

# KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2011 IN TALLA NAN RÒS, KINGUSSIE

**Present:** Councillors Ms G Wright (in the Chair), Mr J Taylor (Treasurer), Mrs V Emmett (Sec), Mrs M Brown, Mrs A Schofield, Mr M Stone; Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows.

Apologies: Mr A Davidson.

Visitors: Ms T Alliod.

### 1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011

Cr Wright asked for a correction: to change the reference to the "Town Gala Day" to "Kingussie Karnival". The minutes were then approved. Proposed Cr Brown, Seconded Cr Taylor.

### 2. Matters Arising

#### Item 9 Stagecoach Bus consultation, Duke of Gordon Hotel, on Mon. 14<sup>th</sup> February:

Cr Schofield reported she had attended the meeting, which was informative and useful. Stagecoach is clearly trying to please its customers and meet their needs and requests. It is hoped they will take on board the comments made at the session. In response to a question from Cr Fallows, Cr Schofield reported that Stagecoach had not produced any posters themselves; the only posters had been sent out by Ms Palmer, the Ward Manager. Posters informing the public of the meeting on 14 Feb. were displayed at all the bus stops in Kingussie. Cr Fallows then commented that he had originated the posters in the absence of any from the bus company.

#### Item 11 (ii) Ward Forum

The meeting in Dulnain Bridge Community Hall was attended by Crs Emmett and Schofield. They reported it was a very good meeting, one of the best they had been to. Highland Council has identified some sites that they currently own in the area and which could be used for allotments. The Kingussie site is part of the Am Fasgadh grounds, which Community Councillors had already suggested as a suitable place when they met Mr Gilfillan in 2009. Apparently a high number of residents have expressed a wish to have an allotment in Kingussie. Information about setting up local allotment organisations was provided at the meeting. Cr Schofield reported it would cost about £40 thousand to set up the site properly with good fencing and raised beds, but that grants are available.

#### Item 11 (iii) Glebe Ponds

Cr Emmett reported on progress. She had recently received information that Highland Council do appear to own the site. It had originally been owned by the Badenoch and Strathspey District Council and had passed to Highland Council on reorganisation. Cr Emmett circulated maps showing the two parcels of land owned by the Council. This area encompasses the fenced off area of land where some residents have established their private gardens and erected sheds and greenhouses. Mr McCracken, Planning Department has looked at planning records, which show that planning permission was granted to the B&S District Council in their time of ownership to create paths. There

is no record, however, of the gardening group applying for and being given planning permission at any time. They would need to furnish proof of such permission.

Ms Palmer, Ward Manager is currently on leave, but on her return Cr Emmett would contact her to discuss further actions.

3. **Police Matters.** In the absence of Sgt Crawford this item was not taken.

4. **Planning Matters** (Cr Schofield)

Cr Schofield reported items on the weekly list of planning applications:

(i) An application by the Kingussie Camanachd Club to site a portable cabin and provide a septic tank for drainage at the Dell in order to provide toilets and a small coffee/tea bar during matches. Cr Taylor clarified some points about the application. The cabin, which is not new, will be painted green; it will be raised on stilts because of potential flooding. The Club has consulted and been advised by SEPA about the application. Councillors agreed to support the application but will ask that the colour should be such as to blend in well with the natural surroundings.

(ii) **Developers' Contribution** - up to 300 house development

Cr. Schofield reported that no needs assessment was done, and although there is no legal requirement to do this, it is usual practice. A paper is shortly going to the CNPA Board making recommendations. As agreed at the last meeting, Cr Schofield has redrafted a letter setting out the communities wishes. She read out the new sections in which she makes it clear that one of the wishes is seek funding in order to acquire the former Museum site and buildings for community use, which she identifies in the letter.

The Master Plan is not yet completed and the new law affecting section 75 agreements may apply. (As already agreed, KVCC has joined Planning Aid Scotland. Recent information from them indicates that Section 75 agreements are being changed). Cr Schofield undertook to contact Planning Gain about this again.

Cr Fallows commented he was not aware of any legal formula for calculating the amount of planning gain.

5. **KVCC Treasurer's Report** (Cr Taylor)

The KVCC current account stands at £3054, no major bills have had to be paid out in the past month The Senior Citizens Party account stands at £5064 and the Children's Christmas Party funds stand at £2016.

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

**The Court House:** Cr Fallows reported the THC Capital Programme is not yet finalised. Mr Gilfillan is of the opinion that the refurbishment of the Court House is still placed quite high in the list and if it does go ahead it will do so quickly, and so the Council will need to think about the community contribution.

**New Constitution and Standing Orders for Community Councils:** Some Community Councils are challenging Highland Council's legal rights to impose new documents and arrangements. Cr Fallows has asked the Deputy Chief Executive to clarify the position and the item is on the agenda for the full Council meeting on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

**Forthcoming Election of Local Representatives on the CNPA Board:** Apparently election papers have been sent out to 67 people under the age of 18, who are ineligible to vote, in Ward 1 (Kingussie, Newtonmore, Blair Atholl, Killiecrankie Ward). Similar errors have occurred in Ward 3. The CNP authority has written to them all personally asking them to return their papers. However if they have already voted and returned their voting forms it is likely the election will have to be re-run, especially in Ward 3 where numbers of voters are very tight and could affect the legality of majorities. A discussion followed. Cr Taylor asked if all the councillors have received their voting forms, he had been told of three eligible electors who have not had the papers.

