



Minutes of the meeting of 12th December 2013

@ Comrie Community Centre from 7.30pm

1.0	Attendance	Action
	Community Councillors: Andrew Finlayson (Chair) Gill Brock Judy McDowall David Robertson Gordon McCartney Gill Brock Peter Jones (pending co-option) David Adams (Community Councillor Stepping Down)	
	PKC Councillors – Ann Younger	
	Strathearn Herald – Lynn Duke	
	Public – 15 members of the public	
2.0	Co-option of Community Councillor.	
	Following our plea for members of the community to step forward to help this Community Council, low in numbers following recent stepping downs, we are delighted to welcome Dalginross resident Peter Jones who has volunteered to serve, if accepted, as co-opted Councillor until the next Community Council Elections in November 2014.	
	It is unanimously agreed that Peter Jones is co-opted on to the Community Council and furthermore we are delighted to unanimously elect him treasurer.	
3.0	Police Report – presented by Euan Mitchell PC 2177 we note;	
	10/10 – Theft 150 sheep Langside Road – (under enquiry)	
	19+20/10 – 2x Break ins (Garry Pl & Strowan Rd (undetected)	
	14/11 – One male drink driving	
	16/11 – Elderly Resident Strowan Rd victim of bogus workmen	
	26/11 – One vehicle seized	
	1/12 – One male arrest for assault	
	10/12 – One male charged breach of the peace	
	4 minor road traffic accidents this period.	
	Recent ATM scams (particularly in Auchterarder on two recent occasions). On a recent occasion it appears that the gang inserted a fine plastic device into the card slot and taped a small camera/phone to film the keyboard	

	such that a) After seemingly completing your transaction the card would remain stuck in the machine. You go off to contact your bank and in your immediate wake the gang quickly visit the machine, release the card and retrieve the camera with all your details. PC Mitchell notes a recent incident where a 4 figure sum of money was spent by the gang in the immediate neighbourhood within a very short time period (much at a chemists).	
	Nominated Neighbour – Councillors note that a fair number of ‘bogus workmen incidents’ have appeared over the year and ask if the Police promoted ‘Nominated Neighbour Scheme’ is succeeding locally to protect increasing numbers of our vulnerable. Also how can this Community Council along with any of a number of village care groups be best placed to develop the most comprehensive ‘Nominated Neighbours’ cover for our village. PC Mitchell will ask PC Donald Florence to help us answer these questions.	PC Mitchell
	Ryder Cup - PC Mitchell advises that around the event; A823 – There will no access to other than ‘official’ vehicles to the stretch from Muirton Roundabout to, and including, the motorway flyover. Glendevon will be local access for residents only. Officially run Pick Ups will be available for ticket holders to the event from surrounding villages without being required to travel via Stirling or Perth. There will be clarification of details in due course. CCC agree to attend the next meeting of the Ryder Cup community liaison team following encouragement from PC Mitchell who will confirm details in due course.	PC Mitchell
	Front Counter Service Provision – PC Mitchell outlined the already publicised proposed changes to Front Counter Services whereby these will be withdrawn from Crieff with Police Scotland assurances that these steps will not impact service delivery. These changes are part of the review of Police Services across Scotland hoping to improve effectiveness and delivery of service. (See full Police Report Appended)	
4.0	Matters Arising from Minutes of Previous Meeting - 14.11.13	
	The draft minutes are agreed to be a true, accurate account.	
	Abbeyfield – We have written to Crieff & Muthill Abbeyfield Committee expressing our on going concerns about the issue of the ‘Restricted’ Comrie funds they hold and invited them to our February meeting to discuss matters more fully. We have recently received a response from Dr Alistair Morrison (Chairman) and will need to give this further consideration before responding.	All CCCs
	Yellow Lines - G.B. has taken up concerns about the extent of the yellow lines outside the Chip Shop with the A85 Authority and has been advised that a) the lines replicate what they once were before obliteration and various past road works and b) they are not to the fullest extent that might be expected from a strict adherence to the Roads Standards Codes. It is agreed that further action on this would not be productive.	
	Cemetery Soil Dump – G.M. notes that the issue has now been resolved thanks to PKC.	

