

KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2009 at 7 p.m.

Present: Crs Mr A Davidson (Chair), Ms G Wright (Vice-chair), Mr T Wade (Treasurer), Mrs V Emmett (Sec), Mrs M Brown, Mrs A Schofield, Mr M MacRae, Mr M Stone, Mr J Taylor, Mr D Whyte Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows, Sgt Crawford (Northern Constabulary).

Absent: Cr. N Macaulay

AGENDA

1. **Apologies:** None

MINUTES OF THE AGM AND COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26th MAY 2009

2. The minutes were accepted as a correct record. Prop: Cr. Whyte, Sec: Cr Brown. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

3. **MATTERS ARISING:** None.

4. **POLICE MATTERS**

The Chairman welcomed Sgt Crawford to the meeting.

Cr Stone asked if the Police was aware that groups of young car drivers are congregating in Ardvonie Car Park in the evenings and some are driving away along Gynack Road fast and noisily.

Sgt Crawford commented that the Police are aware it is now a meeting place for the young drivers, but unless there is a complaint from the residents, they have no reason to take any action. He felt it is not a big issue at present. The staff of the Health Centre has been consulted, but there has been no interference with the staff's access to the Centre in case of emergency. The Police would act immediately if the drivers blocked the way to the Health Centre.

In response to questions about the introduction of the alcohol bye-law, Sgt Crawford said he did not know when the bye-law is due to be introduced, nor could he speculate on its effects in communities. It will help the Police Force should problems arise. They have been policing hard recently and this is having the effect of reducing the incidence of under-age drinking.

Cr Fallows commented that Newtonmore is due to hold its referendum in early September.

5. **SCOTTISH BOUNDARIES COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR ELECTORAL REFORM**

Councillors read copies of the letter sent by the Chairman in response to the proposals. He explained it was necessary to formulate a response quickly in order to meet the short deadline in June and there had been no time to consult the Councillors. The Secretary said as soon as the proposals had been published shortly after the May meeting, she had contacted Cr Fallows in an attempt to ensure paper copies of the proposals could be read by the Community since not everyone was able to access them on line. The Commission had only provided them at two Highland Council offices - both in Inverness. Unfortunately no copies were sent to Kingussie. The Secretary reported she has received an email response to the Council's letter from the SBC.

Cr Fallows complimented the Council on the response, he felt it was very apt and to the point.

6. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL BOUNDARIES BETWEEN KINGUSSIE AND NEWTONMORE** Councillors

were provided with a short written report of two meetings called by the Ward Manager, attended by the vice-Chairman, Secretary and Crs. Taylor and Schofield to address the misalignment of Community Council boundaries. Those present from both Community Councils amicably agreed proposals for the re-drawing of the boundaries, although the Ward Manager. reported the outcome would have to await the conclusion of a wider review of all Highland Council boundaries in the autumn. Proposals would then go out for public consultation.

Cr. Fallows commented that the Highland Council review should not affect the status of Community Councils.

7. PLANNING MATTERS

The Chairman read out recent planning applications within the Council area. It was agreed none required action by the Council.

Councillors then considered four other matters:

- (a) A paper from the Highland Council concerning new requirements for Pre-Application Consultation - it was agreed to put the item on the agenda of the next meeting to allow further consideration and discussion.
- (b) Response to the Highland Council's supplementary guidance consultation on planning gain.
- (c) Responses to an appeal against refusal for housing development in Gynack Road.
- (d) Draft letter regarding the planning application for 300 houses in Kingussie.

Councillors were provided with copies of the responses sent by the Chairman to 7(b) and 7(c) and the draft letter in item 7(d).

In reply to a question from Cr. MacRae, the Chairman explained that once again it had been necessary to respond on behalf of the Council before the meeting in order to meet the deadlines.

After a short discussion it was agreed that due to the changes in the Council in the past few months, some matters had not been dealt with in good time and others had only been learned about at short notice. It was agreed that such disruption was unlikely now the new Council was in place. Councillors agreed that an extraordinary meeting should be called if important matters with short deadlines arose between scheduled Council meetings, and they would all endeavour to attend and contribute.

