

KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3rd MAY 2011 IN TALLA NAN RÒS, KINGUSSIE

Present: Councillors Mr G Davidson (Chairman), Ms G Wright (Vice-Chair), Mr J Taylor (Treasurer), Mrs. V Emmett (Sec) Mrs A Schofield, Mr M Stone. Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows.

Apologies: Cr. Mrs M Brown

Visitors: Sgt Crawford (Northern Constabulary)

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th April 2011.

The date of the March meeting was corrected. Minutes were then accepted as a correct record (Prop JT, sec. MS)

2. Matters Arising

Town Clock: Several councillors commented that although the town clock was now chiming correctly –the number of chimes accords with the hour, unfortunately the actual timing is incorrect – it is not actually striking on the hour. The secretary agreed to bring this to the notice of Ms Palmer, Ward Manager.

Post Office: Cr Schofield reported she has now received a copy of the letter to Mr Alexander MP from Mr Ed Davey, Minister for Royal Mail. It is disappointing that his letter does not satisfactorily address the issues and concerns affecting small rural Post Offices, where there is no room to provide wider retail facilities.

3. Police Matters (Sgt Crawford)

(a) Police Station opening hours to the public: Sgt Crawford reported that the new arrangements for opening hours of the Police Station to the public (Mondays from 2-4 p.m.) are in place and a Police Officer is on duty in the office. At these times, members of the public are able to visit in person to report matters of concern or hand in found items, etc. At other times, members of the public are always able to contact the Constabulary by telephone, messages are passed on promptly and Police Officers who are on duty deal with them.

He also reported that there is no reduction in the number of Officers assigned to our area.

(b) Speeding and the Police Camera Van: The van has visited Kingussie recently and will do so again from time to time. A number of motorists were apprehended for exceeding the speed limit in the 30mph area.

Several councillors commented on the disturbance being caused by a new crop of young drivers speeding on roads in the town and along the A86 in the evenings and early hours of the morning. They are congregating in the former Museum Car Park and at Ardvonie Park. Some have fitted noisy exhaust systems to their cars. Sgt Crawford noted these reports and undertook to report and take action; he said the Police would welcome specific examples of problems.

(c) Under-age drinking and weekend disturbances in the town: In response to councillors' questions, Sgt Crawford commented there are always some incidents, but the number is not rising. Additional Police patrols take place at weekends with successes.

(d) Traffic Warden: A new traffic warden is now employed for Badenoch and following training, will begin patrols shortly. Councillors generally welcomed the news, commenting that car parking in restricted zones has increased in the absence of a Warden and this often causes problems along the High Street and King Street.

(e) Consultation on Antisocial behaviour strategy 2011-2016. The secretary passed over a copy of a letter from Highland Council about the joint consultation between Highland Council and Northern Constabulary. The consultation is taking place from 25 April to 25 July 2011. Sgt Crawford said he was not aware of this. He took note of the web address. The secretary undertook to obtain copies of the draft for councillors.

(f) Football Fans. Sgt Crawford commented that coaches bearing Celtic fans would be passing through the area on Wed. 6th May for a football match against Caledonian Thistle in Inverness. In reply to his enquiry if football coaches still come into the town and if there are any problems, Cr Davidson commented there have not been recent problems. In the past there were difficulties if a large number of fans descended on the Co-op store at one time in the evening and the staff could not cope. He welcomed the early warning provided by the Police on previous occasions when coaches had been turned away from Aviemore and headed for Kingussie instead.

4. **Adoption of the New Arrangements for Community Councils.**

Councillors discussed the new arrangements. Cr Taylor commented that the new orders indicate he should provide a written report about the accounts each month rather than provide a verbal report. He undertook to do this once the new orders have been adopted and his report will be attached to the monthly minutes.

Cr Taylor also pointed out that in future Councils may not re-visit formally proposed and agreed decisions for six months. This was noted by Councillors.

It was unanimously agreed to defer the adoption of the new arrangements until the AGM in early June. It was agreed, as in previous years, to hold the AGM on the same date as the June monthly meeting and for the AGM to precede the monthly meeting. The secretary agreed to place an advertisement in the Strathy and to make some posters for display around the town.

5. **Planning (Crs Mr Davidson & Mrs Schofield)**

Cr Schofield reported only one relevant planning application in the weekly list for 28 April – a new house to be built on the site of the former Strathy Bairns Nursery. On 27 October 2009, the applicants had been given permission to demolish the existing buildings on the site and to erect a new house and garage in their place. Councillors looked at the plans. It was unanimously agreed there would be no adverse impact on neighbours and the new house would not impinge on the street scene since it will be tucked away behind the telephone exchange.

