

Portmoak Community Council

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on October 9th 2012 at Portmoak Hall

1. Attendance: Cllrs : M. Parkin (Chair), R. Cairncross, T. Smith, S. Forde, B. Calderwood and M. Strang Steel.

WCllrs : M. Barnacle and J. Giacomazzi. Seven members of the public attended.

Apologies : Cllrs J. Bird and R. Williamson. Ward Cllrs D. Cuthbert and W. Robertson

2. Previous minutes: Were approved and signed following an amendment to the Police Report concerning theft of lead from Portmoak Hall.

3. Matters arising

3.1. B920

The Chairman had written to P&KC Roads Department to thank them for the build out and extended street lighting, as these were reducing the speed of incoming Scotlandwell traffic.

The soft verges of the B920 are still to be identified by reflective roadside poles, and warning signs are still to be erected.

A vehicle recently straying onto a soft verge and then swerving across the road, has highlighted the need for these poles and signs.

Refreshing of the surface painted road signage on the A911 has yet to be completed.

3.2. Kinnesswood Bus Shelter

The asbestos roof has been replaced, and new interior roof woodwork has been painted. There has been some delay with replacing the floor, and the external grouting will not now be done until 2013 because of colder weather.

3.3. Flooding on road between Wester Balgedie and Glenlomond

This problem is in hand with WCllr J. Giacomazzi, following a report to him from Cllrs Cairncross and Calderwood. WCllr Giacomazzi reported that P&KC were now considering a legal solution to this long standing problem. This was agreed.

3.4. Stephens Field.

There will be a meeting with Mr John Stephen of A & J Stephen Ltd on 11th October to clarify various matters. It is the intention of this Community Council to ensure that when the field is finally given to the CC, all arrangements for its future are in place, and no outstanding problems of access, provision for facilities, or doubt about adjoining land ownership and maintenance are left as potential problems for future Community Councils

On 26th September the CC had met on site at Stephens Field with Mr Alex Page of the Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership to discuss possible funding for Stephens Field, but nothing immediate had come of this.

3.5. Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership

In view of the high level of involvement with Portmoak in the plans of the LLLP, it was thought that Portmoak should be represented on the LLLP Committee, and the Chairman would be writing to the LLLP to suggest this.

3.6. Lomond Country Inn

The Inn remains closed, and now shows some external deterioration.

3.7. Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill

The Community Council prepared a response to this Scottish Government consultation, which was submitted on 24th September. There had also been a meeting with the CCs of Milnathort and Kinross, under the banner of the Kinross-shire Community Council Network (KCCN) and this had resulted in responses from those CCs. The Chairman considered that this had been a good example of how the KCCN had been effective in getting P&KC Community Councils to work together for mutual benefit.

3.8. Meet the Politicians

The Chairman attended this event organised by Perthshire Voluntary Action Group, on 14th September, and raised issues relating to the function of Community Councils to good effect.

3.9. Gorse and Vegetation at Golf Course A911 boundary

At the request of Kinnesswood in Bloom, the Chairman had written and spoken to officials of the Golf Club to ask if they would assist KIB by removing this gorse, as this task was beyond the volunteers of KIB. The Golf Club were considering this.

3.10. Community Payback Orders

The CC had received a note from P&KC asking if there would be any tasks available for people doing community service, and the Chairman had asked for further information.

3.11. Britain in Bloom – Silver Gilt Award

Scotlandwell won this award in 2009 and 2011 and wish to have a notice to that effect on entry to the village, as with Kinnesswood. P&KC are unable to do this because of budget constraints, so the Chairman is exploring other options to provide this signage.

3.12. Countryside Rangers

WCllr Robertson was in touch with Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust to ask if Rangers could be provided to ensure responsible access to farmland, following complaints from landowners and farmers at the last CC meeting. No response to date.

4. Reports

4.1 Police Report

The Police submitted a written report.

Regular speed checks continue on local roads.

No report of crimes solved from previous CC meeting report. No new crimes since last meeting.

Operation Tupelo – This ended on 23rd September and had successfully recorded forty driving offences ranging from speeding to driving while under the influence of drink and drugs, or using a mobile phone while driving.

Police Community Tasking Groups will now attempt to help communities with a range of issues, by working with the public and with P&KC.

4.2. Treasurers Report

There had been some minor expenditure in the month for stationery, room hire and a subscription, and the balance across the two CC accounts was currently £1,141.84

4.3 Roads and Paths

The main issue here is the lack of safe pedestrian access between Wester and Easter Balgedie along the A911. The Chairman had written to Mr Brian Cargill at P&KC to say that while the attempts of TRACKS and SUSTRANS to mitigate this situation were welcome, the real problem was one of a lack of infrastructure, and he wished P&KC to be dealing directly with the CC on that basis, and not with other organisations on the basis that a countryside path was the answer.

CCLr Cairncross made the point that while there was considerable expenditure from different sources on paths and walks, there appeared to be no resource for infrastructure pathways such as those needed for the A911 - the main artery of Portmoak - and while there was a steady increase in housing in Portmoak, which the community was expected to accept, no priority was being given to improving pedestrian safety along the A911 between Wester and Easter Balgedie, or between Scotlandwell and the Church.