Item 7 (b) In response to concerns in about the nature of the modular buildings proposed for schools as part of the planning gain to be placed on developers, Cr. Fallows said the Highland Council had investigated this thoroughly and were satisfied that new buildings were much improved, had a longer life and were better insulated. Some of these buildings were currently being erected at Grantown Grammar School. He offered to bring some papers and materials to a future meeting to inform councillors about the nature of the modular buildings.

Item 7(c) Cr. MacRae said he understood that the proposed new car park at St Vincent's Hospital was to proceed.

Item 7(d) Draft letter on the planning application for 300 houses in Kingussie.

The Chairman and Cr Schofield explained the reasons for drafting a further letter to the Park Planning Board. The original letter by the Council, sent after the public meeting in March, made very good points about the principal community concerns, but was worded only as a "submission". It did. not explicitly object to aspects of the planning application, although this had been the feeling of the meeting of the community.

Cr. Fallows, a member of the National Park Board, explained that a letter which is sent as a "submission" and not as an "objection" does not carry the same weight, and as such will not receive as much serious consideration when the planning application is considered by the Board. He felt the new letter would receive much more attention. He commented that while the draft letter expressed a preference for delaying a decision until the new Park plan is adopted, this could not be met since the

Board has a statutory duty to consider and decide on all planning applications within a fixed time. He suggested omitting reference to this preference since it could not be met. He felt the points made in the rest of the letter were appropriate, significant and well put. The new letter focused on two other main issues: (i) the lack of reference in the plan to enhancement of the community infrastructure for education and health before the construction of the new houses commenced, (ii) access to the site.

A discussion ensued principally about access to the site by construction traffic and then by the new residents should permission be granted. Cr Schofield had discovered that in 2002 when permission was sought for houses in Croila View, Dunbarry Terrace had already been deemed to be at capacity and nothing had changed. The nature of an alternative access: via "a haul road" through Kerrow for construction traffic as promised by the developers at the public meeting was explored, and the point was made that the developer may not be able to build a road through Kerrow.

After a further full discussion, a vote was taken as to whether the letter should be sent:

In Favour - 6

Against - 2

Abstention - 1

8. THE YEAR OF HOMECOMING EVENT AT ARDVONIE PARK 20 June 2009

(Vice-Chairman Cr. Wright)

Cr. Wright presented a verbal report. The celebrations had been favoured with very good weather and it was agreed by everyone to have been a great success. Grants were given by the Cairngorms National Park Authority, Leader+, the Highland Council and European funding, and the event raised

a further £400 on the day.

The festivities opened with a parade along the High Street to re-enact the march by the residents of Kingussie in 1838 when they left en-masse and went to Oban, where they took a boat -the "St George" bound for Australia. At that time the people were called together by the ringing of the church bell. On this occasion the bell was rung again to start the parade, which included a replica of the boat and it was led by the Badenoch and Strathspey Pipe Band to Ardvonie Park. Piper Sandy MacDonell led walkers to the new bridge over the Gynack to celebrate the opening of the bridge and the Gynack Trail and he played the tune he had specially composed for the occasion.

Cr Wright thanked everyone who had contributed to the occasion - the SWRI, who provided homemade refreshments, staff from the Highland Folk Museum and other local crafts-people, many in traditional costumes of the time, who demonstrated spinning, weaving, patchwork and quilting, turning on a pole lathe and rope making using natural plant materials readily available in the area. Ross Noble told traditional stories. The audience was entertained by singers Grant Fraser and Davie Holt from Newtonmore, singer and clarsach player Marie Louise Napier from Grantown, the Pipe Band, and the Woodland Orchestra. Ruaridh Ormiston brought along some of his ponies and his trap to provide rides for the children. The Hill Race was revived and had a very good number of runners. The Murray Davis Cup has been donated to the Festivities Committee by Stephen Myerscough and was once again presented to the winner of the race. A Ceilidh was held in the evening and the music was provided by the band Cruachan; some of the young musicians from Feis Spe also played. Although the Ceilidh was not as well attended as had been hoped the event went very smoothly, was enjoyed by all and there had been no problems.

