



Comrie & District Community Council Meeting

The White Church, Thursday 12th December, 7 pm

In Attendance: Andrew Scobie (Chair), Lindsay Brown (Treasurer), Amy Fenwick, Tim Lucas, Lynn Stewart, Andrew Thompson, Dee Thomas

Elected Representatives: Ballie Rhona Brock, Cllr Stewart Donaldson

Members of the Public: 14

Apologies: Terri Bacon, Gavin Bissett (PKC), Fiona Connolly, Ross Scobie

Extraordinary General Meeting – Cllr Stewart Donaldson

Appointment of Office Bearers:

- As incumbent chair, Andrew opened the meeting. Although office bearers were elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October, per the Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils, office bearers must be re-appointed, and the constitution must be re-accepted in the wake of an election.
- Andrew Thompson proposed Andrew Scobie as Chair. Amy Fenwick seconded the nomination.
- Andrew Scobie proposed Tim Lucas as Vice-Chair. Andrew Thompson seconded the nomination.
- The post of Secretary remains vacant. Andrew Scobie will continue to manage the Secretary's email account. The Community Council will contact the Community Learning Team and PKC to discuss potential administrative support.
- Andrew proposed Lindsay Brown for Treasurer. Amy Fenwick seconded the nomination.

Formal Adoption of Constitution:

- Andrew Scobie resumed the chair to adopt the constitution. The Community Council unanimously adopted the constitution. Andrew will approach PKC about modifying the title from “Comrie Community Council” to “Comrie and District Community Council”.

Ordinary Meeting:

Minutes from the last meeting – Action Points and Matters Arising:

- Andrew has ascertained that PKC Greenspace is responsible for the Lednock Foot Bridge. The stonework is still subsiding. Andrew will visit in daylight for a closer inspection.
- The new community councillors are receiving weekly planning updates from PKC.
- Andrew has consulted PKC about tweaking our minute protocol. We are happy to make changes but will wait until we have secretarial support in minutes.
- Since the last meeting, Andrew, Cllr Brock and Cllr Donaldson have conducted an on-site inspection of Drummond, Dunira and Dundas Streets with Blair Watt from the PKC Roads Department. An update will be provided later in the minutes.
- The feedback on the ward councillor’s correspondence with the Parking Department about relaxing enforcement and penalties will also be provided later in the minutes.
- The Community Council submitted a Participation Request to PKC for the Save the Library Group. A response has been received, and it will be covered later in the minutes.
- Ownership of the Library building will also be covered later in the minutes.

- Andrew has still to reach out to Police Scotland to reaffirm correspondence with the Community Council.
- The Flood Prevention Scheme has been added to the standard meeting agenda and will remain there indefinitely. Gavin Bissett was invited to this meeting but was unavailable. He hopes to attend the next meeting in February.
- Rhona Brock has contacted the War Memorial Committee but has not received a response. Andrew is uncertain who to contact.
- Amy Fenwick proposed the minutes. Tim Lucas seconded.

Office Bearer Reports:

Treasurer's Report:

- Lindsay acknowledged some recent corrections made to accounts.
- We will be requesting a top-up on the admin account.
- Lindsay confirmed that the Millennium Path Committee money has been repatriated.
- We have received some recent donations into the Christmas Lights account. We are still in the process of getting a signatory from the Christmas Lights Committee added to the account.

Secretary's Report:

- At our November meeting, a Comrie in Colour (CiC) representative raised some factual inaccuracies in the October minutes. These have been corrected, and the updated minutes have been published.

Relevant Planning Applications

- Nothing of concern.

Laggan Park

- The Laggan Park Committee has requested a donation of £250 to maintain the facility. As owners of the Skatepark, we are major stakeholders in Laggan Park.
- Although we are not opposed to donating in theory, we have some concerns. They have been invited to attend a community council meeting to address these directly, but they have yet to do so.
- We are concerned that the annual requested amount may change yearly. For example, will it be raised with inflation or at the discretion of the Laggan Park Committee?
- Tim Lucas acknowledged that we need clarity on how the donation will contribute to the cost when the Skatepark does not consume electricity, water, etc. Andrew attended their last meeting and asked this question. They responded that the Pavilion is unlocked for skaters to use, but as far as the Community Council knows, it is not. Furthermore, their request for donations to cover essential costs sits uncomfortably with the ongoing fundraising towards the proposed Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).
- Tim reiterated that other than insurance and repairs that the Community Council covers, the Skatepark does not incur any other costs.
- Andrew Thompson reiterated that we need a representative to attend a meeting to address these concerns.
- The Skatepark insurance was renewed last month. Andrew and Tim will inspect the site before the next meeting.
- The Community Council agreed we will not make a payment until a member of the Laggan Park attends a meeting.

