

BMCC Meeting - Blackmount School 4th December 2023.

Elected Members	Present		Ex-Official Members	Present
Alistair Muirhead/Chair	Y		Alex Allison	Y
Andreas Hudson/Sec	Y			
Pauline Irwin/Treasurer	Y			
Nicola Levy/Editor	Y			
Eric Holford	N			
Anne Hutchinson	Y			
Sarah McGlasson	Y			
Stephen Jenkins	Y			

1. Attendance: Two members of the public attended.
2. As part of the welcome and apologies the audience was asked for permission to record the session. Permission was granted by all attendees. The recording will not be publicly shared but saved in a folder accessible by the Blackmount Community Council (following called BMCC).
3. Approval of minutes of meetings and reports.
 - a. Minutes of the 6th of November meeting approved.
 - b. Minutes of the 4th of September meeting approved.
 - c. Additional AGM Secretary's Report produced by John McCann will be revised and circulated to the group for approval. This will be circulated by the secretary (A. Hudson).
 - i. Recommended changes:
 1. Page 2, "Communications Plan", first paragraph amend date of meeting to December 2022.
 2. Page 3, "Black Mount Survey", 4th paragraph was amended.
 3. Page 4, 3rd paragraph was removed.
 4. Page 4, "Openness and Transparency, 1st paragraph was amended.
 5. Page 4, "Openness and Transparency, 2nd paragraph was removed.
 6. Page 4, "Openness and Transparency, 3rd paragraph was amended.
4. Secretaries report was presented and circulated.

Since the last meeting on 6th November and the commencement of my role as secretary, I have primarily focused on understanding the responsibilities associated with this position. I am very grateful for the help I have received from former and current community council members.

I have concluded all necessary paperwork (nomination form, code of conduct, contact form for GDPR, etc.) to undertake the role of secretary. Admin rights have been granted for the Blackmount Community Council and the Blackmount Community pages.

John McCann has provided input regarding previous activities, such as the 'Road Safety' initiative from the Parents Council. However, I am not yet fully apprised of all the details.

In preparation for today's meeting, I have drafted a social media policy for a more structured approach to our online presence and explored options for acquiring a BMCC domain with email accounts. The domain costs are £20 for the first year, with an additional charge of £2.50 per month for five email accounts (each with 2GB storage).

I have circulated a survey from the Children & Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) via Facebook and the community council.

All communications regarding grant applications have been forwarded to the treasurer.

a. Actions

- i. Social Media draft policy will be circulated for agreement to the BMCC members.
- ii. A Facebook engagement strategy and revised content strategy will be presented at the next BMCC meeting.
- iii. The secretary will follow-up in the road safety complaints from the Blackmount Primary School Parents Council. This involve following up on the retrospective planning application for a neighbouring premises and the instruction of the council to move a fence for road safety.
- iv. A scoping request for Hyndshawland was circulated.
- v. Secretary to follow-up with Men’s Shed and elaborate on ideas how we could utilise £500 paid already to the Men’s Shed.
- vi. Secretary to submit code of conduct form for A. Hutchison.

b. Decisions

- i. A domain similar to BlackmountCommunity.Scot (if available) will be purchased.
- ii. This will include E-Mail hosting with 5 available email domains.
 - 1. Chair@BlackmountCommunity.Scot
 - 2. Treasurer@BlackmountCommunity.Scot
 - 3. Secretary@BlackmountCommunity.Scot
 - 4. Admin@BlackmountCommunity.Scot
- iii. Facebook background picture for the Blackmount Community Council page will be updated with a picture of the current community councillors.
- iv. Secretary A. Hudson will join the Skirling Community Council on the 16th of January for a combined meeting to improve road safety for our communities. Other members of the BMCC are welcome.

5. Treasurer report was presented and circulated.

Please to report the BMCC cheque books, bank statements etc were returned on 21st November.

Blackmount Community Council Administration Account – 00693156

This account holds SLC administration payment to the BMCC plus Survey Group Energy money.

DATE			INCOMING	BALANCE	
30/3/23				73.71	
30/3/23		Survey Group Monies	500.00	573.71	
26/6/23		SLC ADMIN TOP UP	515.00	1088.71	
			1.65		
			3.49	1093.85	
28/10/23		Men’s shed payment 40.50		1053.35	

Unfortunately, I am unable to confirm this balance at present as I am currently waiting on updated Bank statements, However, with the information I do have, (old statements and bank book stubs) this is correct barring any interest due.