Cr. Wright said the marquees, which are owned by the Festivities Committee, were left up for use by the organisers of the Bikeathon charity event the following day. The Festivities Committee hopes to be able to hold a similar event next year at the same time in June, but if they are to gain grant funding towards the costs, they will have to decide on a new theme!

9. COMMUNITY TENTS (Cr. MacRae)

Cr. Macrae reminded the Council he had tried to obtain funding to replace the aged tents owned and used by the Council, as well as various local organisations during the year for special outdoor events. He had not been successful in obtaining funding; he felt that since the Council no longer organised the annual dance at Ruthven Barracks the need for tents had disappeared. He also reported that the Council owned barbecue should be taken out of use and no longer be made available to other groups, he felt it was no longer safe to use.

The Council accepted his report and recommendations.

10. ARMED SERVICES DAY CEREMONY, 22 June 2009 (Cr Emmett)

Cr Emmett gave a brief report; the ceremony had been well organised with the Gynack Memorial Gardens providing an excellent setting in the bright morning sunshine. Although the ceremony of raising the flag by Fergus Laing, Deputy Lord Lieutenant in the presence of members of the armed forces, serving and retired, took place on a Monday morning, it was well attended by Highland Councillors, Community Councillors, residents, groups of pupils and their teachers from the High School and the Primary School, and by visitors to the town. Refreshments provided by the Duke of Gordon Hot_1 gave_ everyone an opportunity to socialise afterwards. Cr. Fallows commented that although the Ward Manager, Sue Palmer had received very short notice of the national event, she had organised it excellently along with Mr Michael Hone, and it had attracted a TV crew from Grampian Television. The broadcast in the evening was excellent publicity for Kingussie and the well-tended Memorial Gardens.

11. MISSING INSCRIPTION ON THE WAR MEMORIAL (Cr Emmett)

Cr. Emmett explained that the Armed Services Day ceremony had once again revealed the omission on the war memorial of reference and acknowledgment of the part played by members of the Royal Flying Corps in the Great War and how this omission might be rectified. The inscription referred only to "soldiers and sailors". Cr. Wade reported that one airman from Kingussie had indeed lost his life in the 1914-18 war. Cr Whyte said he understood responsibility for the memorial was with Edinburgh Castle. During the ensuing discussion it was reported that Highland Councillor Stuart Black had agreed to follow this up. Cr Fallows commented that the other Highland Councillors supported this and he anticipated it might have to be done through the British Legion. He said it might take time, but he hoped the inscription would be added.

12. PROJECTS Crs. Brown and Taylor.

(a) Our Community - A Way Forward.

Cr Brown provided a brief written summary of the early work of the steering groups set up to lead a three year project involving Kingussie, Newtonmore, Dalwhinnie and Laggan. Each community will undertake their own projects. The groups had met recently with the two project coordinators: Ron Mercer and Karen Derrick of VABS, as well as representatives of the CNPA, the Highland Youth Forum and the Highland Small Communities Trust (HSCT). Pilot projects have already taken place in Advie, Cromdale, Dulnain Bridge and Grantown.

In essence, the project is intended to ask residents to identify priorities that would help to improve their communities and then funding would be sought to bring about the improvements. Each steering group is to be helped to draw up a questionnaire and the survey of every household will be carried out by the HSCT on their behalf and they will analyse the results. Cr Brown briefly mentioned a useful questionnaire that had been used in Ballater, which asked questions very relevant to people in Kingussie too, such as housing and transport needs.

Cr. Taylor said several ideas for community projects had already been suggested, for example the possibility of the community using the Court House, and new uses for Am Fasgadh, Mc Robert House and the Museum grounds. He said as part of a transport survey, he was going to take on the design of the questionnaire into the daily commuting mileage that residents have to make in order to go to work.

Cr MacRae suggested improvements to the parking in the centre of Kingussie would alleviate problems in the High Street and King Street areas.

Cr Schofield said she already knew of much interest in the provision of allotments and she reported on a national scheme, which will provide 100% funding to set up such local schemes. A discussion followed about potential sites for allotments.

