

Portmoak Community Council

Draft Minute of Meeting held on 11th August 2015 at Portmoak Hall

1. Attendance. Cllrs Strang Steel (Chairman), Calderwood (Deputy Chair), Williamson (Treasurer), Forde, Smith and Morris; WCllrs Barnacle, Giacomazzi and Cuthbert; PC Lorimer (item 5.1 only) and about 15 members of the public.

Apologies. Cllr Cairncross and WCllr Robertson.

2. Approval of previous Minutes. The minute of the meeting held on 9th June was approved.

3. Matters Arising.

5. SSE overhead wires at Wellside. Cllr Forde had taken the matter up with the Health & Safety Executive. It is satisfied that the wires comply with safety regulations. The raising of the matter has been recorded.

7. Local Development Plan. Responses are now on the website. The Main Issues Report has yet to be put out for consultation and so there is no time limit for lodging further representations at present.

8. Bench on The Green, Scotlandwell. The new bench is now in place.

9. Footpath from Scotlandwell to the Church and Hall. In reply to the Chairman's letter, PKC said that they had discussed the path but there was no easy solution. They would continue to look at the options but could not guarantee a full solution.

4. Presentation by Uwe Stoneman of the RSPB's new Five Year Plan for their Loch Leven Reserve.

Mr Stoneman gave an interesting presentation stressing the RSPB's long connection with the Loch. They regard the reserve as an important place for interaction with the public. They have 55,000 visitors a year and have 13 full time equivalent employees. They will continue to manage the area between the B9097 and the loch as wetland for waders and largely leave the hill to nature. They hope to improve the passage under the B9097 and have commissioned a feasibility study. The cost is estimated at £500,000, partly because it involves the diversion of a water main. The opening of the Heritage Trail and the prospective completion of the Living Lomonds path to Lochore Meadows, both developments welcomed by RSPB, have increased, and will further increase, pressure on car parking space.

The Chairman thanked Mr Stoneman for his thoughtful presentation.

5. Reports

5.1 Police. PC Lorimer spoke to the report which had been circulated. She attributed the number of incidents reported to improved reporting by the public rather than an increase in criminal activity.

She drew attention to cold callers offering to do inadequate work for inflated sums of money. The Chairman thanked PC Lorimer for her report and attendance.

5.2 Treasurer. The PKC admin grant had been received in the general account in June and the printing costs and rent paid. The balance on that account stands at £547.40. The MBW account had been enhanced by donations and stood at the end of the month at £652.85. Since then a further donation of £250 had been received, making a total response to the appeal for funds of £750.

5.3 Planning.

New applications

15/01070/FLL Erection of wind turbine at Findatie Farm. Decided no comment or objection.

15/01067/FLL and 15/01068/FLL Alteration to extension at Millhouse, The Cobbles, Kinnesswood. Decided no comment or objection.

15/00975/FLL extension to garage, 3 Gamekeepers Walk, Kinnesswood. Decided no comment or objection.

Since these decisions were made the applications for Millhouse and Gamekeepers Walk have been approved by PKC.

Progress with development. There was no news of any change in relation to the Lomond Inn application. CClr Calderwood reported that the developer had been on site at Glenlomond on the previous day and the removal of 'soft down takings' (i.e. internal fitments) had commenced. Demolition was planned to take place this year, although no planning application for this had yet been lodged. An indicative plan showing 12 detached houses had been seen.

5.4 Infrastructure.

Stephen's field The Chairman reported that he had told the PKC Planners and Stephens of the results of the public consultation. The former had replied to the effect that they were pleased to see public consultation taking place, and the latter that they would now discuss the matter with the Planners.

Moss road Scotlandwell car park. The Chairman reported that he and the Secretary had met with Mr. Moore, the developer of Wellside and owner of the car park. He is committed to the area being used as a car park, but does not want it over formalised. Mr. Moore was prepared to see title transferred provided that he could be assured as to how the site would be developed and his costs were covered. It was left that the CC would investigate a suitable specification for the site, how title should be taken and funding.

5.5 Roads.

CClr Calderwood reported that the illumination of the build-outs had been restored. He hoped that the work included making them watertight, as water ingress was what caused the problem. Road marking was still required on the B9097, but potholes had been filled and verge cutting had been very well carried out.

WCllr Barnacle had been discussing the status of the Dryside road. It is a good candidate to be designated as a green route. There would be difficulties in signing it as unsuitable for HGVs.

