

Portmoak Community Council

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on March 12th 2013 at Portmoak Primary School

1. Attendance: Cllrs : M. Parkin (Chair) ; M. Strang Steel; R. Cairncross; T. Smith; S. Forde; J. Bird; R. Williamson

WCllr : M. Barnacle and 4 members of the public.

Apologies : WCllr J. Giacomazzi; Cllr B. Calderwood

2. Previous minutes: Were approved and signed by the Chairman

3. Matters arising

3.1.

The following matters are still in hand with P&KC Roads Department.

- Refreshing of the surface painted road signage on the A911 from Milnathort to Auchmuir Bridge.
- Improved signage and road markings at the Wester Balgedie junction with the A911.
- Drain covers collapsing on the A911.
- Resurfacing of the B9097 South Loch Road.
- Replacement reflective signs at New Gullet Bridge on the B920.

3.2. Flooding on road between Wester Balgedie and Glenlomond

This problem has been resolved for the time being.

3.3. Stephen's Field

There was still no reply from A & J Stephen Ltd to matters raised in the CC letter of October 2012, and the follow up letter of 16th January 2013. The Chairman had spoken to the Managing Directors PA on 28th February 2013, and she had promised to expedite matters.

3.4. Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership

The open afternoon held by LLLP at Rothes Halls on 20th February 2013, to explain their plans for paths in Fife and Portmoak was attended by Cllr Cairncross. The Chairman asked Cllr Tom Smith to contact LLLP with the intention of joining their committee, as previously mentioned.

3.5. Wester Balgedie to Easter Balgedie Footpath

In January 2013, TRACKS and P&KC had submitted an application to Sustrans for part funding (£49,403) of a sealed-surface path costing £98,807, with matched funding to be sought from P&KC Community Greenspace (£14,822) and SITA Trust (£34,582)

The Chairman had written to all concerned parties, including the P&KC Access Officer, to stress the need for this vital piece of missing infrastructure, and had confirmed the CCs support. Mr George Lawrie of TRACKS is to report on the progress of this application at the April 2013 meeting of the CC. The Chairman was still in touch with the Climate Challenge Fund in respect of possible alternative funding for this project.

3.6. Opening of the Wash House – Scotlandwell

After a long period of restoration, Scotlandwell in Bloom will be holding a grand re-opening of the Scotlandwell Wash House on Wednesday 27th March, at the Well Green, between 2pm and 3.45pm. The CC will be represented by CCllrs Susan Forde and Malcolm Strang Steel. The CC congratulated all those involved with this project.

3.7. HGV Traffic in Portmoak

Elizabeth Smith MSP was unable to attend the CC meeting so the Chairman reported on her behalf. Following her attendance at the December 2012 meeting of the CC, Elizabeth had met with Mr Phil Flanders of the Road Haulage Association on 6th February 2013, and also with other relevant organisations, following receipt of useful information from our four Ward Cllrs. Transport Scotland is due to combine its website freight and traffic sections so that all are aware of others movements. The RHA – a national body - has enquired about pilot studies in England, which indicate that there are moves to improve signage in areas similar to ours at Portmoak, and to develop a purpose-made HGV satellite navigation system for HGVs. Discussions between Transport Scotland, the RHA, and P&KC are on-going.

Elizabeth had asked if the CC could provide the names of transport companies who use the A911, as the HGV Association is generally co-operative if told about any problems that their members may cause. She has contacted Portmoak residents who responded to her traffic survey, and some have responded with names that have been passed to the RHA.

There is government interest in the dangers of HGVs in small villages, following the accident and loss of life at Fairlie, in Ayrshire, after a HGV collided with a house.

Elizabeth will again be meeting Phil Flanders of the RHA at Holyrood, and will report further.

WCllr Barnacle informed the CC that P&KC were to shortly hold a meeting to review road classifications throughout the Council area.

3.8. Car Park at Moss Road, Scotlandwell

The CC is still working on the provision of a car park at Moss Road. This item will be on the agenda for the April CC meeting, to be held in Portmoak Hall. It is hoped that there will be a good representation and input from Scotlandwell residents at that meeting.

3.9. Locked Gates at Heritage Trail, Levenmouth

It was decided to have a site meeting to determine the facts and review this situation

3.10. TRACKS proposed path at Portmoak Airfield.

There was some discussion as to where this path would be situated, and it was decided to leave further discussion until a TRACKS representative was present.

3.11. Gritting and Snow Clearing

The Chairman has asked Mr Stuart D'All, Deputy Manager, P&KC Roads Maintenance Partnership, that the Wester Balgedie to Glenlomond road be gritted at weekends, as well as weekdays, and he has also provided the names of private contractors who can be called upon at short notice to assist with snow clearance in Portmoak during a severe snow event.

3.12. A911 Access to field north of Woodmarch.

An access from the A911, to a field just north of Woodmarch, has been constructed. The purpose of this access is not known. The CC would determine whether planning permission was required for such an access to a highway.

