEwan (TMc), Cllr Caroline Shiers (CSh), Mr Mark Purrmann-Charles (MP-C)

Apologies

Carla Sutherland (CSu), Euan Donald (ED), Police

Members of Public – 3 present

BRCC meeting

1. Minutes from BRCC meeting 9.1.20 proposed by RD & accepted BR
2. **Resignation of Howard Chandler**

Howard tendered his resignation for health reasons and it was formally confirmed at the meeting.

PS explained that the consequence for the CC of Howard's resignation was that we were sitting with the minimum number of councillors allowed to form the council. We were unable to co-opt or recruit any new councillors before the 7th May. In the event that we lost another councillor there would have to be a by-election to try to fill the 7 vacant seats. We were obviously keen that members of the community who wished to support the town came along to our meetings over the next few months, speak to the councillors and considered whether they would be willing to serve the community by agreeing to be co-opted onto the council after the 7th May.

3. **Matter Arising**

Minuting of Meetings. BR – wondering how much detail of what members of the public say at meetings should be minuted as, at last month's meeting, a member of

the public was vocally critical of his employer (PKC). To protect the public BR was concerned about negative comments being minuted, on a public forum and possibly being used in a negative way in the press. PS suggested that going forward if a member of the public said something in a negative way he would check whether they were happy for it to be minuted or not.

Berries and Cherries Bed. BR found out that the B&C bed was gifted to BRCC by the Round Table, which no longer existed. BRCC currently has the responsibility for maintaining this bed and at the moment it looked fine. BR questioned whether it was within the gift of BRCC to give this bed over to the Blair in Bloom group. PS agreed to find out the position with regard to who currently owned the bed and then a decision could be made.

Item 18 in January Minutes. CSh felt there were a couple of separate points bundled into one item and it was a bit confusing with regards to children's safety at Rattray Primary school and work being carried out on Glenalmond Road. CSh to e-mail KW to clarify the points to amend the minutes for January.

CSh- reassured that the Lollipop service would not be discontinued unless a safe alternative was in place. She understood that some residents wanted to keep the Lollipop person in work until a decision has been made by GS Brown. The building works here could cause more traffic congestion and obstruction and it is important to ensure children's safety at this time in particular. CSh assured that this would be managed as part of the planning process with timings for construction traffic managed.

CSh- school initiative in place to show children how to use a pedestrian crossing and how to cross the road safely prior to removal of crossing patroller. CSh reminded CC that it is individual parents/carers responsibilities to get their children to and from school safely. There is no statutory obligation on local authorities to provide crossing patrollers. By putting in place safe alternatives such as a puffin crossing and 20mph zone this meant it was safer for children 24/7 and not just at school time.

BB- Highlighted to BRCC his concern that the 20-mph vehicle activated signs have not been installed and should have been done by now. CSh said she would chase this with Darryl McEwan from PKC.

CSh- parking bays have been made on Hatton road for parents to drop children and allow them to walk the short distance safely through the park and into school grounds independently.

Recreation Centre. PS had had a response from the council with regard to the progress of the design. It was an ongoing process and they were currently trying to address a difficult challenge to build the new facility whilst maintaining the service and function of the current building which serviced the High School as well. The first design should be available for a PKC meeting on the 9th March 2020. After that meeting the user group should be convened to review the design. PS had been promised by the Chief Executive of PKC that there would be time for meaningful input from the User Group. All agreed that PKC needed to be given the time to solve the design problems to move to the next stage. PS to chase after 9th March if no sign of the URG being setup.

Improving communication with the Public. MP-C gave an up-date on FB statistics. Currently had 1190 followers on FB which he felt was good. Mark had been made an administrator along with Morag who was the previous administrator. Stewart Nichol, CS, and Gordon Darge were currently editors and had the ability to create posts. As SN and GD were no longer councillors they would need to be removed. We needed to decide the arrangement of administrators and editors going forward. Morag would still like to be an editor. No regular or scheduled posts were taking place at present so there was an opportunity to be more pro-active. Instagram and Twitter were also a possibility to look into as they had a different audience and would possibly widen the number of people we were able to reach. Agreed that MP-C would produce a paper and a proposal on the way forward for consideration at the March CC meeting.