£500.00 pounds of this balance is an energy grant payment which was transferred into this account in March 2023 for the Blackmount Community Subgroup known as the ‘Survey group’ as they did not have any alternative bank account set up for the grant so the BMCC admin bank account was used.

All monies in the BMCC accounts are audited yearly by SLC.

When you deduct the Survey Group money of 500.00 the remaining balance is £553.35 which is to be used on BMCC general administration/honorariums/expenses etc.

Blackmount Community Council Energy Funding Account – 693164

This account holds the energy grant monies from SLC and the BMCC savings.

DATE	Description	OUTOING	INCOMING	BALANCE Energy & BMCC
		BMCC Savings	1800.29p	Same account
	balance			55.57
26/6/23	Energy Grant Top up		4960.00	5015.57
10/7/23	Dolphinton Church Hall repairs (electrical)	500.00		4515.00
11/7/23	WRI (flower Show)	300.00		4215.57
15/9/23	Emma Ives (Survey software)	113.40		4102.17
15/9/23	Libberton school (survey payment)	100.00		4002.17
15/9/23	Blackmount School (Survey payment)	100.00		3902.17
20/09/23	Red barn (Survey prize)	30.00		3872.17
11/10/23	Fireworks (Social group)	500.00		3372.17
	Phonebox purchase Elsrickle	1.00		3371.17

Balance is £3371.17. (excluding £1800.29 and any interest)

I regret to advise that all the cheque's written in September (by temp treasurer) for the survey group and £1.00 payment for the Elsrickle telephone box have been taken from this energy account, which is a mistake as the money for the survey group was held in the admin account. We will be required to issue a cheque from the admin account back into to the energy fund to rectify this mistake as soon as possible.

Based on the information we have received last week from Emma Ives, the Survey Group have spent or subscribed to spend so far, A total of £456.80, which means, they will have a remaining balance of £43.20, from the energy grant left. (unfortunately, not 143.20 mentioned in the email from Emma Ives as the grant amount was 500.00 not 600.00 as stated)

The survey group have provided receipts (from Emma) which amount to £456.80, however, looking at the cheque stubs, we have paid out so far, £113.40p subscription invoice no 1127 included in the receipts (37.80 month Dec/Feb) is still outstanding and is required to be paid.

As we have no actual survey group minutes confirming agreement to this invoice, I would request a backup email/letter or minutes, whatever they choose, ideally from a current or previous BMCC member on the survey group team at the time of confirming payment is to be made for this latest invoice submission. I do hope the survey group understands that paying cheques out without back up authorisation documentation is something I am not prepared to do as treasurer.

Going forward and in accordance with SLC 'Establishment of Community Councils' guidelines for subgroups, and to save any confusion etc particularly on the financial side again, I would propose the Survey Group whilst a subgroup follow the guideline and issue regular minutes to the BMCC Secretary.

£30.00 of the survey spending must be rejected as it is clearly 'Prize money' which is not allowed in the grant guidelines. This is very frustrating to me personally as this was pointed out to the previous secretary, and other options given. However, I wish to solve this problem as soon as possible and propose with agreement from the BMCC that we repay this amount back into the subgroup fund from the BMCC savings, as no prize restrictions apply on the savings account, and I will only need to produce the receipt which we currently have. Can I therefore ask for approval from the BMCC councillors to proceed with this option.

I really do apologize for what appears to be job worth's rules in comparison to other organisations or even individuals who obtain an energy grant payment, but the big difference we have here is that the survey group is a subsidiary of the BMCC and in addition is also using BMCC bank accounts, so therefore comes under the same rules that all community councils do.

I am currently unaware of, but must point out that we may have a looming financial commitment made for payment to Dolphinton hall/church for the use of the premises on 2 occasions earlier in the year. I have not seen any correspondence or booking agreement etc so basically in the dark with this but felt everyone should be aware just in case.

Energy Grant Applications

We currently have 3 Energy Grant Applications pending to my knowledge.

2 x applications already agreed, during the previous BMCC council, 1 for telephone box's refurbishment for de-fibs etc and another application for Legal fees for the setting up of Elsrickle Community Hub Ltd, this group will take over control of the Elsrickle community hall from SLC.

These applications have not been handed over during the AGM, may I request the chair arranges for the re-issue of these applications as soon as possible.

