



BLAIRGOWRIE AND RATTRAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Blairgowrie and Rattray Community Council Meeting

August 12th, 2021

Attendance – Morag Young (MY), Sandy Thomson (ST), Gina Purrmann (GP), Scott Macgregor (SM), Linda Miezione (LM), Pete Richardson (PR), David Cuthill (DC), Councillor Bob Brawn.

Apologies – Robin Duncan, Colleen McVey, Councillor Tom McEwan, Councillor Caroline Shiers

Members of Public - Clare Damodaran, Peter Ritchie, Sam Stewart and six residents of Wester Gormack.

- 1. Election of office bearers** – Cllr Brawn welcomed everyone to the first face-to-face meeting of Blairgowrie and Rattray Community Council in 18 months and called for nominations for the role of chair of the community council. DC nominated MY, ST seconded. There were no other nominations and MY was duly elected. MY took the chair and called for nominations for vice-chair. ST nominated SM, DC seconded and SM accepted. ST nominated RD for treasurer, GP seconded. RD had previously intimated he would be happy to stay on in the role. MY nominated GP for secretary, DC seconded and GP accepted.

Minute recording – MY asked the group if they agreed to have Clare Damodaran take the minutes for the group at an annual cost of £480, or £40 per minute. The group voted, and agreed unanimously to have Clare be minute taker.

- 2. Adoption of previous minutes and matters arising** – MY welcomed members of the public to the meeting. GD proposed adoption of the minutes of the July meeting, SM seconded.
 - a. Sir William Macpherson memorial** – Memorial to be commissioned for the Wellmeadow and for Riverside Park. Sculpture may be delayed as designer has had an accident and is only just getting back to being able to work, so no update until next month.
 - b. Our Heritage Group** – no update.
- 3. Subjects raised by members of the public.**
 - a.** Peter Ritchie from Rattray raised the issue of the lack of lighting on the Common and the need for traffic calming measures on Glenalmond Road. Cllr Brawn said that there was no money for lights on the Common and that a meeting was to be held with roads officers from PKC on August 26th to look at the issues at Glenalmond Road amongst others. He said that council staff were inundated with work but he was hopefully temporary measures for the play park area could be agreed at that meeting. Drawings for a crossing could be drawn up in this financial year with the work possibly being under taken in the following financial year (2022/23).

- b. Six local residents raised concerns about proposals for 11 holiday accommodation units at West Gormack, Kinloch, on the outskirts of Blairgowrie. The planning application, which was submitted to the local authority in May this year, has received around a dozen objections and will therefore have to be considered by the council's Planning and Development Management Committee. The proposals include changing a number of agricultural buildings to form eight holiday accommodation units, building an additional three holiday accommodation units and a utility building, and the formation of access roads, car parking, drainage and associated works. Concerns included the unsuitability of the single-track access road to the site for additional traffic, the close proximity of the site to the Catevan Trail, management of the site as the applicant does not live on site, and the lack of benefit to the local community. Cllr Brawn said that, as he was vice-convenor for PKC's Planning and Development Management Committee, he couldn't comment on the application but noted that it would have to be considered by the committee due to the number of objections it had received. He said it was not on the agenda for the committee's meeting in August. MY said that individual objections to planning applications "hold more weight" than objections from the community council which only counts as one objection. Following a vote, it was agreed that the community council would write to the committee expressing support for the residents' concerns
- c. **Clunie Loch** – Previous community councillor Carla Sutherland had been the BRCC representative on the Friends of Clunie Loch Steering Group. DC agreed to take over that role.
- d. **Funding** – In RD's absence, Sam Stewart from Proactive Communities explained that Proactive Communities had been providing food parcels to families in the area during the coronavirus lockdowns, and had at one point been providing up to 36 food parcels a week to people in need. Proactive Communities had also supported 17 people in the town who were victims of human trafficking. She said that over the last 18 months Proactive Communities had used a huge amount of the organisation's own food stock and was requesting that the emergency funding be transferred to Proactive Communities. The amount in question is £1504.84. It was agreed that this would be transferred. SM and MY agreed to be signatories for the bank account.
- e. **Davie Park lease** – ST said that planning permission had been received for the redevelopment of Davie Park. As far as the consultation on the lease for the park was concerned, so far there had been 16 letters of support and no objections. He thanked former community councillors Phil Seymour, Carla Sutherland, Kim Wood, Steve Johnson and Euan Donald for their support previously.
- f. **Speeding in town by the Wellmeadow** – ST said that following a complaint from Elaine Bednarek at Cut Above hairdressers at the bridge, he monitored the speed of traffic. Over a period of half an hour, he counted 78 vehicles going past the VAS at the Castle Water building, 46 of which were going at speeds of 21 mph or above. DC asked if the cameras could be used to trace drivers. The answer is no. He asked if there could be more of a police presence there. MY said that getting the police there has proved to be challenging, however, since the introduction of the 20mph speed limit in the town centre, vehicle speeds had reduced somewhat, but larger vehicles and lorries were still an issue. Sam Stewart said that she had been involved