	Public Toilets – G.M & G.B will team up to conclude missing loo seat saga.	GM GB
	Christmas Lights – DR & AF picked up and delivered Christmas trees to church, school, community centre and Bumblebee Square. Thanks to Mosten Morgan for the trees and help from Charlie Gavin & Craig Graham. Thanks to Blair Urquhart & Andrew Thomson for erected and illuminating the BBSq tree.	AF
	Japanese Knotweed – Following the local loss of a valuable Tup where herbicides appear to be implicated we await clarification from PKC regarding agreed procedures for Knotweed Eradication in this area. It is muted that Tayside Fisheries may have some involvement and we will ask locally for any word on this pending clarification from PKC.	All CCCs
	Community Gathering – The Community Gathering at the White Church was a great success and thanks to the inestimable Hamish Reid for the perfect entertainment, Murray Lauchlan for the perfect pig, Andrew Scott’s team, the volunteer bar staff at the Community Center, the Community Councillors for helping to arrange and, most particularly Graham McWilliam and his team at the Kirk for making it happen.	
	Plea for Bar Staff – A.F. took the opportunity to praise the Community Centre Committee who, with limited numbers, manage to staff the Bar on countless occasions such as the Gathering. It is this volunteering that helps to bring in much of the funds that keeps Community Centre going. The place is a fantastic resource to the village and we encourage other people to put their names forward and pledge at least one night behind the bar. Its invariably good fun behind the bar and just a few more people contributing to the staffing throughout the year would make a great contribution to our Community Centre.	
5.0	Bumblebee Square	
	Mr Frame of Braemore Estates asked to say a few words to this Council in regards the Square.	
	He thanked the Bumblebee Square Group and Comrie Community Council for being so professional in matters related to their lease of this property over the last few years and for the manner in which they are approaching hand over arrangements for the site early in the new year.	
	He offered praise to Kathy Collins as the originator of the garden and to all the Friends of The Square whose efforts helped to make it a great place for the community over the last few years and raise reasonable sums of money which might yet be useful to the Community. He noted that Bumblebee Square has now, however, run its course and he invited the Reverend Graham McWilliams to offer some pertinent news .	
	The Reverend McWilliams thanked William for his generosity and benevolence for the use of the Square as a great asset to the village over the last few years. He noted a village where the lingering effects of recent floods still run deep and that the potential loss of the Square to a planned Co-op has caused much distress. Over the last few months much thought and prayer has been focused on the benefits of this place to the community and, following legal transaction	

	<p>and a recent meeting of the Kirk Session of the Parish Church, the Rev McWilliams can confirm that, with the aid of a most generous benefactor, Comrie Parish Church has agreed to purchase the entire piece of land. This is a very recent development, the Kirk Session only sat last night, but early intensions are to keep the whole area open with perhaps a sensory garden to the rear and to name the place St Kessogs Square.</p> <p>Graham went on to thank William Frame for showing great benevolence in this matter.</p>	
	<p>There was a pause of some minutes as Rev McWilliams took his seat and the Councillors and members of the public took time to compose themselves. There were applause and tears.</p>	
	<p>Libby Urquhart from the floor was first to express how thrilled she was, as a Friend of Bumblebee Square, to hear that the future of this great open space is secured and thanked all those who brought matters to this pass.</p>	
	<p>All councillors took it in turn to express their delight at the news and offer their deep gratitude to all the parties who made this great thing happen; to the great act of act of benevolence at its heart, to the Rev McWilliam and the Church for taking this bold initiative and to William Frame for the very important part he clearly played.</p>	
	<p>Cllr Finlayson recognised Mr Frame’s enthusiastic, patient and pivotal support for Bumblebee Square from its initiation and for the professional and honourable way he has conducted matters despite, on occasions, being subjected to unworthy aggravation.</p>	
	<p>It is agreed that this is a very important moment in the history of our village the implications of which will greatly benefit many generations to come.</p>	
6.0	Roads Report . Cllr Brock reports	
	<p>Overhanging tree at the Ross Bridge was fixed by Bear Scotland who are commended for their very prompt attention to this matter.</p>	
	<p>Overhanging tree at south end of Dalginross has been reported to PKC.</p>	
	<p>It is noted that on the morning of the recent storm the Crieff back road was cleared for use thanks to the prompt and considerable efforts of Euan Stewart with his chain saw.</p>	
	<p>Cllr Brock will assemble a list of outstanding roads defects for the next meeting and direct Cllr Finlayson to take any photos required in support.</p>	G.B. & A.F.
	<p>Again the matter of bad flooding at the cemetery was raised. We will take photographs and express our dismay to PKC that we have been complaining vociferously for over a year and still nothing has been done to remedy the situation.</p>	
	<p>Andrew Thomson advises that we should look at ‘Fix My Street’ website which allows for the logging of street defects and pressures the local Council to make good.</p>	
	<p>Mairi Philp notes a terrible pot hole black spot beside the Institute to the south of Dalginross Bridge where the whole road width is now particularly dangerous for bikes. G.B. will investigate.</p>	G.B.
	<p>It was also noted that there are local cyclists using the roads and pavements after nightfall without lights or suitable reflective gear and every opportunity should be taken to remind them of their obligation to</p>	