Steve Johnson representing the Business association suggested we needed to be quite clear about making a distinction between BRCC posts and general posts that are to do with what was happening in Blairgowrie as that was being addressed through the ongoing development of the Discover Blairgowrie website. There was the possibility that duplication might lead to confusion and dilute what Discover Blairgowrie was trying to achieve. SJ 's view was that on social media, the CC should be concentrating on specific projects that BRCC was doing. Discover Blairgowrie had an idea for providing an area for BRCC to show minutes etc. PS indicated that the CC had a role in communicating in relation to the CC, PKC, national govt and public and related bodies.

RD felt there might be duplication but MP-C suggested if he and SJ got together to make a plan then a proposal could be made to the CC. PS would like to look into getting community input on their priorities/concerns by doing some community surveys and gathering data and information from the public.

CCTV in the Wellmeadow. Steve Johnson reported from the business association that businesses were in favour of it going ahead. BR raised a query on whether there was an issue of operating the CCTV with WIFI. CS said she didn't believe that was a problem. PS said the next stage would be to set up a meeting involving the CC, BARBA, PKC and the police to explore how we take it forward. BR questioned if CCTV was necessary and commented on the lack of evidence of crimes taking place in the Wellmeadow. ST pointed out that there was small time vandalism, issues with drugs, fear for older people and he also believed there was a problem with incidents not being reported and that the commander's bulletin didn't necessarily reflect all the problems that occurred. BB added that the CCTV was also there to protect vulnerable people and if you were going about in an acceptable fashion it shouldn't worry you. BR felt there was a lack of trust in citizens and that it was an unnecessary measure. PS re-iterated that the decision to go ahead had been made previously by the CC so we should move on and go ahead. The resilience committee was also in favour.

Community market BRCC Presence. A survey had been put out to members to ask for availability and there were people available for each market. MP-C would only know if he was available closer to the markets due to work commitments. BRCC faces the challenge that a pool of only 8 members were available to cover the market for 6 months. ST felt it was important for BRCC to have a presence. Good opportunity to gain opinions from visitors as well as locals. PS had written to Nick to ask if we could still get the stall without having to do the setup and takedown. BR commented that some BRCC members were not comfortable with doing the heavy lifting required and felt it was unreasonable for this to be expected. MP-C asked if we always needed a stall? From past experience, RD confirmed that to have a proper, professional presence we really should have a stall. There was enough money available to pay for it if necessary and SCYD were very good at attending and setting up. If BRCC were not doing the set up it would also help with reducing the resource needed to cover the stall. BR also asked where the pens/boards/kit needed to use at the stall were currently housed. BRCC needed to establish where these were and put in place a system to get access to them. It was confirmed the equipment was currently in the BRDT office and would need to be recovered.

After discussion it was agreed that the CC would take a stall at the Community market but would not assist with the putting up and taking down of stalls. PS would convey the decision to Nick Cole.

4. Police and Fire Reports

Fire Report Delivered by Lorna Rumsay.

Blairgowrie crews have been mobilised to 24 incidents in January.

Incidents of note include:

Road Traffic Incident (RTC) on the Alyth Road on the 5th.

Car Fire (totally involved) on the 8th

Chimney Fire on the 9th on Reform Street

RTC at Caputh on the 17th

Stand-by in Dundee

Community Safety Engagement;

32 HFSV completed

20 High risk, 11 Medium risk, and 1 low risk.

Home & Fire Safety presentation delivered to the Kinloch WRI group.

CPR input also delivered to the Kinloch WRI group.

Firefighters Charity Cheque Handover from BDC Blairgowrie Dental Care for £620.

