

Portmoak Community Council

Minutes of Council meeting held on Tuesday, August 11th 2009 at Portmoak Hall.

1. Attendance: Ian McGrattan, Jim Shepherd, John Bird, Robin Cairncross, Stuart Garvie, Mike Hally, Charles Weedon, Cllr W. Robertson, PC Lynn Petrie, PC Graham Stephen and 58 residents.

2. Previous minutes: were approved

3. Police Report. (This was given after the Traffic calming report)

- In the Portmoak area there were two reported incidents, break in to a house in Scotlandwell, sneak in thief through an open lounge window 7/8 August and vandalism to a reinstated hedge where saplings were removed.

- Burleigh Sands continued to be targeted, break in to vehicle on 8 August.

The Police had only received 3rd hand information regarding the disturbance at Kinnesswood on Friday night when plant pots were placed on top of parked cars.

In answer to a question from a resident, the police agreed that there are road traffic problems with all types of traffic calming.

4. Treasurers report. Cheque to be sent for membership of the Convention of P&K CC's.

5. Traffic calming

The Chairman introduced the subject of traffic calming by going over the history of the subject. Prior to the introduction of the build outs the area of Kinnesswood and Scotlandwell was not statistically considered a 'hot bed' for traffic accidents. However the CC had campaigned for many years for some form of speed restriction on the understanding that it would be better to do something before someone became an accident statistic.

Suggestions from P&KC were put forward to the CC and after two very well attended public meetings the decision was made to introduce the build outs.

Following the construction of the build outs there has been a 3 month fact finding period. Monitoring stations have been set up to record speed and type of vehicle. During this period, P&KC has received a total of 36 complaints, 31 from residents in Gamekeepers Road and 2 from out with the Portmoak area and the rest from elsewhere in Portmoak. The No 1 complaint was the position of the build out at the bottom of Gamekeepers Road, then visibility of all the build outs followed by poor signage and abuse of speed and bad driving.

The Chairman then introduced Daryl McKeown from Public Space Management, P&KC, who was present at the meeting as part of the build out process to speak about the information gained from the 3 month fact finding period and answer any pertinent questions.

Generally the fact finding period had identified that there had been a slight reduction in speed and size of vehicle using the roads and few accidents reported to the Police. Again, generally, after 2/3 months accidents normally decreased after the introduction of changes to road systems but P&KC were surprised at the physical evidence of the build outs. This evidence showed that there had been a considerable number of accidents involving private cars as opposed to larger vehicles such as lorries. It was clear that the present situation needed change.

Various options were available:-

1. Look at repositioning of the build outs.
2. Make islands more visible
3. Change signage.
4. Remove completely

Most everyone agreed that the build outs were not sufficiently visible and signage could be increased. The original thinking on the small bollards and signage was that since this was being introduced into smaller type villages we would have preferred less obtrusive signage and less obtrusive bollards. However different bollards were available which could be fitted with a light and an example was available at the meeting.

Questions and issues made by the residents were as follows :-

1. The P&KC have regular meetings with the Police, Traffic co-ordinating group and perhaps better communication could have resulted in a more consistent approach.
2. Vehicles had been seen accelerating both towards and away from the build outs.
3. New signs were required, e.g. Traffic calmed area.
4. The anti skid surface had been applied on the side of the road driving towards the build outs. Vehicles were cutting off the corner of the road and driving on road which did not have anti slip surfacing.
5. Based on the available data the build outs were not necessary.
6. Single build outs were not enough to slow traffic, a chicane arrangement would be more suitable.
7. The build out edges were dangerous.
8. There was a problem with the sightlines driving towards the build outs.
9. The traffic was driving faster leaving the build outs.
10. Speed control traffic lights could be considered although there was a budgetary constraint.

11. The path going into Scotlandwell from the church was made more dangerous with the number of accidents occurring at the build out area.

12. The build outs are being totally discredited simply by bad driving. It was important to get the Police involved.

13. A resident asked if there could be a show of hands to show who was in favour or against the build outs but this was declined.

The Chairman thanked Daryl for his input to the meeting and confirmed that it was the CC's responsibility to represent the views of all the residents in Portmoak.

There was a short break.

A matter detailed under AOB was taken.

A resident complained of the disturbance caused by residents in a P&KC owned flat. The flat was being operated for the Homeless centre and despite a number of complaints to the authorities the residents of this flat were still causing a nuisance to surrounding tenants. Cllr Robertson agreed the complainant had done everything in her power to protect herself from this anti social behaviour. The Chairman agreed that the CC would take up the issue on her behalf.

6. Matter arising from previous minutes

Mail box at Post Office.

Latest e mail from Royal Mail, July 21st 2009, stated that a final decision had been made. Based on the usage figure Royal Mail will not replace the box. It seems that Royal Mail cannot understand that the smaller the size aperture then the smaller the number of articles that can be posted. Action: Write again to Royal Mail.