Cr Fallows said he would follow up the lack of signage on the High Street to the former Highland Folk Museum car park at the end of Duke Street. Since the museum is closed its former car park might usefully be used by the general public, who might not be aware of its existence.

Crs. Brown and Taylor are due to meet the project team again on 20th July and said they would welcome ideas in the meantime.

(b) Scotrail's Rail Station Regeneration Project

Cr. Brown briefly outlined a new project funded by Scotrail to regenerate disused railway station buildings. Kingussie is one of the stations to be included. She said that the Badenoch Learning and Resources Centre are already investigating this with a view to refurbishment of the unused area for conversion to new premises for their adult education classes. Their current use of the Library and adjacent rooms in the Badenoch Centre is not proving successful; they have insufficient space to develop all the courses that are in demand.

(c) BBC/Big Lottery Fund Village Project.

Cr. Brown briefly outlined this proposed project funded by the BBC and the Big Lottery Fund to regenerate villages, help people set up businesses, improve facilities, etc. It was by nature of a competition and the successful villages - only one of which would be in Scotland, would have to take part in a BBC TV programme. Cr Brown passed the leaflet to Cr Wright for consideration by the festivities group.

13. HIGHLAND COUNCIL TRAINING COURSES FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILLORS

Cr Emmett reported she had been asked by the Ward Manager, Ms Sue Palmer to ask councillors to identify topics for potential training courses, which the Highland Council managerial teams might develop and provide. Cr Emmett suggested councillors might email or phone her with their ideas of appropriate topics, which she would pass on to Ms Palmer.

14. WARD FORUM

Councillors received a brief written report of the recent meeting held in Cromdale and attended by Crs. Brown, Emmett and Schofield. No discussion ensued.

15. HIGHLAND COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (Cr. Fallows)

Cr. Fallows suggested this might be a very good time for the Community to approach the Council with a project to use the former Court House by the community.

He reported that six travellers and their vans were parked in the Market Stance. They had been interviewed about this "illegal parking" and they had given assurances they would be away by

Friday 10th July. Apparently the Newtonmore Travellers site was full when they arrived in the district. Cr Fallows said he had asked in previous years for surveys to be undertaken into the number of occasions when the travellers site was full and other travellers had nowhere to park their vehicles and caravans, he had not had any response.

Cr Fallows asked if there had been any problems with the current use of the Market Stance. Cr Taylor reported that ahead of last Saturday's home shinty match, one of the travellers had asked about the number of cars using the area and had moved his caravan and vehicle away to leave room for the visiting teams. Cr MacRae said the parked vans had left little space for residents to put their waste materials in the recycling skips. He also asked about progress with the proposed installation of barriers

to prevent such use by travellers in the future. Cr. Fallows said he would make enquiries. A brief discussion followed about the possibilities of extending the current Newtonmore site or provision of other sites elsewhere in Badenoch and Strathspey.

16. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Secretary, Cr Emmett provided a written report summarising items of correspondence received:

Highland Council review of Community Councils - new draft orders for councils and councillors. SNH letter about the proposed extension of the Speyside Way between Aviemore and Newtonmore
Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Company
Report from the Kingussie Footpaths Group
Report of the KCDC meeting on 18 May
Highland Council -Housing in the Countryside interim supplementary guidance
Moffat Community Initiative - Walkers are welcome in Towns
Highland Council - Budget Brief 2009-2010 booklet
Highland Council High Societies website
Kincaig CC - report of a renewables meeting with RWE npower
Kincaig CC -report of meeting about setting up Woodland Crofts
Highland Council - Quality Awards 2009

It was agreed to put the last item on the agenda for the August meeting to consider nominations for the award.

17. AOCB

(a) KVCC Finances

Treasurer Cr Wade gave a brief report of the KVCC account. He reported that the Council still has not received its annual grant from the Highland Council. The secretary said she had contacted the Ward Manager's PA, who said a letter was due to go out this week.