Parking and Road Matters:

- Drummond Street residents: Despite easing restrictions, there continues to be a strong warden presence and a high rate of penalties.
- Tim Lucas noted a ticketed car in Dunira Street on Sunday evening. He is unsure of when the penalty was issued. He added that the car was parked on double-yellow lines.
- Clamping by the DVLA was noted, but this is a separate issue.
- Amy Fenwick has received correspondence from a resident who had heard from the office of Pete Wishart MP regarding parking restrictions. She did not provide content details as the ward councillors would likely cover it.
- Following some uncertainty at the last meeting, Cllr Rhona Brock confirmed that she did not attend the parking restrictions meeting in September because it was not a generic public meeting but one delivered exclusively by Scottish National Party (SNP) representatives. In addition, she could not have attended due to a scheduling conflict with another commitment.
- Cllr Stewart Donaldson elaborated on the meeting with Road Safety and Traffic Technician Blair Watt on November 22nd. PKC is proposing that from April 1st, eastern Drummond Street (Comrie Hotel to Ancaster Lane), there will be no restrictions all year round. The same will apply to Dundas Street. The ward councillors will consult with local businesses via a letter drop regarding west Drummond and Dunira Street restrictions for their views on a two-tier system. He reiterated that the ward councillors have no preconceived ideas about how parking restrictions should work.
- Blair Watt is willing to return to Comrie, possibly running a drop-in or attending a Community Council meeting.
- The Flood Prevention Scheme work has reduced available parking and will do so until Summer 2026. Extra spaces on

Drummond and Dundas Street may be an option. Blair Watt advised us to be cautious about the impact of increased parking spaces on congestion. That said, Stewart maintained that it may be possible to get extra spaces. Permission will be required from BEAR Scotland and Transport Scotland, which takes time.

- Extra parking at the Primary School will be investigated, though this raises additional health and safety issues.
- Better signage for parking and the possibility of utilising Dalginross for extra parking are also being considered.
- Stewart acknowledged that the pavement parking ban will be enforced starting in January. As a result, the wardens' presence will likely increase. Tim Lucas highlighted that the ban would also cover parking near drop curbs. This should minimise damage caused by heavy-goods vehicles parking on western Drummond Street.
- Drummond Street residents in attendance are concerned that what is proposed will not go far enough to resolve the problem for both businesses and residents. They are worried that it will create friction between businesses and residents.
- There remains some uncertainty about what action was agreed and what has been taken.
- The belief persists that parking penalties are utilised as revenue streams. Freedom of Information (FOI) requests submitted by residents confirmed that parking penalties have increased across PKC. Locally, they were excessive in July during the Comrie Fortnight.
- Stewart reiterated that the ward councillors cannot direct operational matters; specifically, they cannot tell the parking team to desist enforcement.
- A resident expressed concern about the impact of increased parking on local traffic in Dalginross.

- A Drummond Street resident queried the process for challenging the proposals. Stewart replied that challenges can be submitted through the mainstream channels for ward councillor contact.
- Another resident asked how we would know when the restrictions had changed. Rhona answered, stating that signs would be removed from the areas where restrictions had been lifted. Andrew added that the Community Council communication channels could also be used.
- A resident would like a timeline for restriction changes, including business consultations.
- The Community Council are not meeting in January, though we may have a special meeting about parking if Blair Watt is available. Stewart added that Blair will be abroad for most of January.

Legion Park:

- No update on Legion Park at this meeting.

Library:

- The Save the Library Group has followed up with PKC and Culture PKC on the participation request. It was validated a week ago but needs formal approval by January 28th.
- The Primary desired outcome is the restoration of the rural library budget. Alternatives for library provision were also considered, including community management and a hybrid community model with Culture PKC.
- No further progress has been made on the ownership of the library building; more work is required. Dee Thomas asked that once this has been ascertained, a dialogue with the owner will

be held. Stewart added that he is still engaging with council officers to clarify ownership.

