

KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON Tuesday 7th December 2010 in Talla Nan Ròs, Kingussie

Present: Councillors Mr A Davidson (Chairman), Mr J Taylor (Treasurer), Mrs V Emmett (Sec.), Mrs M Brown, Mrs A Schofield, Mr M Stone. Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows.

Apologies: Ms G Wright (Vice-Chair)

Visitors: Police Officers G Mackenzie and S O’Gorman, Northern Constabulary.

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 2nd November 2010** were approved as a correct record. (Proposed: Cr. Taylor, seconded Cr Brown.)

2. Matters Arising

New Noticeboard. Cr Taylor reported the Kingussie Shinty Club does not wish to join in the project for a new notice board in King Street.

Freedom of Kingussie for Mr Tom Wade. Cr Brown reported that Mr Wade is aware that KVCC initiated the award. He would like the presentation to be combined with the Town’s Gala Day in June to enable his family and many Kingussie people to attend the presentation of his award and the celebrations. After discussion Cr Taylor agreed to find out if it was possible, at this early stage, to ask the Camanachd Association to arrange for Kingussie Shinty team to have a home game that day, since Tommy has been a very influential member of the club in the past.

Empty Shops. Letters have not yet been sent to the owners of the empty shops. Cr Emmett confirmed she is still waiting to learn who the owners are.

Senior Citizens Christmas Party. Cr Davidson said he had received several thank you cards from people who had attended the lunch party. Councillors agreed it was a successful and enjoyable occasion again and thanks were given to the Star Hotel. The bad weather had resulted in a few late cancellations, but in the end 45 invited guests had taken lunch in the Star Hotel. Cr Davidson provided a breakdown of the costs: Star Hotel £451; Cooperative Society £108 for refreshments and £51 for presents.

The Treasurer reported that the Council and residents were still benefiting from the generosity of the late Cr Bennett’s family, who donated the proceeds of a collection taken at his funeral in his memory. It was agreed the Council would need to organise fund raising activities from 2011 onwards to continue to fund the event in future.

3. Police Matters

Delivery Note Scam: The Officers alerted Councillors to a new scam where people receive a delivery note (for an unknown unexpected delivery). When they phone the number on the delivery note they are charged £300 for a parcel that never arrives!

Bank Card Skimming. The Officers reminded everyone to be aware of the dangers of illegal card skimming devices fitted to cash machines. There has been a significant increase in detection rates of such devices fitted to machines in Inverness.

Forged Bank Notes: Cr Davidson asked if there have been reports of forged bank notes in the area, apparently they are on the increase in Glasgow and point to organised criminal gang activities targeting major retail outlets. The Officers took note.

Drink Drive Campaign: Northern Constabulary will be running the campaign this year as usual. The Officers commented that half of all drivers caught driving over the legal alcohol limit had been reported to the Force by members of the Public.

Kingussie Police Station: The Officers reported negotiations are taking place with Highland Council for joint use of the Police Station. They confirmed that Police Officers will still be stationed in Kingussie and it will still operate as a Police Station.

Speed Camera: A speed camera will be installed in Kingussie very shortly.

4. **Treasurer's Report** (Cr Mr J Taylor)

Cr Taylor provided his monthly financial statement:

KVCC current account balance stands at £3144

Senior Citizens Account - £4575

Children's Christmas Party Account - £1451

Cr Taylor reported that retired Banker, Mr John Renton has acted as the auditor for the KVCC accounts for several years. The Charity Commission now requires all auditors of charitable accounts to be registered and approved by their office (OSCR). Mr Taylor has approached Mr Renton about this new requirement.

5. **Planning Matters** (Cr Mrs A Schofield)

Cr. Schofield reported on recent planning applications:

- (i) The owner of the now closed Happy Eater premises on the High Street (restaurant and bunkhouse) has applied for retrospective permission for change of use of the bunkhouse to two flats.
- (ii) KCDC has applied for planning permission for the micro-generation hydro scheme on the River Gynack.
- (iii) Application for a house extension in Spey Street.

Housing Development Kingussie: Cr Schofield read out a letter from the CNPA in response to a letter from KVCC about the revised conditions for the planning consent for the 300 house development.

Waste Water Treatment Works: Cr Emmett reported receipt of a letter that day of a meeting by the CNPA Board on Friday 19th December to consider approval of Scottish Water's application for renewal of the sewage treatment works. KVCC has the opportunity to address the Board. Cr Fallows reported agreement between Scottish Water, Highland Council and Kingussie High School for strict control mechanisms for use of the track alongside the school by construction vehicles. They will be restricted to use outwith times when pupils are using the school access routes. There will be designated holding places for the vehicles and a member of Scottish Water staff will be on duty at the bridge over the Gynack. In reply to a question by Cr Davidson, Cr Fallows confirmed that the restrictions are unlikely to apply to times when the public roads are used by primary school pupils even though their entry and closing times are different to the High School. Cr Stone expressed concern that the restrictions are unlikely to be followed when lorries arrive with ready-mix concrete

on board. Cr Brown asked if additional restrictions will apply during national examination periods when there is a need for quiet; Cr Fallows replied that it was up to the School Rector to negotiate such matters.