No Police Report.

Whilst appreciating the challenge their shifts presented, the councillors were disappointed that again there was no police presence. Their attendance provided an opportunity for the councillors and members of the public to discuss current areas of concern as well as providing the police with a chance to explain what they were doing and promoting. PS suggested asking the police to send the CC a written report if they were unable to attend a meeting. PS agreed to write to the police to ask for this. A member of the public would like to have asked if considering the size of the town and how it is expanding whether the police station could be opened for even a few days a week. Another member of the public found a wallet and spent a few days trying to get into the station to hand it in. The concern was raised that there was no established place for lost valuables to be handed in.

5. Subjects Raised by Members of the Public

Suggestion scheme. MP-C had had a handover meeting with Len Seal and would now continue checking the suggestion boxes before each meeting. This month the two suggestions included:

1. The painted boards sitting in the area behind Sainsbury's were decayed – could a group SCYD or Blair in Bloom do some maintenance? PS explained the damage was not down to decay but had in fact been vandalised. One was ripped down and damaged beyond repair. It had already been noticed and was in the plan for Blair in Bloom to tackle in the near future.
2. Could the railings around the Wellmeadow be repainted? CSh believed these were included in the rolling maintenance program but she would check and confirm this.

Steve Johnson representing the Business Association talked about the work they had been doing with the Proactive Communities Project. Including organising tours for businesses to visit other businesses to find out about each other's businesses and how they could all help each other. They were looking to produce a town brochure that might take the form of a lever-arch file or catalogue. They were also waiting for a meeting with Westpark to try to find ideas and solutions to connect the new site and the town together. 15 businesses had expressed an interest in a PKC funding scheme to improve shop-fronts. The fund closed at the end of March. SJ has been working closely with Clare Damodaran (Press) to get more reporters into Blairgowrie. There was a proposal to develop a Cargill's trail idea along the Riverside and they were also looking into the possibility of creating a town merchandise range to sell. CSh praised the business association for how pro-active they were. A member of the public praised the loyalty card scheme.

Big Guns Project. Brian Smith (BS) advised that Historic Environment Scotland's Director of Collections has asked for a meeting to discuss the idea of returning the Big Guns to Blairgowrie. BS was happy to go to this meeting but wanted to check that BRCC were happy to proceed with this project. RD queried the cost. At the moment the associated costs to the project and the exact condition of the guns were unknown. PS suggested BS attends the meeting to clarify the details and establish important points for consideration like, how much

it will cost to upkeep them, maintain them and display them?. The guns were given to Blairgowrie in 1919. TM suggested BS could contact Culture Perth & Kinross as a possibility for funding.

6. Sub Committee Up-dates

Citizen of the Year

PS gave an up-date that KW, ST, and PS had met to discuss the criteria and can report that the rules will remain the same as last year however we may wish to review for next year when we have more time to make changes. There was a small concern that with no qualifying criteria, relying purely on public votes to decide the winner, it became a popularity contest and was therefore open to abuse. However, this had not happened in the past 2 years since the format was changed.

The event will be advertised in the Blairgowrie Advertiser and on the BRCC website and Facebook page. Nominations open on Tuesday 17th March and close Tuesday 14th April. Details to be published in the BA, Hub Magazine, BRCC website, and Facebook page. The nominees will be published in the BA with brief details of each nominee. Voting forms will be available from Tuesday 5th May and close on Tuesday 2nd June. The venues for forms need to be finalised. Presentation of awards at the community market on 26th June.

XMAS Tree & Bonfire

RD not received the forms from Morag yet but he had been given lots of information on what to do and who to contact. RD suggested they need a team of 3. RD will bring a plan to the next meeting.

Resilience Team

Fraser McDonald and Ally Donald had agreed to stay on the team. the other members were PS, CS. BR. and M P-C. PS was the co-ordinator and would be looking to organise a workshop to go over the plans. BR suggested that due to situations where it was not possible to get across the bridge, two teams were needed– one for Blairgowrie and one for Rattray. PS said that the plan covered a whole range of scenarios and this would be picked up at the workshop.

