

Comrie Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th September 2008 in the Comrie Community Centre at 7.30pm.

Chair: Gordon McCartney

Present: Tim Lucas, Andrew Gairns, Bruce Gairns, Sandy Gray,
David Robertson, Judy McDowall

Councillors: Ann Cowan, Anne Younger

Police: Sergeant David Pettigrew

Strathearn Herald: Lynn Duke

Public Neill Aitken and 2 members of the public

1.Apologies Jennifer Perks, Willie Nicol, Fiona Connolly, C Helen MacDonald
Inspector Cathy McDonald.

2. Minutes:

Minutes from the 11th June 2008 meeting were adopted without amendment and signed by the chair.

3: Matters Arising

3.1 Police Matters.

Sergeant Pettigrew summarised the calls received by Tayside Police to the Comrie area from the last meeting that included the school holidays and Comrie fortnight.

He said that from 1st June 2008 the police have dealt with 104 calls in the Comrie area.

The calls included 13 youths causing annoyance calls, one to the School and 6 in the area of the Square opposite the Post Office.

There were 7 acts of vandalism, 2 at Post Office, 2 at Comrie Primary School, 1 at White Church, plus two others.

There were seven reported thefts.

Any member of the public who has information regarding any of these crimes should contact Crieff Police Station.

Licensed Premises

Crieff Pubwatch is now up and running and have excluded 3 individuals from all premises. It is hoped to extend this scheme, which encourages good communication between licensed premises, to Comrie and other surrounding areas.

Police carry out regular checks of licensed premises. Crieff police propose to increase these checks over the coming weeks to target:

- Underage drinking
- Carrying of weapons
- Persons in possession of controlled drugs
- Other offences in and around licensed premises.

Comrie Fortnight.

Police intend to work closely with the organisers of the Comrie Fortnight during the planning stages for next year to ensure that the fortnight, where there is an increase in the numbers within the village, is policed effectively and remains a success.

Parking

There is still a problem with vehicles parking on the pavement on Drummond Street adjacent to the proposed new development on the old garage area. The traffic wardens have been made aware, and have been in the village and will be returning. Police suggested that the Community Council could liaise with Transerve, who the police have already contacted, to see if some planters/street furniture could be placed along the kerb line to alleviate this problem until the development starts.

CRIME STOPPERS – the police force promote the use of the **CRIMESTOPPERS** number 0800 555 111 as an effective way of passing on information regarding any crime. Tayside Police are particularly keen to get information on those in our community who:

1. **DEAL DRUGS**
2. **CARRY WEAPONS** including knives
3. Prey on the elderly and vulnerable operating as **BOGUS WORKMEN**

The community can be assured that information received from the community is dealt with discretion and acted on. The police regularly use the phrase '**intelligence led**' – the Crimestoppers system feeds that intelligence database – please use it.

Anti Social Behaviour

Several members of the Community attending the meeting expressed their concerns regarding:

- the number of youths who were congregating around about the Square and Boulevard areas engaging in anti social behaviour and under aged drinking particularly leading up to the last bus leaving.
- the behaviour of young adults, throughout the evening and on their way home after pub closing time.
petty damage to street furniture, littering and noise made as patrons return home.

- Much of this is cleared up by local residents early in the morning and is not seen by the local community or reported to the police.

It was suggested that all local off sales could adopt the use of logo'd or easily identified carrier bags that would make it easier to determine where recovered alcohol is being sourced. Police will look into this suggestion.

Some frustration was also voiced at the apparent ineffectiveness of issuing fixed penalties to curb the anti social behaviour of individuals.

In response the Police stated that they have been carrying out regular mobile and foot patrols in the areas where youths congregate and after closing times particularly on a Friday and Saturday night. Any youth found in possession of alcohol or drunk will be taken home and a child concern report submitted to Tayside Police Family Protection Unit for liaison with the Social Work Department.