Website

The new website is up and running and will be the main vehicle for communicating with the majority of the community. Following the delivery of a flyer to every resident in the Portmoak area a number of people have signed up to receive the minutes and other information as and when it is available.

Notice Board

The Notice Board at Kinnesswood will be the official CC notice board and the only one displaying minutes of the CC meetings. Notification of the CC meetings will be placed on the boards at Balgedie and Scotlandwell.

Phone Box alongside Kinnesswood shop.

The phone box has now been adopted by the CC under the disused scheme.

7. Subcommittee reports

Paths Group

- Information boards for the Michael Bruce Way were now 99% complete and it was planned to ask residents for comments by copies in the Kinnesswood shop and the website.
- MBW, finance is a problem. OK for new paths but not maintenance.
- Path between Kinnesswood and Scotlandwell, details were with solicitors.

Planning Group

At the last few meetings it has been stressed how important the Single Plan is to the people of Portmoak and the CC will be submitting their comments. The main points were summarised by Cllr Hally and the complete report will be on our website, www.portmoak.org when it is finalised and sent to the P&KC by the end of August.

A resident raised the principle of no new building between road and loch. This was always considered of prime importance but appears to be forgotten. It was agreed to include in the final submission.

The CC is not opposed to progress but to inappropriate change.

Planning application discussions :-

09/01071/FUL Demolition of existing house and erection of a new dwellinghouse, Woodlands Main Street, Kinnesswood, Kinross KY13 9HW, regularising a previous application, already been determined

09/01149/FUL Erection of a 15kw wind turbine, Balneathal Farmhouse, Easter Balgedie, Kinross KY13 9HQ, write in support but setting out the conditions we would like to see for any of these smaller turbines

09/01227/FUL Erection of agricultural storage shed, Kirkness Farm, Lochgelly KY5 0HH, no comment

09/01278/FUL Alterations and extension to dwellinghouse, Carsehall Farm, Wester Balgedie Kinross KY13 9HE, no comment

09/01317/FUL Demolition of outbuildings and erection of a new dwellinghouse. Levenmouth Farm, Kinross KY13 9JH, object on basis it appears to be attempt to build rejected scheme, one house at a time. Suggest PKC require scheme for whole site from applicant

09/00936/FUL (Causeway Cottage) -- following previous meeting did further enquiries and would make an objection.

Westfield Wind Farm – this was not in the Portmoak area but notice of the application was sent to the CC. No comment at this stage.

There was some concern from residents that the community was being bulldozed into accepting wind turbines by the Scottish Government. This certainly appeared to be the case. Cllr Robertson re-emphasised the fact that where planning applications for wind turbines and farms had originally been refused locally, by P&KC, it was common practise for the application to be allowed when heard on appeal in Edinburgh.

Management Group

Already reported under separate headings.

8. Cllr reports

- Cllr Robertson gave information that the new Housing in the Countryside policy would be available on the P&KC website, Wednesday, August 19th 2009.
- P&KC budgets would not be good news for the forthcoming year
- Change to the planning procedures had now been introduced.
- Loch Leven Heritage Trail was now in the last three of the National Lottery Awards and everyone was urged to vote.

9. AOCB

1. A resident raised the issue of the recent presentation by a Conservation officer of the responsibilities of living in a conservation area coupled with the recent painting of the fence at the burial place at friar Place. The CC agreed to follow this up.

Whilst looking into this issue it was also agreed to confirm the planning consent/conditions for the area left vacant opposite the burial ground.

10. Communications

The Secretary gave details of communication received since last meeting:-

1. Data Protection Act, change of name as data controller
2. 2 replies to letters of complaint re Build Outs.
3. Letter received and sent re retrospective planning in conservation areas.
4. Licensing Board, Lomond Country Inn, objection date 17.8.09
5. E mail to Clarence, re sweeping of roads, Vane Farm and out of Pittendriech.
6. Tacran Regional Transport Strategy
7. Survey of Community Councils
8. Training seminar for the new planning procedure, 4 places booked

9. Consultation events, local people and P&KC
10. Letter from Royal Mail re post box
11. Information from Stephen's re alteration to piece of ground they are donating to community.
12. Letter from Infinis, a Company proposing a 5 turbine wind farm at Westfield.
13. Letter of objection, application for a new build, Causeway Cottage.
14. Kinnesswood in Bloom had been judged on Friday 7th as part of The Britain in Bloom competition.
15. The Kinnesswood shop would now be open on Thursday afternoons.

Via website

1. Request to speak at this meeting.
2. Letter re the presumption against wind farms in this area.

The meeting closed at approx 21.10 hrs.

The next meeting will be held in Portmoak Primary School at 7.00 p.m. on September 8th 2009.