6. **Report of Planning Gain Meeting with CNPA and the Planning Gain Team.**

Councillors reported on the 13 April meeting. The Section 75 agreement with the developers is still being drafted. At the meeting councillors made it known what the community wanted, since there has been no previous community consultation.

They felt they now had a better understanding of what gain might eventually come to the community, but overall councillors were dissatisfied with the response from the CNPA and Planning

Gain Team. Cr Fallows expressed some concerns about the messages given to councillors. A discussion ensued about the contrast between what little community gain Kingussie was being led to expect, and the community gain promised to Aviemore Community Council from the developers of the Highland Resort.

After further discussion it was agreed that Cr Schofield should draft another letter and this time circulate it to all members of the National Park Board, so they are aware of the problems we are encountering and how little real community gain is being offered by the developers.

7. **Treasurer's Report** (Cr Mr Taylor)

Current account - £3822

Senior Citizens Party Account - £5064

Community Children's Party Account - £2016.

In addition there is £1800 in the reserve fund.

Cr Taylor reported he had investigated interest bearing accounts without success. Few accounts are offering reasonable interest and ready access to funds is not possible with higher interest accounts. After discussion, Cr Taylor agreed to forecast the cost of both the Senior Citizens' and the Children's Parties for the next couple of years, to keep enough funding for them in the current accounts and then open interest bearing accounts for the remainder of the monies.

Cr Taylor reported that the account books are with the auditors. He would speak to the auditor to ensure that copies of the audited accounts are available for the AGM.

8. **Report of the Ward Forum 20 April 2011:** Transport Scotland's proposals for snow gates at the Slochd and road widening on the A9 at the Carrbridge junction. Failure to provide an underpass during construction of the new dual carriageway at Crubenmore.

Crs Mrs Emmett and Mrs Schofield gave verbal reports of the well attended meeting in Aviemore and in the course of the subsequent discussion they clarified certain points for other councillors.

Report: Representatives from almost all the Community Councils along the A9 from Tomatin to Dalwhinnie and Laggan had attended the meeting, along with three of our four Highland Councillors.

Snow gates at Slochd. There had been very lively exchanges with officials from Transport Scotland, who appeared not to understand the concerns of all communities in Badenoch and Strathspey about the potential danger to lives if snow gates were fitted and the road to Inverness closed at night in winter. Communities again stressed the need to keep the road open for emergency vehicles; they were not satisfied with the officials' response.

New Overtaking lanes on the A9: The officials then announced proposals for two-plus-one overtaking lanes to be constructed on the A9 on both the north and south sides of the Carrbridge road junction. The current slip road from the north at the junction would not be retained. Several members of the audience expressed concerns about safety.

Lack of an underpass at the new dual carriageway section being constructed at Crubenmore. This part of the evening's proceedings had been the liveliest with many objections to the failure of Transport Scotland to include an underpass in the new section of road.

It was frustrating and disappointing that the officials present at the meeting appeared to be unwilling to listen to the many concerns expressed by community councillors, road users, walkers, cyclists and horse riders about the closure of access across the new road to the General Wade road

and long standing Scottish Right of way at Etteridge. The officials only seemed able to stick to a pre-prepared statement.

An official from the CNPA apologised to the audience that the existing access routes across the A9 at this point and lack of provision for a new access had been overlooked by officials when the plans were submitted to them.

Transport Scotland officials' assertion that all communities had been well consulted was hotly disputed by Community Councillors.

At the end of this item Cr Fallows commented that the message about the snow gates might have been accepted by officials now and the proposal might well be buried. He also commented on some inaccurate reporting in the local newspaper concerning consultation with Community Councils about the Crubenmore scheme.

9. **Highland Councillor's Matters** (Cr Mr Fallows)

Cr Fallows commented he had no new items to report.

10. **Short Items**

(a) **Glebe Ponds:** Cr Mrs Emmett reported she was still awaiting a reply from Ms Palmer, Ward Manager about a meeting to discuss the Ponds and to clarify which department has responsibility for them, at present the latter was unclear. Mrs Emmett had received confirmation that the area is owned by Highland Council, and there are no records in the Planning Department of permission ever having been applied for or given for the erection of buildings on the land.

In discussion councillors reiterated their concerns about safety due the poor state of repair of the wooden decking along the pathways and of the pollution of the water as a result of excess food provided by the public in feeding the now large population of Mallard ducks. Mrs Emmett commented there are potential serious dangers to people and small animals, such as dogs, from toxic algae, which often occur in polluted waters especially in hot weather, and of the deadly danger of Weil's disease that can be caught from rats.