**Community Council Elections.** Kincaig Community Council has issued a press notice that they will delay their elections until November when the new orders come into force and in this way avoid holding two elections in a very short space of time in 2011.

Councillors discussed if similar action should be taken by Kingussie CC since we had not held an election in May 2010 in the belief the new arrangements would be in place in May 2011. The new orders will require elections every four years, when the whole council must stand down and a completely new Council must be elected. The cost of running these elections will be borne by Highland Council. If Community Councils choose to hold elections at other times, they must pay for them out of their own budgets.

It was resolved that, in agreement with Cr Taylor, Cr Emmett should word a notice for advertisement in the local newspaper. She would put a similar notice on the Community Council notice board and invite local electors who are interested in the working of the Council and considering becoming a Councillor in the future, to contact one of the current Councillors and to come to a meeting. There was the opportunity for such electors to be co-opted in the short term until the new elections take place.

Cr Brown expressed concern about the future of front line staff in TECS since the grass-cutting has gone out to contract. Cr Taylor commented that two of the staff are very worried and do not know about their future with Highland Council. Cr Fallows confirmed that his information is that none of the current employees in Badenoch and Strathspey is being transferred to the contractor. Elected members have been told that nobody is going. If these members of staff are worried then they should contact their line managers for clarification.

**The Service Point:** In response to questions, Cr Fallows reported that elected members have not been given details of new arrangements. The decision has not yet been made and, as a consequence, he was aware this is producing a lot of uncertainty. Elected members are unhappy with the way the situation is being handled by Officers, it is causing stress among personnel right across the Highlands.

**Payments to the Council.** Cr Fallows confirmed that Council Offices will no longer handle cash payments. Councillors reported that some residents want to know if they can make their payments at the Post Office. Residents are not happy that the Pay Point is in the Co-op store, which is very public and is staffed by many PT staff, opportunities for confidentiality are missing.

**Public Libraries.** Cr Taylor reported he had heard that libraries will be cut by 10% and librarians hours will also be cut by 10%.

## 7. **St Vincent's Hospital** (Cr Brown)

Cr Brown reported a meeting between POST (the local Community Care action group), members of NHS SE Highland Community Health Partnership and two MSPs for our area. POST emphasised the importance of St Vincent's to our Community and the need for it to be retained and the services provided there enhanced. POST also emphasised that it was essential that additional capital was necessary. The situation at St Vincent's is largely unchanged, there is still a backlog of maintenance to be done to repair the roof, update the heating and provide en-suite accommodation.

Cr Brown reported a copy of the draft constitution for setting up a "Friends of St Vincent's" organisation was handed over to Mr Small, the Manager of the CHP. At the meeting about St Vincent's, MSP Ms Scanlon had proposed that provision of dementia care should be privatised, but the NHS managers view is that residential care needs to be in place for dementia care.

In response to a question, Cr Fallows commented that Mr Ian Gibson of Newtonmore is the Vice-Chair of NHS Highland, but his role is to look at the wider area and he cannot be seen to represent just a given area.

## 8. **Care of the Elderly** (Cr Brown).

The Highland Council and NHS Highland have agreed that NHS Highland will take over care of the elderly from April 2012 and the care of children, including health visitors. An interagency working party has been set up under the chairmanship of Jan Baird, a senior manager from Highland Council. At the meeting at St Vincent's, POST emphasised that rurality and a preventative approach, i.e. social events, lunch clubs, day care and effective day care should be established, rather than a solely curative approach be taken. Cr Fallows commented that he fully supports the new arrangements, but that the programme is ambitious and that Highland Council still has a major responsibility for the strategy and implantation.

**Care Homes:** Cr Fallows reported that a report on the quality of Care Homes is on the forthcoming Highland Council agenda. The Performance Indicators in the annual report, measured against national standards, show that three THC care homes are in the bottom quartile and the fourth is placed 24<sup>th</sup> in the list – only just above the bottom quartile. The number of patients on hospital delayed discharge lists is rising and there is a crisis over the number of care places available. It is not possible to provide care at home in Badenoch due to a lack of qualified staff and recruitment is urgently needed.

## 9. **Our Community A Way Forward**

(i) **New Community Council Notice board.** Cr Taylor reported on the progress in seeking grant aid for a new KVCC notice board. A site meeting, attended by Crs. Taylor, Emmett and Schofield, was arranged at short notice one afternoon with Mr. Crane CNPA, who is prepared to offer some funding towards a new notice board in King Street. Mr Crane suggested the inclusion of a new notice board for the Kingussie Camanachd Club in the funding, providing the Park could include information about Shinty on the board. The Club has welcomed this proposal.

Cr Schofield has contacted another company: Green Barnes about their designs and prices. They make a 3-bay cupboard for £1400 and one with landscape doors for £1500. Their delivery charge is only £40. Cr Schofield agreed to continue to progress the proposals.