3.13. Traffic problems in Wester Balgedie

The CC is considering methods of preventing the damage caused by agricultural and other traffic to walls and verges in Wester Balgedie. There was also the problem of an already damaged wall, which is near collapse and dangerous.

4. Reports

Police

The Police Report had been sent via e mail.

There were no incidents to report.

Speed checks continue within Portmoak.

There has been an increase in rural thefts this year, mainly targeting fuel in remote areas. Operation Purvis aims to specifically tackle these thefts, and will continue indefinitely.

Anyone seeing anything suspicious is asked to record registration numbers, and inform the police, who would welcome any information.

4.1. Treasurers Report

There had been no income or expenditure during the month, and the Bank balances at 28th February 2013 were General account, £417.16 and MBW account, £355.75 Total £772.91

4.2. Roads and Paths

Nothing more than already dealt with.

4.3. Planning

13/00278/FLL Removal of extension, and erection of sun room; 2, The Crescent, Scotlandwell. No objection to this application.

This was the decision of the whole Community Council

13/00401/FLL Arnot Tower; Erection of dwelling-house. A new application based on a previous application to which the CC had not objected. The CC will consider this application.

It was noted that P&KC does not inform Community Councils of planning applications for advertising signs.

There was discussion about the statistics used by P&KC when determining future demand for housing. Cllr Forde suggested that P&KC could be using information that was out of date and based on the 2001 Census. WCllr Barnacle assured the CC that the latest information from other sources, such as the Office of National Statistics, was used.

4.4. Local Development Plan

The CC was considering, and may comment on those Schedules relevant to Portmoak, which had been submitted by P&KC to the Government's Reporters. A letter may also be sent to widen the context of those Schedules.

4.5. Ward Cllr Reports

WCllr Barnacle confirmed that following the P&KC submission of the proposed LDP, and accompanying Schedules, two Reporters had been appointed. He would be writing to these Reporters to express his view that certain issues raised during the LDP consultation period had not been reflected in the Schedules, and he was concerned that the consultation process had been inappropriately accelerated.

He considered that there had been a lack of dialogue between the political groups involved with confirming the P&KC budget.

He understood that the problems of resurfacing the South Loch road (B9097) would be addressed, although the positioning of blind summit signs remained unresolved.

He had attended a meeting about the proposed HS2 rail line which is to terminate at Leeds and Manchester. He had learned from this meeting that train journey times within central Scotland exceeded accepted standard journey times.

5. AOCB

5.1 View of Wellside Park Development from Well Green.

Cllr Forde said that this view was untidy, and considering the impending opening of the Wash House, she asked if anything could be done to improve the situation, such as by screening the north boundary of the Wellside building site.

WCllr Barnacle said that there was a P&KC enforcement officer who could instruct individuals and companies to maintain certain standards. It was however decided that initially the Chairman would contact the developer, to discuss and resolve this problem.

5.2 Broadband Speeds.

The Chairman is presently investigating Broadband speeds within Portmoak with a view to improving these. Any residents who have an interest in this subject are asked to contact him.

5.3 Ground Maintenance Reductions by P&KC.

Cllr Cairncross queried the basis on which P&KC had made these decisions. For example, maintenance for Wester Balgedie had been almost completely removed. The CC would contact P&KC to discover the reasoning behind these decisions.

5.4 Speeding on A911 between Scotlandwell and Auchmuir Bridge.

A resident had asked for a 40 mph speed limit on this part of the A911, because of the danger posed to children crossing the road to board buses, particularly the morning school bus. There were now some 22 private houses along this stretch of the A911. WCLlr Barnacle said that he would include this problem when he met to consider lorry routes within Portmoak. He had previously asked P&KC for a 40 mph limit on this part of the A911, but to no effect. It was noted that Fife Council had reduced the A911 road to 40 mph from Glenrothes to Auchmuir Bridge, whilst P&KC had maintained the 60 mph limit thereafter. The effect of this was that the straight stretch of the A911 after Auchmuir Bridge presented the first opportunity for vehicles to resume higher speeds and to overtake, and this had increased the problem of speeding vehicles on this section of the A911.

5.5 Reflector plates at New Gullet Bridge on B920.

Following an accident, these had not been replaced. WCLlr Barnacle said that he had informed P&KC Roads about these missing signs.

A resident reported that the anti-skid surface on the downhill approach of the A911 at Auchmuir Bridge had not been replaced after speed bands had been laid, and a road sign had not been replaced on the A911 north of Auchmuir Bridge. The CC would report these two items.

It was pointed out that residents themselves can report problems via the P&KC website, without having to wait for CC meetings.

5.6 CCLlr Cairncross raised the problem of water on the Mawcarse Road, north of Balgedie Toll. This could be a leak from a water main, and would require further investigation.

5.7 CCLlr Bird informed the meeting that he had previously told the Community Council that he would be resigning at the AGM in May 2013. However, he might now not be able to attend the April and May meetings, and therefore this might be his last meeting. The Chairman, and all other CCLlrs, thanked him for his valuable and appreciated service to the Community Council over the years.

6. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held at 7.00pm, on 9th April 2013, in Portmoak Hall.

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

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