

Comrie Community Council Meeting Minutes, Thursday 12th May 2022

In attendance: Gillian Brock (Chair), Scott Broadley (Vice-Chair – on Zoom) John Greer (Treasurer)
Andrew Scobie (Secretary)

Terri Bacon, Cllr Rhona Brock, Lindsay Brown, Cllr Stewart Donaldson, Cllr Noah Khogali, Lorna Ramsay

Members of the Public: Lesley Maylor, Roy Maylor, Ruaridh Macintyre, Harry Thomason

Apologies: Kirsty McKinlay-Stewart, Sandra McRitchie

Minutes of last meeting:

- Minutes for April meeting approved by Gill Brock and seconded by Terri Bacon

Matters Arising:

- Gill welcomed the councillors and members of the public to the first in person meeting on the new community council.
- Gill also congratulated Ward Councillors Brock, Donaldson and Khogali on their successful election.
- John raised according to the minutes it was unanimously agreed that the next meeting will take place in the Royal. The March minutes were corrected. John asked for a copy of the amended minutes.

Police Report

- No police report

Relevant planning applications

- Proposal to convert former RBS branch into a restaurant. No known objections. Lindsay is concerned that this development will be a substantial change to the street.

- Information about the development has been shared on social media so the public are aware. The Courier has also covered this and got a lot of engagement, virtually all of it in favour.
- Lindsay concerned about parking in Bridge Street, Dalginross and Drummond Street. Terri thinks that it will improve once parking is available in St. Kessog's Square.
- Lorna also had some concerns that the aroma from the cooking may be unpleasant.
- Rhona noted that the Community Council can ask for an extension on the planning application.
- The CC agreed that we will ask for an extension in order to raise awareness. Andrew will contact the planning department and ask for an extension. Gill will ask Sandra to put this on the Comrie Facebook Page again. Lindsay will do a poster for the notice board.
- Stewart highlighted that the next planning committee meeting will be on 1st June.
- Lindsay stated that details are also available on the planning website.

Road matters

- Gill has contacted PKC about fixing the remainder of the South Crieff Road between Tanish's and Lennoch Farm. Also she has chased up on the un repaired slabs outside the Post Office.
- She has also chased up on the puffin crossing, average speed and disabled bay and no developments so far.
- Drainage issues in Dundas Street – Gill will follow this up.
- Nothing back about the skate park or the average speed cameras
- Stewart emphasised that we should persist with this matter. Gill suggested that we hold a public meeting as there is a general interest amongst the public. Also put some more material on social media about this issue.
- Scott highlighted that there has been a string of accidents on the A85 between Comrie and St. Fillans, including 2 fatalities and involving motorcycles. Various CC members have had close run ins with motorcycles.

Treasurer's Report

- John supplied copies of accounts and confirmed the balances.
- John highlighted some errors on the statements that he has corrected.

Secretary's relevant correspondence and updates

- Nothing of great significance since last meeting.
- Secretary email account is still working well.
- Andrew noted that there is some duplication regarding subscriptions, he is looking to scale back on these.
- Andrew engaged with a family who are moving to the village and looking for a local piano tutor.

Twinning

- Twinning Committee due to meeting next month on 1st June.

Legion Park

- The park is coming along slowly but surely
- Terri has met with Greenspace and the architect; very positive. Jimmy's drawing sent to different play equipment companies. Looking to get a budget set.
- Legion Park Committee looking for a treasurer as the previous office bearer has emigrated to Australia.
- Benches and notice boards arriving next month.
- The Legion Park is the favoured location for equipment for older citizens. Steinmeier funding would be available for this.
- New gates will be installed at every entrance to the park. Gill stated that the main entrance looks a lot better since it has been tidied up. Seating on the out rim of the park will also be available.
- Terri still waiting on further correspondence from the flood prevention team.

- There will still be grass space provided for events and sports.

Shakey Bridge and Core Path:

- Stewart stated that we are still on course for the end of September, though it may be a bit earlier if the labour is available.
- We still need to get landowners on side for the core path, but after almost 14 years, planning permission has been granted. No construction work can begin until April next year.
- Stewart hopeful that hesitant land owners can be brought on side by negotiation.
- Sustrans likely to fund 50% of more of the project.
- Stewart thinks that a representative from the CC should attend the next steering group meeting.
- Gill asked if Iain Finlay had been involved as his family may wish to install a commemorative bench on the route.
- John queried if the surface would be similar to that used on the Comrie to St. Fillans path.