	see and be seen.	
7.0	Community Website	
	Cllr McRitchie notes 3,330 people liking our Facebook site of late and 30,000 hits on our website over the last month.	
8.0	Secretary's Report	
	Comrie Primary School -Cllr McRitchie notes correspondence received in relation the 'Evidence2Success' study on Comrie Primary School and asks Dee Cooper and Mairi Sinclair of Comrie Primary School Parents & Friends Association (PFA) to take this opportunity to more fully explain their concerns. They explain that whilst Comrie Primary School has recently been given excellent school reports and is clearly considered an establishment of high calibre by its parents and all who know it this study displays a clear aberration from any valid norms of judgement to the perverse extent that it seems to indicate our school as the worst in PKC. The 'findings' of this deviant study have been made particularly destructive by its propagation on the Council's own website as if it was of merit.	
	Elements of the 'Evidence2Success' (E2S) questionnaire at the heart of this study were highlighted and we were all deeply shocked and concerned at the nature of some of the questions being asked of our young school students particularly as these were asked without any prior consultation or with the prior knowledge of parents.	
	With the clear evidence that the methodology and specifics of this study are wrong headed in so many ways it is deeply shocking to be informed that the study is being piloted in the PKC area with a view to it being adopted nationwide by the Scottish Government. We are furthermore troubled that what seem to be the very reasonable requests for clarification made by PFA to PKC and our local politicians about this matter have been dealt with shoddily or simply ignored.	
	We ask Cllr Younger to immediately convey our deep anxieties about this affair directly to John Fyfe and Sheena Devlin in the Council's Education Department and insist that they engage with us at the very earliest to limit the destructive capacity of this clearly invalid study.	Cllr Younger
	We furthermore ask that all our three PKC Councillors, who on the basis of their own experience must understand that Comrie Primary School is far from being the worst in the County, to show their wholehearted support for the School and the Community at large by expressing their abhorrence at the E2S findings.	All PKC Councillors
	As this pilot study has ambitions to be rolled out across the country the strength of feeling raised by all councillors and members of the public attending this meeting must also ring alarm bells with our MSPs who will be expected to take the matter up with the Education Secretary Mike Russell. We will write to the various parties involved in support of the PFA.	A.F.
	Planning Forum – Following an e-mail from Jean Ann Scott Miller we agree to attend the next Forum on Monday 13 th January at Crieff and to send representatives (D.R & A.F.) to the associated workshop on Wednesday 5 th March from 6.30-9pm in the Activity Meeting Space in Strathearn Community Campus.	D.R. & A.F