In the last 2 months in Comrie there have been 2 arrests for disorderly conduct and 4 persons charged with a Breach of the Peace. It was accepted that there have been a few weekends, where due to events being held in the village or birthday parties, there had been an unusually high number of persons in the village. Mobile and foot patrols in the village had also been increased accordingly during these periods.

Police stated that they would adopt a zero tolerance approach to repeat offenders who, where possible, will be arrested and taken to Perth for processing or for keeping prior to a court appearance.

Police still stop buses travelling from Crieff and carry out checks for alcohol. Alcohol continues to be confiscated from youths throughout Crieff and Comrie. Police have also travelled from Comrie to Crieff on the last bus.

The purchase or supply of alcohol for under aged persons is a serious offence and is taken seriously by the courts. Several adults have been reported for this offence. The public were encouraged to provide information on who is supplying alcohol to under aged persons or from where it is being obtained either by phoning Crieff Police Station, Crimestoppers or to a Police Officer. Information is kept confidential and can be given anonymously.

It was suggested that the Police do not convey clearly enough to the public what they have done, what they are doing or details of persons charged or issued with fixed penalties. Police will consider making better use of the press and other media to convey such activities to the general public.

It was noted that speeding is still a problem in the Strowan Road area of Comrie. Police said that they would be carrying out speed checks in this and other local areas.

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Also discussed was the damage caused to hanging baskets and flower tubs by persons on their way home after pub closing time. It was noted by the police that the baskets are hung rather low and anyone over 5' 10" had to step off the pavement to avoid getting a face full of flowers and that it would appear that people on their way home from the pub were taking their frustrations out on the low hanging baskets. It was suggest that if they were raised to a height similar to those on the bridge, this wouldn't make them such an easy target.

3.2 CDT update.

CC Robertson gave an up date on the CDT and said that their open day during the Comrie Fortnight was a success. He went onto say that everything is ongoing and the CDT will be holding their second AGM on the 15th September 2008 in the Comrie Community Centre at 7.30pm.

He said that the CDT has two new jobs available. One is for a Comrie Carbon Challenge officer, and the other one is for an Office Manager. The CDT is looking for local people to fill these two high quality jobs. Contact Annabelle Ewing for more information.

CC Lucas said that the CDT will be organising an informal recruitment evening. This event will take place on Thursday the 25th September 2008 from 6.00pm in the WRI Hall. The intention is that as well as the CDT board being present along with the candidates, it would also be an opportunity for representatives from various organisations within the village to be there as well to assist in the selection of the candidates.

CC Robertson said that the CDT would be operating an office and it would be situated at Number 5 Dunira Street. This will base the newly recruited staff and be a drop-in point for local people. CC Robertson also said that copies of minutes from previous meetings would be made available both there and to the CCC.

CC Lucas said that he had received an email from Annabelle Ewing confirming that the funding application to the Scottish Government regarding the new Climate Challenge Fund had been successful. This money will fund the above two jobs for an initial 3 year period.

3.3 Public Toilets.

CC Lucas said that there has been no particular progress since the last meeting regarding the CCC proposed the take over of the public toilets. At present the CCC are still not sure if they will be able to proceed with this project due to the cost of running the toilets on an annual basis. CC Lucas confirmed that the annual insurance premium would be £381. He also said that to date P&K had not been successful in forming partnership agreements within the village regarding comfort zones and presumably the toilets would therefore continue to remain open.

CC Lucas asked if the CCC was still interested in going ahead with this project as at present the public toilets are not in good condition and require considerable refurbishment. He said that the down pipe was missing, the south wall is thick with ivy and that in general they were in poor condition. CC Lucas went onto say that if the CCC took over the toilets in their present state it would cost more than the £300 P&K have offered to upgrade them an acceptable standard. He felt it was unlikely that P&K would be able or willing to spend any substantial money on upgrading the toilets.

CC A Gairns said that P&K must take responsibility for maintaining the toilets and suggested that unless the toilets were upgraded to an acceptable standard the CCC would not be interested in going ahead with this project. CC Lucas will write to P&K regarding this matter.