Flood Protection Scheme:

- Stewart reminded the CC that construction will start in early 2023. Lack of staffing has caused some problems.
- Prep work is due to start in the Field of Refuge soon. A lot of activity is expected by the end of the year.

Mental Health Awareness:

- Kirsty is still working on raising awareness, but there are no new updates to report.
- Gill confirmed that nothing will be published until the CC has approved it.

Library:

- Lorna continues to encounter communication issues with CulturePKC.

- Survey issued by PKC on library use is asking residents to review their library experience over the last 3 years, including lockdowns where they were closed for prolonged periods.
- The survey is not wholly reflective on how the Comrie Library is currently used.
- Only 3 weeks to complete this, which is not reasonable. Gill has engaged with Helen Smout who has apologised.
- Lorna has put up material around the village, raising awareness of the importance of libraries. Lorna cited evidence, stating that libraries are crucial in addressing loneliness and isolation.
- The White Church can also be included in initiatives to address loneliness. John is concerned that the White Church is getting overlooked.
- Lindsay is in agreement, stating that a lot of activities do take place in the White Church, however, the community is not wholly aware that they are taking place.
- Stewart is going to look to have a catch up with Lorna about the library.
- Stewart will ask if we can get an extension on the survey.
- Ruaridh reiterated that the survey should reflect use pre-Covid. Lorna agreed, but noted that library use has fundamentally changed in the last few years.
- Stewart reminded the CC that CulturePKC is an autonomous body and not under direct control of the PKC.

Website:

- Lindsay reiterated that the website is a community website. Lindsay wants to move forward to allow the community to have a more direct input into the content of the website. Lindsay looking to use the White Church as a test case.
- Important that we find a method which works for local groups to share information. Lorna proposed the use of 'Mail Chimp' messaging.
- Possibility that log in details for the website are provided that would allow different groups to input information directly into the website. Rhona highlighted that the admin grant could be used to pay for training.
- Lindsay may have to spend some money to set up proper authorisations. Gill stated that this is not a problem.

- Lindsay asked for clarification of what a business list on our website does. The Archray Hotel as contacted Lindsay about this matter. This was discussed at a previous meeting and there was general agreement that this would be beneficial for the village.
- Gill reiterated that we agreed that we would limit the geographical scope to businesses in Comrie, Crieff and St. Fillans.
- Andrew reminded the CC that we need boundaries so we do not end up being a source of free advertising.

Scams:

- Both Andrew and Gill have been victims of scams recently. A scammer impersonated Gill and asked Andrew to purchase iTunes vouchers and send them the codes. Gill was in bed unwell and not available on the phone. This was a very targeted scam and though common, is only applicable in certain circumstances.
- John noted that as treasurer he has had these in the past. He urged the office bearers to check the email addresses they come from.
- Lindsay urged the officer bearers to be mindful of correspondence coming to the official CC emails.
- Gill was scammed via PayPal by a scammer who compiled her details from her Facebook page.
- Lindsay asked Andrew if he wanted her personal account disengaged from the Comrie Secretary account. Andrew is happy to keep it synced right now to avoid jumping between accounts. He will keep an eye on things and keep Lindsay in the loop.
- Gill acknowledged that scams are a major problem locally and that the CC plays a fundamental role in addressing them.

Councillors Reports

- **John Greer** – John has received complaints about the CC meetings being held in The Royal. John remains concerned that by meeting in The Royal we are prioritising businesses over the community. Terri stated that residents have said similar things to her. Lindsay believes that we will need to revisit this issue again. Andrew proposed that the venue ‘floats’ i.e. goes between the White Church, the Rural Hall, local church meeting spaces and local hotels, etc. John emphasised that the White Church is the community centre and the CC meetings should be there. Ruairidh added that objection may be against the Royal as the venue, not the fact that the CC is not meeting in the White Church. Floating venues supported theoretically but it may cause confusion.

Gill stated that if the choice of venue is causing concern we need to address it. Should we use Facebook to gauge public opinion. Gill will put this on the agenda next month. She would like some further info from the Ward Councillors. Stewart stated that the decision lies ultimately with the CC.

Gill asked the public in attendance for their thoughts. Lesley highlighted that this is the first CC meeting she has attended and cannot compare The Royal with another venue. She did state that there is a lack of information as to where the meetings are being held. She still would have attended if it was in the White Church. Roy was surprised that the meeting was in The Royal and not in the White Church.