Further pressure had been created by completion of the Heritage Trail, the expansion at Loch Leven's Larder, housing at Queens View, and there would no doubt be further development at Wester Balgedie in the future.

CCLr Cairncross noted that P&KC had confirmed that there is a budget of £2 million for roads over the next 5 years, with a further £0.5 million for unadopted roads and footpaths, both of which are conditional on matched funding.

The matter of A911 pedestrian safety could no longer be ignored, and the CC would be pressing for this omission to be rectified, as well as taking its own action in the matter.

4.4 Planning

The Community Council had considered the following applications to P&KC and made no objection. These decisions were those of the entire Community Council.

12/01729/FLL, Ravenscraig, Main Street, Kinnesswood, Kinross KY13 9HW, Proposed extension to rear of dwellinghouse.

12/01296/FLL, Ar Dachaidh, Back Dykes Road, Kinnesswood, Kinross, KY13 9HU, Installation of replacement windows, doors, and roof to conservatory.

The Community Council noted that of 103 planning consents granted since January 2010, 15 required a detailed landscape plan to be approved by P&KC before building commenced.

Only 3 such plans had been lodged. 6 planning consents had commenced building without an approved landscape plan, and in a further 6 cases building had yet to commence.

Cllr Cairncross had previously prepared a report for WClr Cuthbert on the failure of P&KC to enforce these landscaping requirements made as a condition of planning consent. It was decided to write to the Head of Planning with a list of the 6 consents where landscaping was a condition, and where work had not yet started, and to ask that attention be paid to the proper execution of landscaping conditions in each of those cases.

A resident asked that a recent application for a dwelling-house in principle at Balneathill should be judged by the CC on the same basis that a previous application had been considered and objected to. The resident was assured that consistency was the aim of the CC, but it was pointed out that the full details of this recent application had not yet been examined.

Full Details of Portmoak Planning applications, with CC comments, can be found on the Community Council website at www.portmoak.org.

4.5. Ward Cllr Reports

WClr Barnacle reported that the proposed new Local Plan, not yet adopted, was now being used as the basis for planning and other decisions. The proposed plan was being treated as a final plan and he had also expressed concern at the lack of consideration given to representations made in response to the consultation process. Matters such as the loss of AGLVs and settlement boundaries, were being dealt with as proposed in the new Plan.

He felt that there was a case for challenging the loss of AGLVs, and making Loch Leven and environs a National Scenic Area.

There were issues with phosphate mitigation not being accorded best practice consideration by planners, and input from SNH was being disregarded in some instances.

He also felt that the neighbour notification area for wind turbine applications should be considerably increased, as by definition these devices were proposed for isolated locations.

WClr Barnacle had attempted to have a 50mph speed limit imposed on the B9097 (South Loch) road without success. He would now try to have blind summit signs erected.

WClr Giacopazzi said that the question of the number of objections required to refer an application to Development Control had been reconsidered, as had the weight of a Community Council objection, but for reasons that were probably valid on balance, there would be no change to present procedures.

There was a request from the CC that the £400 developer contribution, made three years ago for trees in Scotlandwell, and recently located, should now be paid to the CC.

5. AOCB

The question of repeated accidents on the A911 at the Wester Balgedie junction was considered, as it was felt that there would be a fatality here involving pedestrians or oncoming traffic, and it was only good luck that had prevented this so far.

The problem is caused by a sudden blind downhill left turn on the northbound A911 coinciding with the summit of a hill. Vehicles fail to negotiate the turn, and being already off balance due to the summit, cross onto the opposite side of the road, strike the kerb and

grass bank, and generally bounce back in to the line of what would be oncoming traffic, and then frequently overturn.

The new 40 mph limit does not seem to have had any effect.

WCllr Giacomazzi asked for the history of these accidents and undertook to investigate in conjunction with P&KC Roads department. He felt that more prominent signage might help. There was also consideration of an anti-skid surface, that had proved successful on the entry to Scotlandwell, and also in Wester Balgedie.

There was a discussion about the lack of attention paid to cyclists by inconsiderate motorists, but while deplored, this was a general issue and not specific to Portmoak.

CCLlr Strang Steel raised the problem caused by large trucks passing through Portmoak on their way to Glenrothes. It was agreed that signage might help to prevent this, although the real problem was probably the route indicated by the satellite navigation systems used by these vehicles.

A lady from Milnathort was welcomed, and she drew the Community Councils attention to her letter on Page 3 of the Kinross Newsletter, concerning the adverse effect of wind turbines on the Kinross-shire landscape.

It was noted that the dry stone retaining wall at the foot of the landward field just to the north of Kinnesswood on the A911 was leaning over the pavement, and already had a collapsed section. The Chairman undertook to contact the owner of the field, as this wall was now considered to be potentially dangerous.

The hedge on the A911 near the Balneathill entrance is overgrowing the pavement. This was cut back by its owner last year. The Chairman will ask for this to be done again.

6. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be at 7.00pm, on 13th November 2012, in Portmoak Primary School.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance, and the Meeting closed at 8.45 pm

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