Attempts to get Mr Cargill, the new head of the roads department, to come to a meeting to advise about the experimental 20 mph limits in Kinnesswood and Scotlandwell had failed. The public needed to be given advance warning of the experiment. CCllr Morris made the suggestion that the centre of Kinnesswood be made one way, with the use of lights, as part of the experiment. The Ward Councillors advice was to take one step at a time and gauge the success of the 20mph limit first. Agreed.

5.6 Paths.

CCllr Smith reported that all work that required to be done to complete grant funded work had been done, and so the Paths Group was able to look at fresh projects. He noted that the Woodland Trust is doing work at the Grahamstone entrance to the Moss and there may be work to do on the Grahamstone side. The grass on the Peat Loan was being cut less often, and this would be assessed.

Cattle on the hill had made the surface of part of the MBW difficult to negotiate. CCllr Smith and the Chairman had met with Calum Robertson. The cattle were now on the top of the hill and would be until October. The intention was to put them up the hill next year from the beginning. That gave CCllr Smith the confidence to proceed with the maintenance work. The work done in the last year had held up well. Nobody wanted to have to fence the livestock out from the vulnerable part of the MBW.

6. Local Government Boundary Commission

The Chairman reported that the Commission's proposals to reduce the number of Ward Councillors from 4 to 3 and to transfer the part of the old county north of Milnathort to Strathearn are now out for consultation. Comments have to be lodged by 22nd October. Portmoak is not affected by the proposed boundary change but we still need to consider whether to object. WCllr Cuthbert said that PKC had unanimously objected to the change to the ward boundary and he was analysing the basis on which this proposal had been made. There would be an article in the Newsletter. Apart from the statistical objections there were good grounds for opposing from the historical and geographical points of view. There should be a full discussion at the next meeting when WCllr Cuthbert's analysis would be available.

7. Portmoak Cemetery

The cemetery is almost full. WCllr Robertson has established that there is a PKC wide review of cemeteries including Portmoak. There is a deep suspicion that (a) 'bereavement services' as cemeteries are apparently called will be centralised and (b) there will be little or no local consultation. Agreed that the Chairman should write to Allan Grant, Convenor of the relevant PKC committee, to try to ensure that a cemetery will continue to be available in Portmoak and that there will be local consultation on the issue.

8. Community Council Insurance

The Chairman had been asked by one of the organisers of the Gala if they were covered by the CC's insurance. The answer was in the negative as the insurance provided for the CC by PKC only covers activities and events for which the CC is responsible e.g. the Paths Group. If this is of concern to other groups they might want to consider coming under the CC's umbrella.

9. Election of New Community Council

Notice of the election will be posted on 17th August. The CC is to receive nomination forms and these can be obtained from the Secretary, the Chairman, or Christine Grant of PKC. Nominations must be lodged with PKC by 4pm on 24th September. (N.B. nomination forms will be available on PKC website from 17th August).

10. PKC Councillors reports

WCIlr Cuthbert warned of a charge being introduced for applications for closure of a public road for events such as the Remembrance Day parade. Any organisation that wishes a road closure order within the next year should apply before the 31st August to avoid the charge.

11. Matters notified to Secretary

11.1 Heritage Trail. A plea for help had been received from the occupiers of a house situated beside the Trail. There were four issues: abuse and obstruction when driving down the road to and from the house; invasion of the privacy zone around the house; bagged dog excrement not being properly disposed of; and human excrement in the wood adjoining the house. The Chairman had met the complainers and referred the matter to WCIlr Robertson, as Chairman of TRACKS and Sgt. Nicolson of the police. Both were taking action.

11.2 Kilmagadwood Urns

WCIlr Cuthbert reported that there is a lot of work to be done before the urns can be offered to any museum. When that happens they will be offered in a strict pecking order and the Kinross Museum (assuming it has the capability to store properly such delicate items) will not be high up that order. All that can be done is to put in a plea for at least some of the urns to be displayed reasonably locally.

12. A.O.B.

Mrs. Hey presented a petition with 30 signatures on it requesting a reduction in the speed limit at Easter Balgedie from 40mph to 30mph. The chairman undertook to pass it on to Mr. Cargill of PKC. Particular causes of danger at this point are the fact that all three farms in the hamlet have ground on both sides of the A911 and have regular need to cross it with tractors and machinery. When the school bus stops cars regularly overtake it although the visibility is inadequate. There is no warning signage.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Next meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 8th September in Portmoak School, when there will be a presentation on the Local Development Plan.