A Defibrillator has been installed outside Davidsons the chemists. We needed to train people to use this equipment. The target was 6 people a month. Pete Richardson of First Aid Perthshire had offered to provide training for free and had given 3 dates at the end of Feb and March as a possibility? This training

would also include CPR which was much more involved than using the Defibrillator. He could train 20-25 people in one session and each session would be 1-1.15hrs long. Claire is happy to help with publicity in the BA. BRDT would be ideal premises if this could be organised. PS would take the plans forward.

7. Issues Carried Over from Previous Community Councils

None to report.

8. Treasurers Report - RD

Current account ending 768-

We received £267 from PKC into this account on 28th January. This was the top up as the year-end was changed. We paid the annual web charge of £36.00. RD managed to take down the old flag from the Wellmeadow and has received and paid for a new Saltire at a cost of £104.40. A Union flag is also available and RD suggested that we purchase this to use at certain times of the year when appropriate. For example, the Climate Conference coming to Glasgow is a UK event so it would be appropriate to fly the Union Flag at that time.

We have £327.89 in this account.

Account ending 560- RD emptied the well at the Wellmeadow and removed £27.98. This account has a balance of £7959.22

9. Local Councillor's Reports

Bob Brawn.

- Last round of Community Investment Fund taking place 20th Feb at Rattray Connect.
- Westpark had been approved with a number of conditions applied. Most of these were straightforward but some were more complicated, for example, a filter lane for traffic entering the site. Architects were working on these conditions. There will be 6 electric charging points going in. With regards to timescale, they were looking at the first shops opening the beginning of next year. ST questioned BB with regards to the Westpark development.

He felt that in the 3 years since the talks started the retail plans seem to have grown. BB confirmed there will be 2 large retailers – Lidl and Home Bargains plus 3 smaller retail units (occupancy not as yet confirmed). Also included in the plans was a family restaurant, a budget hotel, and possibly a drive-through eatery (again not confirmed), although there were no indications that any companies had shown an interest in these . BB confirmed the next phase of the development would definitely be used as affordable housing and not more retail. Discussions had started.

- Ferguson Park – BB had a meeting with Peter Ritchie and PKC with a view to setting up the residents association. The three members had decided to be un-constituted initially. They were looking to each recruit another 2 people and once they have that they would hold another meeting, possibly a Rattray Connect. It had not been decided if it would be open to the public at this stage, however it would be appropriate for BRCC to have a representative present.
- Rattray ground clearance had started and grass seeding had been done.
- Glenalmond Road traffic issues were to be reviewed as part of the 2nd phase of Hatton Road review. The rubbish from the Marfield Hotel had started to be removed due to an enforcement order and it was understood that a fence would be erected to deter further fly-tipping.
- The path down to Rattray school had no lights and as it had no electricity supply it was not going to be financially feasible to solve this problem. There was a possibility that Springfield house builders might need to dig a channel for drainage, so it might be possible to use that as an opportunity to lay an electricity cable at the same time. ST was concerned about the drains being put in and questioned whether that was in the original plans. BB to report back on the issue.
- Rattray Xmas Tree. PKC have indicated they wouldn't mind a permanent tree being planted on their land but suggested the land in front of the church might be more suitable as they were concerned about possible vandalism.

Caroline Shiers.