Application received from Susan Dobbin, from Rigside Rural Communities Nursery. I will circulate the application for councillors' considerations/questions later in the week. As the BMCC will not be meeting in January, I will respond to Susan and advised we will hopefully be able to give our decision on first Monday meeting in February. Any questions/query regarding this application through the treasurer please for collation/response. I will be asking for a breakdown of the costs.

We have been contact by SLC who have advised that Libberton School is not within the Community Council boundary of Blackmount, however, Libberton village is. A payment of 500.00 made to Libberton primary school for a community library has been paid. I have emailed Lesley Parks and advised her of the genuine mistake, Libberton School is within the Blackmount catchment area. I have informed Lesley Parks that I believe that the

Blackmount community have benefitted from this payment as we have access to this library and some Blackmount children residents attend this school. I will advise any response from SLC when received.

Due to the delay in receiving the community cheque books it was only last week I was able to complete the RBS application forms for additional bank signatures. Currently BMCC have 1 authorised signature and we need 2 BMCC serving members for cheques. I understand from RBS this takes approximately 4 weeks to process. Until this process is complete, we are unable to sign any cheques.

a. Actions

- i. Correction of Misallocated Funds: Address the misallocation of funds for the Survey Group and Elsrickle phonebox purchase.
- ii. Two Energy grant applications will be reissued by the current Chair.
 1. Telephone Box refurbishment.
 2. Legal fees for Elsrickle Community Hall.
- iii. Application from Ringside Rural Community nursery will be recirculated.
- iv. Email or Letter from a member of the Survey Group regarding outstanding invoice. To be actioned by Emma Ives.
- v. The Chair will investigate if we could reduce the costs for the Bugle even further.

b. Decisions

- i. Correction of Misallocated Funds: Address the misallocation of funds for the Survey Group and Elsrickle phonebox purchase.
- ii. Authorization for Invoice Payments: Treasurer requests authorization to pay invoices for the Survey Group. Approved.
- iii. Approval for Reimbursement: Request for approval to reimburse £59.99 for Microsoft 365 Software. Approved.
- iv. Repayment of Ineligible Expenditure: £30.00 spent by the Survey Group on ineligible prize money to be repaid from BMCC savings. Approved.
- v. Regular Reporting by Subgroups: Proposal for subgroups, including the Survey Group, to provide regular financial reports. Approved.

6. New Member Applications

- a. Sarah McGlasson was confirmed as new member of the BMCC.
 - i. Proposer: Alistair Muirhead, Seconder: Andreas Hudson.
- b. Stephen Jenkins was confirmed as new member of the BMCC.
 - i. Proposer: Alistair Muirhead, Seconder: Andreas Hudson.
- c. Actions
 - i. Secretary to inform council about new BMCC members.
 - ii. New members to supply 2022 nomination form with signatures.

7. Community and Engagement

The new Bugle edition has been produced and is ready for distribution. The BMCC has acknowledged all the hard work that went into the new edition and has thanked Nicola for her hard work.

We currently sit on a 12% engagement rate but we are confident that we will reach higher engagement if we continue to utilise our communication channels such as Facebook.

Schools are working on their own responses. Liberton Highschool is still catchment area of Blackmount and will be included.

The Survey Group has decided after recommendation from the last BMCC meeting to separate from the BMCC to form their own group which was agreed at their last official meeting.

- a. Actions
 - i. Sarah will collect the Bugle from the printer in Edinburgh and assist with the distribution. (A big thanks to Sarah for the help).
 - ii. Email survey software invoice to treasurer.
 - iii. The Survey Group will outline a plan to separate from the BMCC and explore options such as forming a community development trust.
 - iv. The Survey Group will investigate setting up a new bank account.
- b. Decisions
 - i. Approval for Reimbursement: Reimbursement of £113.40 for survey software subscription (Dec 2023- February 2024). Approved.

8. Black Mount Social

We are investigating plans to host a Scotch Night end of February instead of a senior citizen Christmas dinner. This depends on pending actions in regards to leasing the Elsrickle Community Hall via a incorporated organisation.

A member of the public has approached the BMCC to ask for the layby on the A721 intersection Biggarshiels Rd just before Elsrickle to be upgraded.

- a. Action
 - i. Cllr. Alex Allison to investigate possible improvements.

9. AOB

The next edition of the Bugel will be produced for distribution end of Q1 2024.