Harry confirmed that he liked The Royal. As a regular attendee of CCC meetings, Harry confirmed that in the White Church attendance from the public is generally low.

Ruairidh is not precious about the venue, but is concerned that community venues should be supported over private enterprises.

The CC can put this to a vote at the next meeting.

John asked if we had received emails from Adobe about the bank account. Andrew and Lorna have got these but thought they were false. Andrew and Lorna will sign these.

- **Lindsay Brown** – Peter McNaughton is happy for his materials to be put on display. He is sending over another 5 boxes. The history material is going to be stored at Cultybraggan. Stewart asked if any relate to St. Fillans, as their CC is trying to work on their archives.
- **Andrew Scobie** – Andrew is setting up a Friends of Comrie Cemeteries on a similar vein to Crieff. Andrew attended an inspection of the Old Cemetery in South Crieff Road, noting some areas of neglect local residents are concerned about. The council are currently addressing these issues. The group will not replace the council as custodians of cemeteries, rather they will provide ‘guardianship’ of the sites. This will include the Old and New Cemeteries in South Crieff Road but also the White Church and Tullichettle and potentially Monzievairst and Strowan. John queried the practicalities. Andrew replied,

stating that there will be delivered primarily by volunteers. John asked if it will be an ongoing cost of the CC. Andrew noted that this was a good point, but reminded the CC that this is in its infancy and not at the stage where such decisions are being made. Stewart suggested that Dundurn Church in St. Fillians may be something to consider.

- **Lorna Ramsay** – No other updates.
- **Cllr Noah Khogali** – Noah has only been a councillor for 6 days. He is confident that he will have more to contribute at the next meeting.
- **Cllr Rhona Brock** – No updates
- **Cllr Stewart Donaldson** – Stewart congratulated Noah and Rhona on their successful election. Gill in turn congratulated Stewart. Stewart's party are set to form a minority administration in PKC. Further details will be available after the first full council meeting on 25th May. He looks forward to working with Noah and Rhona over the next 5 years.
- **Gillian Brock** – Gill is wondering whether we should still pay for Zoom via the admin account. Though we can meet face to face, differing groups still use it as it is compatible with other commitments. Gill does not have an issue in keeping Zoom. Gill and John agreed that we will keep a monthly subscription. Gill has purchased some technology to record meetings as opposed to hiring a minutes secretary. PKC has authorised this. Andrew has done the minutes for the last few meetings. Gill has been sharing the agendas. Gill will continue doing the agendas. Lindsay asked if the recordings will be made public, Gill confirmed it was not, unless the person was in attendance at the meeting. Rhona reminded the CC that we should say at the start of the meeting that it is going to be recorded.

Gill is still dealing with complaints about cars using Strowan Road as a rat run to avoid the speed bumps in Dalginross. She is still working on this issue.

As a closing point Gill reminded the CC that if members have concerns about any issues, they are brought to the CC table, not discussed out with.

- **Terri Bacon** – Terri asked what are the next steps for filling the vacant slot. Gill highlighted that some residents have expressed interest.

AOCB:

- Ruaridh raised the issue of the 20mph on Drummond Street. He would like to understand PKC's position on this. He stressed that a lot of local residents are the worst culprits for speeding, however, he recently has a close encounter with a non-resident. He involved Police Scotland. The Police are going to do some monitoring, however, PKC are dragging

their feet. Stewart and Gill are both working on getting speed bumps and average speed cameras installed.

- Lindsay mentioned that 'repeater' signs worked effectively where he used to live. Also, there is such a thing as a 'community speed watch'. Currently there is one in existence in Methven. This could be replicated in Comrie.
- Rhona suggested that the speed inspector be contacted. She will pass this information onto Gill.
- Ruairidh asked if anyone was willing to volunteer to pull out some the Himalayan Balsam on the banks of the Ruchill. The plant is an invasive species and can cause damage. Gill suggested that he contact Sandra and she will put this on the Facebook page.
- Ruairidh has recently been appointed to the CDT board of directors and he is aware that a member of the CC is interested. Lindsay acknowledged his continued interest.

DONM: Thursday 9th June at 7pm

Action Points:

- Andrew to share amended March minutes with John
- Andrew to contact planning department and ask for an extension regarding the RBS development
- Stewart and Lorna to have a catch up about the library.
- Stewart and Lorna to ask Helen Smart for an extension on the survey and express our dissatisfaction about the timescale it is asking up to reflect on.
- Andrew and Lorna to sign the link provided by Adobe Sign.