in a community transport action plan with Planning Advice Scotland which looked at a number of actions that can be taken in Rattray to address issues of concern to local residents. One that had been highlighted was the discrepancy in speed limits in Rattray which could contribute to people speeding up as they come down Boat Brae. One of the outcomes of the plan is to make Boat Brae and Rattray High Street a 20mph speed limit from the bridge through to past the Community Connect building. There was a discussion about policing and road safety and it was agreed that the new community police officer for the town will be invited to a BRCC meeting

- g. **Twinning** – GP reported on the discussion she had with Berbieres. There is a lot of interest from the French town. Initial areas to look at would be schools and language and learning as well as potential similar clubs and organisations. Sam Stewart asked if there was going to be a new official twinned town. GP said that she was still waiting to hear back from PKC what the official procedure was that but was keen to establish informal connections in the first place. Sam Stewart asked about building and renewing the relationships that already exist. GP said that she was keen to establish links in Europe as exchange trips etc would be easier and cheaper but if there was no interest in that from Blairgowrie then that was fine. MY said that someone from Pleasanton had been in touch as they were coming to the area to take part in the Cateran Yomp. He was hoping to bring a letter from the mayor of Pleasanton and possibly a flag and that Blairgowrie and Rattray could do the same in return and possibly hold some sort of civic reception. SM is to liaise with Guy Houston from Pleasanton on this. The Provost and Laurence Blair Oliphant should be invited.
- h. **Flags in Wellmeadow** – SM reported that in the poll he carried out. There was a small majority (51%) in favour of three flag poles but there was a rejection of the plans to fly the Union flag. This project has been moved on to the planning stage.
- i. **Beeches Road** – Cllr Brawn said that complaints had been made by a resident in Beeches Road about parking in the area, particularly with regard to the new recreation centre and with school staff parking outside the houses during term time. He said there was some dispute about whether the spaces are allocated specifically to the houses. One solution to the problem would be to consider residential parking there. There is currently no residential parking in Perth and Kinross outwith Perth city centre. Cllr Brawn is keen to gauge how the community feels about implementing that. It was not known if there would be a cost to residents. MY suggested arranging a meeting between residents and Bev Leslie, head teacher at Blairgowrie High School, to discuss the issues.
- j. **Malfunctioning pedestrian crossings** – A local resident had contacted BRCC to ask about the pedestrian crossings. PKC officer, Charlie Haggart, is open to reverting the signals to operating individually with no audible sounds if that is what the community wants. ST said that in his discussions with members of the public around 50% of people like the signals being synced and 50% don't. MY suggested inviting the local resident to the site meeting when it takes place, to explain thoroughly how the lights work and the benefits of the system. She could then be asked her opinion on the system. BB said that he would write to the local resident and ask what she they would like to do.

- k. **Climate emergency** – GP received a letter from a local resident about the declared climate emergency which she read out. It called on the BRCC to play a role in driving activities to reduce the climate crisis, leading by example. GP suggested that members of BRCC could commit to shopping in the BaRI food store for one meal a week or using recycled toilet paper for a month with the results published in the local press and the Hub magazine. MY said that there were a number of groups in the town such as the HEAT Project which already highlight what can be done to tackle the climate emergency and are there to give advice to the public on how they can reduce their bills and carbon footprint. Sam Stewart suggested that holding BRCC meetings on Zoom instead of having every one drive to a venue would be a good start. MY suggested that GP put a paper together for discussion at the next meeting but that she wasn't sure it was the community council's remit.