- CSh had been working with the Eastern Perthshire Action Partnership. She wondered if BRCC received the minutes as she felt it would be of interest to BRCC as there were financial assistance opportunities available for disadvantaged people.
- Shop front scheme – Pleased with the up-take and looking to get the shop fronts tidied up before the start of the tourist season.
- Advised that the 40 MPH limit would be extending along the A923 from the Coupar Angus Bridge to the Bendochy crossroad.
- CSh had been looking at the area around Piggy Lane and was seeking to get it dedicated as parkland. CSh was keen to get BRCC involved. They are looking at creating a more rustic park in areas around the pitch which would be more interesting for children than a standard park. KW suggested this needed to be looked at in relation to the car issues for the school along Hamish Henderson Drive. TM felt an opportunity was missed to get Stewart Milne to commit to a park area when the last development went through planning. PS advised that Blair in Bloom had plans to redo the roundabout at the start of Hamish Henderson Drive.
- CS raised concerns about the increase of roadside litter, particularly between Coupar Angus Road and Blairgowrie. KW asked if we could work closely with the schools to promote good citizenship in this regard. However, CSh believed that great efforts were already being made in the schools and actually we needed to target adults. KW asked if we ever fined people for dropping litter. An easy solution did not seem possible.

Tom McEwan

- TM visited Glenaldmond Road and could see that although work had been done there was still a lot that had not been done that was on the list. TM had raised concern with PKC that things hadn't been done. RD felt that responsibility for work not being done should lie with the management team at PKC, in particular, the Housing Manager. If work had not been done that should have been then it was the job of our councillors to hold them to account.
- Sandy from post office had spoken to TM. He had repeatedly asked Royal Mail to put a post box across the road from the post office and they had refused. He had asked for permission to put a sign up indicating where the post boxes were but was still waiting to hear back.

- TM commented that the Police were doing very proactive stuff in the community but they were missing the opportunity to tell us.
- TM questioned how Westpark was going to co-ordinate with Newhill Primary and the whole surrounding area. He felt a co-ordinated approach needed to be taken to address the whole area with regards to road planning and was seeking to pursue this with the council officers.

With regards to road planning, a member of the public questioned whether there should be a crossing outside the post-office. A discussion ensued about the challenges of where to put a crossing given the closeness of the road junction to the Post Office. The member of the public also raised concern about the lack of crossings in the town and noted that a skip had been left on the street that caused a hazard due to a lack of any night-time lights.

9. Pending Planning Applications

None – Gordon Darge happy to continue checking this.

10. Planning Session for Councillors

BB advised that PKC were happy to offer a joint planning session for community councils with new members and advised that BRCC Councillors need to liaise with other local committees – Meigle & Ardler, Coupar Angus, Mount Blair and maybe Alyth suggested. BB agreed to speak to planners to get some possible dates. PS would then liaise with other CCs to get a mutually agreeable date and location.

11. Roads, Parking and Crossing Issues

PS had agreed with Daryl McKeown (DM) from the Roads Dept to have a session with BRCC on pm Monday 17th to consider road, crossings and parking issues. PS suggested this might be a walking meeting to visit areas of concern. BR asked if this would include Rattray High Street as this is a great concern to him. PS suggested members create a list of areas that need to be looked at. ST believes there may already be a list of concerns with DM. Time and place to meet TBC. Member of the community asked why loading bays could not be changed to normal parking but was advised that this had previously been looked at and would cause a big problem to the local shops so had been ruled out.

13. AOB

PS requested that everyone, who hadn't already, writes their profiles and sends them with a picture to Tracie Dick - ideally in the next week, so the website could be updated.

PS would also like to look into how we get youth involved in BRCC. Possibly options amongst others might be creating a subgroup with the High School or working with SCYD. This should be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

14. Date of next meeting

Next Meeting 5th March @ Small Hall, Rattray Church @ 7pm.

Distribution of Minutes by email unless specified:

_BRCC:

Mr P Seymour

Mr B Rickwood

Mr E Donald

Mr R Duncan

Mr S Thomson

Miss C Sutherland

Mrs K Wood

Mr M Purrmann-Charles

Cllr C Shiers

Cllr B Brawn

Cllr T McEwan

External:

PKC Community Councils

Clare Damodaran (Press)

Mrs B Leslie (Blairgowrie HS)

BRCC Website

Blairgowrie & Rattray Development Trust