	Our PKC Grant -We have an acknowledgment of payment from PKC of our yearly grant in the sum of £528.32.	
	Laggan Wood – We have received correspondence from Comrie Millennium Footpath Association regarding their ambitions to extend the current footpath up to the viewpoint in the woods. We all agree that this is a very worthwhile project and wish to support in any way we can. We will take up the offer in their letter and invite someone from the Association to come and discuss the proposals further if required.	A.F
	Data Protection – We have received notification of registering Cllr Sandra McRitchie as our relevant Data Protection person.	
	Insurance – Our insurance quotation handed over to P.J. for payment.	P.J.
	Floodworks Fencing – S.M. brought up correspondence referring to concerns about the barbed wire to the new fencing to field boundaries adjacent to the public right of way from Camp Road end to the Ruchill. It is noted that PKC have now attended to the fence and removed what they consider to be potentially hazardous barbed wire and replaced it with plain wire where appropriate.	
9.0	Treasurer’s Report	
	The Treasurer’s report was presented by David Adams the outgoing Treasurer and reported as follows	
	Bank Balances; Main Account - £2120.30 Flood Account - £758.70 Hayride - £1179.03 Legion Park - £252.43 Public Toilets - £784.28	
	Commitments; For early payment D.R. hands D.A. outstanding Co-Co bus invoices for expenses relating to the visit by our Canadian Exchange Students from Carlton Place. Cost for varnish for bridge handrails.	D.A.
	Earmarked Sum – Donation of £30 from Stirling Ramblers for Melville Monument.	
	Change of Authorised Signatories – It is agreed that the authorised Treasurer’s signature for the accounts detailed in Section 2.1 of the <i>Change of Signing Authority Mandate</i> be changed from David Adams in accordance with Section 5 and that the current mandate will continued as amended and that the new Treasurer Peter Jones will become the authorised Treasurer henceforth.	
	Twinning – It is clear that expenditure for the recent Canadian exchange events was a considerable burden on our finances particularly as, for a variety of reasons, we did not promote any specific fund raising activities to support the venture. It is understood that we intend to participate again in the exchange in 2014 and it is important that we make much better provision for future expenditure in this regard, set a limit on our contribution to local individuals wishing to participate in the exchange and encourage them to promote fund raisers in support of the venture.	
	Flood Maps - D.A. acknowledges the contribution made by income from our	D.R.

	sale of maps and cautions us to have to consider the costs of reprints which may be needed soon to replenish stocks. D.R. to check amount left and report back.	
	Flood Account – D.A reminds us that we have some funds available in our Flood Account and that we need to decide how best to spend this money to good effect.	
10.0	Any other Business	
	Comrie Christmas Light- D.R. advises us that the provision of Comrie Christmas Lights was run as a Charity with Charity Status under the auspices of OSCR. At a recent meeting of their committee it was felt that their status under OSCR was an unnecessary complication and it was proposed that they withdraw from OSCR, hand over their outstanding funds (of some £9000) to the Community Council to be held in a separate account and henceforth manage the whole matter through CCC as there seems no viable alternative. Light will be stored and Cultybraggan during the year. D.R notes that there are 24 separate lights erected this year around the village.	
	Offer of Help- Despite stepping down as a Councillor David Adams takes the opportunity to confirm that he will be happy to assist in any other ways to help the this Council in its aims. Councillors all expressed appreciation at the work David has done in this Council over past years and thanks him for his kind offer of future help as appropriate.	
	Cameron Court- C.B. makes a plea that, in the event of a major snow fall this winter, some plans are put in place to clear some of the paths around Cameron Court as a great help to the elderly and vulnerable residents.	
	Library- J.McD confirms that the new library opening times have been announced as follows; Thursday 2.00 -4.30pm and 6.00-8.00pm, Friday 10.00am-12.30pm, Saturday 9.30am – 12.30pm. Cllr Younger notes that mobile Libraries are about to become more compact and better spread which should allow for most widespread use across PKC.	
	Post Office – It is agreed that we will write to Euan & Debbie Lamont at the post office to thank them for doing a great job for the village in opening & shutting the public toilets and for posting notices as required on the public board.	G.B.
	Antiques Show on TV – S.M. will stick up some posters from a television production company looking for volunteers for their proposed antiques show.	
	Comrie Community Emergency Group (CEEG) – AF confirms there will be a CCEG meeting next Wednesday evening at 7.30 in the Fire Station and will report back at the next CCC meeting. A.F notes the snow clearing issue raised re Cameron Court and also a comment from Ali Hamilton concerned at the build up of gravels within the river system.	A.F.
	Silver Line – The new nationwide help line for the elderly is noted as 0800 470 8090	
	VC Commemoration- Following recent advice that the village is entitled to a commemoration slab to celebrate the VC awarded to local man Lieutenant John Manson Craig Royal Scots Fusiliers in 1917 A.F. notes that Ray Crosier	