4. Planning

- a. **Layby/drop off zone on Elm Drive** – Cllr Brawn said that the signs were in place for the trial exclusion zone but that the council was waiting to hear back from the head teachers at the campus about what times it should be set for. It will be in place in Smithfield Crescent, McLaren Place and Blackthorn Place initially with the impact on Elm Drive measured. It is likely to come into effect in September. Letters will go out to parents on August 23rd. The layby on Elm Drive was to have been designed by PKC and built by Stewart Milne but Stewart Milne is no longer the developer at that site. Nothing will be done until the exclusion zone trial is complete. DC said that the exclusion zone was going to be pandemonium and that the whole thing hadn't been thought through since the campus was first planned.
- b. **Laird Aggregates Ltd/Marlee Quarry** – no update.

5. **Police and Fire reports** – There was a discussion about the Commanders' Bulletin. MY said that there was no mention of an incident in Rattray the previous week which she felt should have been mentioned. It was pointed out that the Commanders' Bulletin only provides a snapshot of what is happening across the region and was not a definitive list of every incident reported to the police. MY said that a man wielding a machete in a local shop should probably have warranted a mention. Cllr Brawn said that he would write to the Ceommander and raise concerns about the lack of information about the Blairgowrie and Rattray area. AT also expressed his concern that Blairgowrie rarely has many incidents reported in the Bulletin, which give an unrealistic impression of low levels of crime in the area. GP will put in a note of concern to the Commander. Fire Report – GP read out the fire report. Blairgowrie firefighters were mobilised 32 times in the last month. Home fire safety visits had now resumed in a Covid-safe way.

6. Sub-committee updates:

- a. **Christmas Tree** – The tree has been ordered and should be delivered in time for Christmas.
- b. **Bonfire night** – there will be no bonfire this year. However, it is planned to run the fireworks display from a pontoon on the river on Saturday, November 6. PKC has been asked for a 45-minute closure to traffic of the bridge.
- c. **Citizen of The Year** – last year's recipients have been presented with their awards. Covered by the Blairie. It was suggested that given the challenges faced by so many in the community over the past 18 months and how well the community pulled together in terms of the volunteer effort

to support those in need throughout the coronavirus pandemic that perhaps the 2020/21 award be given to the whole community. ST, RD and LM to be on the sub-committee to decide how best to proceed with that idea in practice.

7. **Treasurer's report** –
8. **Local Councillor's reports - Cllr Brawn** is meeting with the new police commander on August 25th. He said that the new Community Investment Fund was open for applications. Deadline is September 3rd. £47,000 is available for projects in Blairgowrie and Rattray. He asked for volunteers to sit on the judging panel. GP volunteered. Blairgowrie Town Hall was going to continue to be used as a vaccination centre with booster jags being offered from September to the first nine priority groups. He said that work times for getting things done by the council are much longer as lots of council officers are still being redeployed. In June there were 950 non-essential housing repairs to be done, which is down to 600 now, but due to construction costs increasing and having to wait for materials, everything is taking much longer.
9. **AOB** – LM asked if anything was being done for children at Christmas. MY asked her to put a paper together to discuss at the next meeting. MY asked if the community council should buy a Zoom package. It was agreed that it should and that BRCC will look at how it holds its meetings in the future. Sam Stewart suggested the community council used the enhanced package for businesses and community groups in the town offered by Discover Blairgowrie which offered use of Zoom and support running the meetings. MY added her thanks to former community councillors, Phil Seymour, Carla Sutherland, Kim Wood, Steve Johnson and Euan Donald, for their help and for all the good work they had done during their time on the previous CC. She also thanked Bob Stewart for considering being on the council, and was sorry his time with BRCC had been so brief.

Next meeting – September 9th 2021. If it is to be an in person meeting it will be at 7pm, if it is to be online it will start at 6.30pm.

Distribution of Minutes by email unless specified:

BRCC:

Robin Duncan
Sandy Thompson
Morag Young
Scott MacGregor
Gina Purrmann
Colleen McVey
Linda Miezi
David Cuthill
Pete Richardson

External:

PKC Community Councils
Clare Damodaran (Press)
Mrs B Leslie (Blairgowrie High School)
BRCC Website
Blairgowrie & Rattray Development Trust