It was agreed that responsibility for maintenance of the area lies with the owners, although the Community Council is willing to become engaged with the community about the future development of the area for the enjoyment of all residents and visitors alike. It was agreed to defer ideas for a public meeting until Cr. Mrs Emmett has a response from Ms Palmer.

(b) **Community Council newsletter:** Cr Mrs Schofield had previously circulated copies of the draft summer newsletter. She is waiting for details of the venue for the allotments meeting on Wed. 25th May to finalise the edition. Groverprint recently provided quotes for printing the newsletter- £149 for 800 copies and £161 for 1000 copies. After discussion it was agreed to order 800 copies on this occasion. Decisions would need to be made about arrangements for distribution of the newsletter and to coordinate them with distribution of sponsorship forms for hanging baskets and Mr Kelly's proposed newsletter about Post Office services in Kingussie. Mrs Emmett reported she had contacted Mr Tait about the forms for sponsorship of hanging baskets, she had hoped to have copies in time for the meeting, but none had arrived.

- (c) **Floral decorations in the town centre:** Mrs Emmett reported she had spoken to Mr Tait and he was willing to mastermind the production and care of filled baskets again this year, but his suppliers needed payment up front. (See also the comments about sponsorship in (b) above). She had contacted Mr Crawford, current chairman of the Kingussie Business Partnership. They are holding their AGM on Sun 8th May, he is retiring as chairman, but he undertook to raise the matter of the Forum's contribution for this year. After discussion it was agreed not pursue an application for a discretionary grant at present, since we had received generous grants towards the new town gateway signs and associated floral decorations last year. Mr Taylor confirmed there were sufficient funds in the Community Council account for a more modest contribution this year.
- (d) **Donation by Pitmain Estate:** The Chairman reported that the owners of Pitmain Estate had generously donated the income from the sale of fishing permits last season to a good community cause. The beneficiary was the St Vincent's Therapy garden and the donation, which was in excess of £1000, is to be used to buy a summerhouse on the garden site for the benefit of patients and other local people using the hospital. The Estate is offering to donate the income from the sale of fishing permits again this year, but asked the Council to nominate several good community causes that might benefit from them. The Chairman asked Councillors to suggest nominations at the next meeting.
- (e) **Our Community, A Way Forward.** In Cr Mrs. Brown's absence, Cr Mr Taylor reported that Mrs. Brown has been in communication with the Community Assets Branch in Edinburgh and they have provided some good advice on the way forward. They suggested that once the company limited by guarantee is set up, discussions take place about the sale of the former museum and site with the owners, who might be willing to sell them to the community without the need for the right to buy being invoked. Mr Taylor and Mrs Schofield are due to meet Mrs Brown on Friday 6th May.
- (f) **Kingussie Karnival:** Vice Chairman Ms Wright gave a progress report. Arrangements are being finalised. The Karnival will take place on Saturday 18th June at Ardvonie Park. This year the Karnival is to be called a "Forest Festival" to celebrate the "Year of the Forest", and everything will be wood related. It will include the usual range of popular craft events. Ms Amanda Calvert, a member of KCDC and the Karnival Committee is the principal organiser. Mr Paul Brown, manager of the Duke of Gordon Hotel has offered to organise a hog roast and bar in their rear car park. To provide access, he will remove a section of the hotel's back fence and install a gate onto Ardvonie Park. Cairngorm Brewery will also have a stand.
- (g) **Freedom of Kingussie for Mr Tommy Wade.** In the absence of Mrs. Brown, Mr Taylor gave a brief progress report. The date of the Freedom Ceremony and celebration is fixed for Saturday 18th June, but several problems still need to be resolved. The Chairman reported that the Community Council is willing to pay for wine and nibbles at the presentation. He also asked about the outcome of Mrs Brown's consultation with Mr Wade's family about the nature of a gift from the Community Council. Mr Taylor and Mrs Schofield agreed to pursue this matter at their meeting with Mrs. Brown on 6th May.

11. Correspondence received.

- (a) New draft planning documents from Highland Council for consultation, including one concerning revisions to preferred areas for siting of wind farms.(Documents passed to Mrs. Schofield)

- (b) Letter from the Small Communities Housing Trust about a construction training initiative for young people. Several councillors commented they had already alerted local tradesman to the opportunities for young people and the financial support that is available.
- (c) Letter from Highland Council concerning consultation about a new Antisocial Behaviour Strategy. (already referred to in Item 3.)

12. AOCB

Cr Mrs Schofield reported that the Saltire on the Court House is in tatters. Mrs Emmett agreed to notify Ms Palmer, Ward Manager about this, as well as the continuing problems with the Town Clock.

There being no other matters, the meeting closed at 10 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 7th June 2011, to follow the annual general meeting, which will start at 7p.m.

Venue Talla Nan Ròs.