(b) Grants for Interpretative Boards

Cr Wade reported that former Cr Grant had obtained grant funding of £2500 for the provision of an interpretative board for the Gynack Memorial Gardens. The commission for this board had been given to the agency researching and making the interpretative boards for the Gynack Trail. In the event the board for the Gardens cost less than the original estimate and only £1794 was spent. Mr Grant had approached Cr Wade about refunding the excess to the three funding agencies, in proportion to their original donations. One of the grants came from the Highland Council's discretionary fund.

Cr Fallows reported that this had been discussed that afternoon by the four Highland Councillors in a meeting with the Ward Manager, and Ms Palmer had to ask advice from Mr Gilfillan to see if the Community Council could retain their proportion of the excess and vire it for other good causes.

Cr Wade suggested Mr Grant and his colleagues should be congratulated for their work on the Gynack Trail and especially the provision of the new bridge, which he felt was a significant feature in Kingussie.

(c) Memorial Bench

Cr Wade said he had now received a copy of the estimate of £690 for the memorial bench to be installed by the Duck Pond in memory of Sandy Bennett. The organising group hoped the Community Council would contribute one-third of the cost - £230. There were insufficient funds in.

the current account to make this donation, so it was tentatively agreed that, if need be, funds could be drawn from the Council's reserve funds. Cr MacRae asked who else is to contribute to the memorial bench; Cr Wade replied that one third would be given by the Christmas Lighting Group and another third by the Badenoch Angling Association.

(d) Iona Gallery

The secretary reported briefly on the progress in the leasing negotiations of the Iona Gallery from Highland Council by the Society of Badenoch and Strathspey Artists. She invited all the councillors to a public meeting to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Iona building and the launch of the community project on Mon. 10th August at 7.30p.m. in the Gallery.

(e) Bus timetables.

The secretary reported a complaint had been received about the lack of bus timetable information at the bus stops in Kingussie. She had contacted the Highland Council Transport Officer and had been told it was the responsibility of each bus company to put up their own timetables. Copies of bus timetables should also be available in the library and at the service point, but they are not open at all hours. The HC Transport Officer has agreed to supply KVCC with a copy of the new timetables when they are issued in August and the secretary will put them on the KVCC notice board in King Street, where everyone can always see them.

KVCC notice board in King Street. Vice chairman Cr Wright reported she had taken it upon herself to ask Mr Duncan MacArthur to give her a quote for either refurbishing or replacing the notice board, but so far had received no estimate from him.

(f) Hanging Baskets.

Questions were asked if the hanging baskets were going to be put along the High Street as usual. It was reported they were made up and Mr Reid had undertaken to distribute them to residents and businesses willing to look after them throughout the summer.

(g) Clock Tower.

The secretary reported that following a report from Cr Taylor about the poor state of the Saltire on the Clock Tower, she had reported it to the Ward Manager with a view to the provision of a new flag. She had also asked Mr Thain, who used to maintain the clock, about access to the roof of the tower and was assured it was possible via a ladder inside the tower with access attained through a hatch in the roof. Cr. Macrae reported that in the past Cr Macaulay and a colleague had replaced the flag from time to time, but the main problem now is that the rope does not pass easily over the pulleys and it is not possible to remove the flag without scaling the flagpole itself. A new flag pole is required.

Crs. Whyte, Wade and MacRae confirmed that in the past the responsibility for the Clock Tower, the clock and the flagpole lay with the former Town Council, but it had effectively passed to the Highland Council on reorganisation of local councils.

Cr. Fallows suggested the provision of a new flag pole seemed to be a good case for application to the Discretionary Fund, the secretary agreed to follow this up.

(h) Putting Green in Spey Street

Cr Schofield reported she had been asked by a resident why the Putting Green in Spey Street had not been reinstated after the Gynack floods. It was suggested the responsibility for this area lies with the Highland Council's Education, Culture and Sport department. It was agreed enquiries should be made.

18. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA.