At the end of the discussions Cr Schofield agreed to attend the meeting on the 10th December.

KVCC's Response to the Highland Wide Development Plan. Cr Schofield reported she had made a detailed response including on some of the matters that do not apply to Badenoch and Strathspey since they are delegated to the CNPA. She agreed to email a copy of the response to Cr. Fallows.

6. **Highland Councillor's Report** (Cr Mr D Fallows)

Highland Council Budget Savings. Cr Fallows reported on the Chief Executive's proposals. If all the proposals are agreed, there are likely to be compulsory redundancies in several departments. The B&S councillors will object to changes in arrangements for grass cutting for example, which will result in loss of staff. It may be possible to avoid compulsory redundancies by managing vacancies through redeployment rather than by hiring of contract staff.

The proposals also include reduction in opening hours and sharing of premises for Service Points, including Kingussie and Grantown on Spey. The proposal is that both Service Points should move to the Police Stations. The B&S Councillors have objected to the Grantown proposal on the grounds that the Police Station is in a less central position, but not to the proposed move for Kingussie. The Northern Constabulary support the Grantown proposal but their opinion for Kingussie is not known yet.

KVC Councillors made several points in discussion:

In Kingussie the Service Point is part of the main offices and serves as the "front door" for Highland Council here. They queried the future of the other THC offices in Kingussie and also the future for the Court House and the existing proposals for its refurbishment.

A reduction in the Service point opening hours is likely to adversely affect the most vulnerable in society, who benefit most from the opportunity to voice their concerns to a person and maybe less confident about dealing with their concerns over the telephone.

There are already complaints about the lack of opening hours of Kingussie Police Station, there are no Police Officers to talk to and telephone calls are routinely put straight through to the Aviemore Station, where there are already proposals for reducing opening hours there.

There will be need for disabled parking close to the Police station if the Service Point is moved to this location.

Cr Fallows took note of Councillors' views and reported that the Budget proposals are to be debated and decisions made by the full Council on 16th December.

Cr Fallows confirmed he had received an email from a resident about lack of road clearance and gritting on the upper part of the Ardbroilach Road; he had followed it up with TECS and would reply to the resident shortly.

Crs Davidson and Stone confirmed they had observed the road gullies being emptied in Kingussie about a month ago.

7. **Proposed installation of new snow gates on the A9 at Schlod.**

Cr Emmett distributed copies of papers from Scotland Transerv about proposed installation of snow gates at the Schlod and overnight closure at times to facilitate unimpeded snow clearance. A good discussion ensued. Councillors were in agreement that they did not support the proposals, in their view the road should be regarded as a lifeline connection with Inverness and should not be closed. There is no alternative connecting road for emergency services, both the minor roads between the Carrbridge junction and Schlod and Raigbeg and Tomatin do not connect without access via the A9. There was the danger that people who know about them would try to circumvent the snow gates by using these routes and cause more problems since they were totally unsuitable for heavy vehicles. There were also concerns that the installation of snow gates was a cost cutting measure.

The proposed sites for installation of the gates were at sites where there were no services or facilities for vehicle stacking and safe parking. Most overnight traffic is heavy goods vehicles and if they had to stop at unsupervised places they could block the A9 for other traffic. Councillors suggested closure points should be closer to Aviemore in the south and Inverness in the north where there are 24 hour services and drivers would be able to seek accommodation and refreshment. Councillors also suggested that if the road had to be closed it should be manned by Police Officers, who could provide controlled access to legitimate users and also manage vehicle parking. Cr Emmett reported objections were being voiced by other Community Councils; she agreed to email the KVCC response to the Scotland Transerv official.

8. Correspondence received

- (i) The parking restrictions on the A86 at the entrance to Manse Road come into force on the 16th December.
- (ii) **CNPA Board Members' Election arrangements.** All households will receive notice of the elections via a mail drop on 19th January 2011. Cr Fallows confirmed he intended to stand for the Electoral Ward covering Badenoch since he hoped to be resident again in the area by that time. The current Board member is Mr Alan Rafferty, who lives at Glentruim does not intend to stand for election again.

9. AOCB

There were no matters.

The meeting closed at 2030 hours.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 1st February 2011 at 7p.m. in Talla Nan Ròs