3.4 Housing/ Planning

Culybraggan

CC Lucas relayed a message from CC Connolly saying that members of the community were concerned as to why the planning application for Culybraggan had taken so long (almost a year). They wanted to know if this was because the original application had been amended.

Many members want to know what planning had now been applied for. CC Robertson said this would be discussed at the CDT AGM.

Muirend Chalets

CC McDowall raised concern regarding this project and went on to say that the chalets are to be built in the woods behind the new cemetery. She said that the entrance to the chalets would cross over the right of way that runs along the side of the burn from Muirend Farm. She is led to believe that this is the old historic cart track from Crieff to Glenartney. Mr Neill Aitken also raised concerns regarding the planning application and said that many residents in the area of the woods were against the building of the chalets. However, he felt it was pointless raising a petition objecting to this proposal. From a previous experience an 80 signature petition had been lodged with P&K regarding the erection of an office building for J Denholm Associates but that this had been treated as only one objection. He said that as P&K accepted this petition as only one objection he felt there was no local justice in the planning system.

CC Anne Younger confirmed that the way petitions were dealt with was correct but did say that P&K Planning Department were only following the procedures that were available to them.

CC Lucas asked members of CCC if they had any objections regarding this planning application and it was suggested that CC Lucas should write to P&K to determine what was happening regarding the right of way.

3.5 Hayride

CC Lucas said that the 'hayride' was held at Cultybraggan this year but had to be curtailed due the ever increasing health and safety legislation requirements. He said the event went ahead without the tractor and trailer ride from the village although this was a big disappointment for the children and for many other residents in the village. He said that the event had been running for 27 years without any problems. P&K liases with the Police regarding the issue of a parade licence to enable this event to go ahead and as the police had considerable reservations regarding the safety of the children riding on the trailers it was agreed that a licence should not be issued on this occasion.

CC Lucas said that, in consultation with the police, it was hoped the 2009 hayride would be able to operate in an acceptable way. Tractor and trailer rides and other events at the final venue were options that were discussed. Arrangements will be finalised next year. A good day was had by all who attended. Cultybraggan proved to be an excellent venue.

4.Treasurer's Report

Account balances are as follows:

Main A/c -	£3,995.81
Hayride -	£1,037.77
Public Toilets -	£978.54
Legion Park -	£778.91

5: Secretary's Report

CC Lucas said that the ASCC were requesting an area representative.

P&K are requesting a delegate for planning meetings. A meeting will take place on 30th September 2008 and will be held in Dundee from 6.00pm –9.00pm. For further information contact CC Lucas.

CC Lucas said that Steven Kane, Landscape Architect from P&K, had been in contact with him regarding the Legion park and wants to finalise proposals for the play area. CC Lucas said that he could invite Mr Kane to the next meeting and if this was not appropriate perhaps they could meet at the site.

Councillors Reports

CC Bruce Gairns said that he had received complaints regarding the log lorries using the Langside. Although the lorries cannot be prohibited from using this route it was suggested that perhaps advisory signs could be erected at either end of the Langside saying that “this road is unsuitable for HGV vehicles”. This idea has already been proposed to P&K and rejected.

CC Gray reported that the scrub by the Ross Bridge has still not been cut back and as result is a danger to cyclists. He also said that light PP331 at the westend of the village has still not been repaired. He said that this was first reported 2 years ago and despite Scotland Transerv changing the covers they have not renewed the bulb.

CC Robertson said that on behalf of the CCC he would like to congratulate the Comrie Fortnight Committee for another successful fortnight. He also said that CCC bottle stall was very successful and generated around £180 of funds. He also reported that the hedge on the corner of School Road and Dundas Street was growing out over the pavement.

AOB

Chairman McCartney thanked Sergeant Pettigrew for attending the meeting and thanked him and his officers for the time that they spent in the village this year and sincerely hoped that the youth problem would quieten down soon.

He also thanked everyone else for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

The next meeting will be held on the 9th October 2008 at 7.30pm in Comrie Community Centre.

This is a public meeting and all are welcome to attend.