1. Pre-Application Planning consultation documents
2. Nominations for Highland Council's Quality Awards 2009 The secretary to circulate councillors for other items

19. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 5th August 2009. Venue to be decided, depending on the availability of the High School Library in view of the forthcoming building works during the school holidays. Cr. Wright gave her apologies in advance; she will be away on holiday. The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 16 Correspondence Received

1. Highland Council (Alison Clark): review of Community Councils Letter and draft model orders – constitution, code of conduct for councillors, model scheme for establishment of community councils.

They are a follow up to the public consultation in 2008. They have been finalised by the Scottish Government and are available for use by Local Authorities.

NO ACTION NEEDED YET - Highland Council intends to produce a draft scheme later this year, which will then go out for public consultation.

2. Proposed extension to the Speyside Way between Aviemore and Newtonmore. Letter from SNH.

Roseanna Cunningham Minister of the Environment has approved the route. Gives a web site address or we can ask for hard copy. *Would councillors like copies?*

3. B&S Community Transport Co. Letter and leaflet about the service. I have asked for two more copies, which I shall display on our noticeboard.

4. Report from the Kingussie Footpaths Group -for information. NO ACTION REQUIRED

5. Report of the KCDC meeting on 18 May. These are now displayed on our noticeboard for everyone to read.

Gynack Trail complete and leaflet published. Their Chairman holds their stocks.

They have set up a Renewables sub-committee. They also discussed the possibility of acquiring a site for local food production. Land suggested near the High School is probably unsuitable because of flooding.

6. Highland Council- Letter dated 24 April, about Housing in the Countryside interim supplementary guidance

The document was available on line for only 4 weeks from 24 April and the closing date for comments was 22 May - so we cannot take action even if it was needed!

7. Letter (via HC) from Moffat Community Initiative - Walkers are Welcome in Towns

I have given Gwynneth a copy and passed another to Roger Crawford of the Business Forum, since it seemed more relevant to businesses associated with the tourist industry, rather than KVCC.

8. Highland Council - Budget Brief 2009-2010 - booklet. *I can ask for copies for all the Councillors if they would like one.*

9. Highland Council- High Societies -letter about an interactive directory for not-for profit organisations. An entry has apparently already been created for us. We can upload documents - newsletters, pictures, enter forthcoming events, enter contact details for the KVCC, etc. I have looked at the site, no information is entered yet for KVCC, several other CCs do

have completed entries. The site is available online in the Library.

10. Kincaig Community Council- information about the installation of assessment masts for potential wind farm on Balavil Estate. RWE npower renewables have now applied for permission to install four more on Dunachton, Alvie and Dalraddy. During this summer ecological, hydrological and geological surveys will be done to see how best a wind farm can be accommodated within the site area. Ornithological surveys began in Sept. 2008 and will continue for a further year.

11. Kincaig Community Council- report of meeting about Woodland Crofts. Conclusion - Not straightforward!

12. Highland Council Quality Awards 2009 invitation to nominate someone or group nominations required by 2 October 2009

OUR COMMUNITY - A WAY FORWARD

Aim - to help residents prioritise what actions and improvements are needed in their communities by asking residents what they want.

Communities involved in this project are Kingussie, Newtonmore, Laggan and Dalwhinnie.

Pilot was undertaken last year resulted in

Advie - moving war memorial, progress upgrading water supply.

Dalnain Bridge - permanent smiley face speed indicator, replacement road markings, improved parking.

Cromdale - improved facilities in village hall, strengthening of community council

Grantown- Dulaig Park - work to start

KVCC representatives - Joe Taylor and Mairi Brown

Progress so far

List of organisations (stakeholders) and their main contacts in Kingussie was drawn up.

We attended Steering Group meeting in Newtonmore with representatives of Newtonmore, Laggan and Dalwhinnie. Ron Mercer and Karen Derrick from VABS will co-ordinate the project, representatives of Highland Youth Forum, CNPA, Highland Small Communities Housing Trust (who will carry out the surveys). We looked at the Toolkit which had been used in the pilot project but will be tailored to needs of each community.

On Monday we attended the working group meeting for Kingussie which was chaired by Ron Mercer. Representatives of the Business Forum, Youth Forum and HSCHT attended. We looked at the letters and questionnaires. It was recognised that amendments were necessary.

Date of next meeting - 20 July 2010