- Culture PKC are not confident about the budget being reinstated.
- An anonymous public member has contacted Culture PKC to donate a generous sum to keep Comrie Library open.
- A resident reiterated why and how the library closure would adversely affect local well-being.
- Another highlighted Moray Council's decision to reverse library closures. Why can PKC not do the same?
- Stewart confirmed that the PKC Finance and Resources Committee, which he convenes, is exploring how Council Tax can be channelled towards keeping libraries open. They will need to wait for further clarity on the Scottish Government Budget.

Invergeldie:

- Andrew Thompson stated that Oxygen Conservation attempted to attend three separate meetings with local organisations. The Comrie Development Trust (CDT) invited the Community Council and Friends of Strathearn. This allowed all groups to tease out their concerns about the consultation process. This has given us more time to scrutinise the community benefit being offered.
- Low Carbon (wind farm developer) aims to get formal consent for their wind farm from the Energy Consent Unit before Christmas, which is unlikely to succeed.
- Andrew Thompson clarified that the community benefit from Oxygen Conservation is for the re-wilding and forestry developments. The wind farm community development from Low Carbon will be separate.

- Currently, the minimal community benefit is £5000 per megawatt, which is poor and based on outdated calculations. Other wind farm schemes pay more. We must negotiate for a higher community benefit package. Stewart highlighted that another company's wind farm development at Logiealmond offers a community benefit of £7000 per megawatt.
- Residents remain worried about the disruption caused by the wind farm construction and the transmission infrastructure required. Andrew Thompson added that we are pushing the Energy Consent Unit not to consent to the wind farm construction until such logistical issues have been resolved. Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) have agreed on an access route with Drummond Estate to construct the nearby Glen Tarken Wind Farm. It would be foolish for Low Carbon to build another route when Invergeldie will be accessible using this one. Another resident who attended a recent meeting by SSE about Glen Tarken stated that communication between the two developers is poor, with the former having a generally low opinion of Low Carbon. Collaboration between both is essential to minimise disruption.

Flood Prevention Scheme:

- No further updates at this meeting.

Councillors Reports:

- **Cllr Rhona Brock** – See AOCB
- **Lindsay Brown** – Community Action Plan (CAP) funding has been awarded. Lindsay hopes to commence the working group in January.
- **Cllr Stewart Donaldson** – Stewart provided an update on extending the 20 MPH limit in Comrie.

- **Amy Fenwick** – See AOCB
- **Tim Lucas** – Nothing to add.
- **Andrew Scobie** – Nothing to add
- **Lynn Stewart** – Nothing to add
- **Dee Thomas** – Nothing to add
- **Andrew Thompson** – Andrew has approached Calum Bachell at PKC for an update on path access at Cultybraggan. We also need clarification from Balfour Beatty about how path access will be affected.

AOCB

- Both Rhona Brock and Amy Fenwick acknowledged Police Scotland's decision to scale back officer presence at the Flambeaux Procession on Hogmanay. Rhona confirmed that there will be police officers there, but they will be deployed elsewhere in the event of an incident. There will be no traffic management from Police Scotland. Amy added that the Flambeaux Committee is aware of that arrangement and is not satisfied with it. Their risk assessments are calculated based on police presence. Rhona noted that the Flambeaux Committee had categorised the event as 'low risk', so Police Scotland had scaled back the officer presence. Lynn confirmed that the Flambeaux Committee had used this category for years, and this is the first change in police presence. Financial constraints at Police Scotland's end have also contributed to this decision. The consensus was that this is unfair and discriminatory towards rural committees. Additionally, there were no police officers at the Blast in the Park event last month, and there were problems with anti-social behaviour. The community is concerned that the same thing will happen at the Flambeauxs, which will potentially have tragic consequences.

DONM: Thursday 13th February, in the White Church

Action Points:

1. Andrew will contact the Community Council Team at PKC to ask about modifying the constitution's title.
2. Andrew will visit the Lednock Foot Bridge in daylight to inspect the subsiding stonework.
3. A delegate from the Laggan Park Committee will be invited to the next Community Council meeting to address our concerns.
4. Andrew and Tim will visit the Skatepark for a structural inspection.
5. The Community Council and ward councillors will provide a timeline for the proposed parking restriction changes.