In response to a question, Cr Fallows said the next meeting of the THC Board to review applications for discretionary grants is on the 7<sup>th</sup> March.

Cr Brown suggested publication of a well worded press notice when the boards are installed to explain their grant support.

**Progress towards acquisition of the former HFM site:** Cr Schofield reported on recent progress. She has contacted the Community Assets Branch (CAB) in Edinburgh; the government department which will approve the community becoming the preferred bidder. The Articles of Association for the company limited by guarantee are ready to send off; CAB will check them and advise if improvements are required. Crs Schofield, Brown and Taylor are due to meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March to finalise the documents that need to be sent to CAB. It is necessary to prove that there is support for the community proposals from 10% of the electors – the group already has this. A copy of the new electoral roll is required; the Service Point only has a 2009 copy. It was agreed that an up to date copy should be purchased. Crs Brown, Schofield and Taylor to action this.

#### **10. New Legislation affecting Royal Mail - implications for Rural Post Offices.**

Cr Schofield reported disturbing proposals in new UK government legislation for the Royal Mail and Post Offices that seriously threaten the future of our Post Office. Together with Cr Emmett, she met Danny Alexander MP at his recent Grantown constituency surgery to acquaint him with our concerns. He provided some reassurances and undertook to contact the Minister dealing with the new legislation and to report back. Although he had commented “Kingussie is not going to lose its Post Office on my watch” the Councillors still have some worries about its future and the range of services it will be allowed to provide.

#### **11. Correspondence Received**

- (i) **New Standing Orders for the CNPA Planning Procedures.** Requests to speak or appear before a Board Planning meeting now have to be communicated in writing at the time when the CNPA calls plans in. (Letter passed to Cr. Mrs Schofield for filing for future ref.)
- (ii) **KCDC Mini-Hydro scheme.** Communication from the CNPA that a decision on the KCDC Mini-Hydro scheme has been further delayed, but it is hoped the item will appear on the agenda at the Board meeting on 1st April 2011.
- (iii) **Letter from SNH concerning review of the SSSI on the Drumochter Hills** – part is in Kingussie “territory”. No action needed, but letter and map passed to Cr Schofield for filing.
- (iv) **Membership of the Association of Community Councils** – renewal and newsletter. It was agreed KVCC should continue membership. Cr Emmett to complete the renewal form and pass to Cr Taylor for return with payment.
- (v) **Highland Council** – draft supplementary guidance – (a) Sustainable Design Guide and (b) Trees, Woodland and Development. Both booklets were passed to Cr Schofield.
- (vi) Notification of a **Housing and Small Communities conference in Aviemore** on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April. Crs Emmett and Schofield said they would be away, Cr Brown indicated she was interested in attending the conference.

## 12. AOCB

(i) **Kingussie Community Children's Party** (This item was taken at the start of the meeting.)

Ms Tanya Alliod, a member of the voluntary organising team reported on the Christmas Party in December 2010. Ms Alliod, together Mrs Jillian Robertson and Dr Rachel Hewson, took over three years ago from the previous voluntary group.

The team has organised several fundraising events to raise money for the parties, e.g. Bingo nights at the Duke of Gordon Hotel for the hotel residents and for the public; they have also held raffles, run cake stalls and had donation boxes. The Kingussie Golf Club also kindly provided a donation. In 2010 the team raised more than £1000, with the Bingo evenings raising about £200 each time. As a consequence of their success, fund raising is not a priority in the immediate future. The funds are used to pay for a visit by Santa, the purchase of Christmas decorations and lights and to buy present for all the children, plus some of the refreshments. Most of the catering is provided by about 25-30 parents. They are happily not short of volunteers to help run the parties. The parties are held in Talla Nan Ròs free of charge thanks to the kindness of the TNR Management Committee.

Information about the parties is sent to parents in the "school bag". Two parties are held each time – one for the younger pupils includes games and a visit by Santa and in the last three years they have also engaged a storyteller, which has been popular with the children. The party for the older pupils includes dancing and games. In the past three years approx. 300 children resident in Kingussie have attended the Christmas parties free of charge.

The team would like to do be able to hang more decorations in the hall in TNR. It was suggested that Ms Alliod contacts Mrs. Helen Wink, chair of the TNR management committee to discuss their wishes.

Ms Alliod was thanked for her presentation and asked to convey the Councillors congratulations on their success. She then left the meeting.

(ii) **Kingussie Website.** Cr Schofield reported that the Council's monthly meeting minutes are still not being uploaded onto the Kingussie website as agreed with the Website manager in 2010. She suggested the Council sets up its own website. She had contacted "Wee Epics" the organisation in Carrbridge that had produced the impressive website for the Food on Film event. The indicative costs are £450 to set up a site, the Council would need its own domain name, cost £10; and it would cost £20 thereafter. After discussion, Councillors agreed to the principle but suggested Cr Schofield investigated other web-building organisations and obtained further quotes.

The meeting closed at 2200hrs.

**Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April at 7p.m. in Talla Nan Ròs.