

KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7th JUNE 2011 TALLA NAN RÒS, KINGUSSIE

Present: Councillors Mr A Davidson (Chairman), Ms G Wright (Vice-Chairman), Mr J Taylor (Treasurer), Mrs V Emmett (Secretary), Mrs M Brown, Mrs A Schofield, Mr M Stone.

Apologies: Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows, Ms M Macdonald (VABS).

Visitors: Mr K Tait, Mr & Mrs J Pickering, Mr E Emmett, Mr R Ormiston, Mr D Grant (KCDC), Mr A Dunn (KCDC).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Minutes of the AGM held on 25th May 2010

The minutes were approved as a correct record. Prop: Cr Wright, Sec. Cr Brown.

2. Matters Arising

None

3. Chairman's Report

Cr Davidson (Chairman) thanked everyone for their support during the year, which has been an active and busy one for the Community Council. He then went on to highlight some significant events:

"Growing Spaces" It was pleasing that the Highland Council has identified potential sites for allotments and progress is being made to provide them in Kingussie for residents who have declared an interest.

The Court House About 18 months ago there was the prospect of the Court House being refurbished with news of Highland Council's plans to use the building as its main office centre in Badenoch, but sadly all has gone quiet. The plans included provision of a community facility and the Community Council supported the plans. On behalf of the community, the Chairman hoped some progress will be made soon to restore the building and prevent further deterioration.

Community Newsletter: The Community Council has produced two newsletters this year, which have been well received. The Chairman thanked Cr. Mrs Schofield for initiating the project, drafting the newsletters, and organising their publication and distribution.

Town Gateway Signs. The new signs at each end of the Town were successfully erected last summer. An initial glitch about the spelling of Kingussie in Gaelic was quickly and successfully rectified by Scotland Transerv, who made the signs. It was generally agreed that the new signs make a significant difference to the appearance of Kingussie. On behalf of the Community Council, the Chairman publicly thanked Highland Council for the award of a grant through the Ward Discretionary Award scheme and to the Cairngorms National Park via VABS and the "Our Community A Way Forward" project for their financial support to the project. The grants had also enabled the

Community Council make a substantial donation towards the new Kingussie Floral decoration scheme last year.

Alcohol Byelaw: The previous Community Council had decided to implement a proposed byelaw banning the consumption of alcohol in public in Kingussie, but it had not been implemented when the new Council was selected in 2009. An opportunity arose to reconsider the matter, and after further consultations and discussions the current Councillors felt it would not be advantageous to residents and visitors to have such restrictions and the earlier decision was reversed. At present there appear to be no problems of rowdiness as a consequence of under-age drinking in public in the town, but should problems arise in future, the Community Council has the opportunity to reconsider its decision and request the introduction of a bye-law.

Proposed Windfarm at Allt-Duine, Kincaig Several councillors attended public meetings held in Kincaig about these proposals. A representative of the power company behind the proposals came and talked to the Council and later they provided detailed consultation documents when their application for planning permission was submitted. The Community Council considered all the information at length and made a formal response to the Scottish Government in April. The Council neither supported nor rejected the application, but expressed many concerns about it, especially the problems that are likely to arise during the construction period.

New Community Council Noticeboard Cabinet in King Street After many years service, the existing cabinet has deteriorated badly and was becoming unusable. Although enquiries were made locally, attempts at obtaining refurbishment were not forthcoming, and it was decided to purchase a new cabinet instead. The Community Council was successful in obtaining grants towards the replacement from the Highland Council's Ward Discretionary Award Scheme and the Cairngorms National Park. The Kingussie Camanachd Club are also beneficiaries since the design of the new cabinet includes separate space for their noticeboard as well, at no cost to the Club. The new larger cabinet, made of green stained oak, has three compartments, with sufficient space for use by KCDC as well when they wish to display notices. The cabinet has arrived and will be put in place by the manufacturers on the 9th June. The Chairman thanked Cr. Mrs Schofield for masterminding the project.

Am Fasgadh, the former Folk Museum Site in Kingussie The proposed project, which emerged as a community priority from the "Our Community A Way Forward" survey in 2009, is progressing satisfactorily.

KCDC's Mini-Hydro scheme for the R. Gynack The Chairman congratulated KCDC on the successful award of planning permission plus a substantial grant from the People's Postcode Lottery towards the project to install a small hydro scheme on the R. Gynack below the Golf Course. The Community Council lent its full support to the project and acted as a Partner Organisation in the application – albeit as a sleeping partner. Earlier in the year the Chairman and Cr Mrs Schofield accompanied members of the KCDC directors to the event in Edinburgh when they learned of their successful application to the Lottery. The Chairman wished KCDC well in the construction of the scheme, which will bring many benefits to the community.

Kingussie Post Office -Possible Threats to its Future Earlier this year Crs Mrs Emmett and Mrs Schofield went to see the constituency MP, Mr Danny Alexander to voice our concerns about the potential threat of closure of Kingussie Post Office as a result of forthcoming UK Government legislation for the Royal Mail. The new laws could have disastrous effects on small rural Post Offices. On behalf of the Community Council, the Chairman urged residents to make good use of the post office in Kingussie – otherwise it could be a case of "Use It or Lose it!"

Water Treatment Works in Kingussie Last autumn, the Community Council met a representative of Scottish Water to discuss their plans for upgrading the water treatment works in Kingussie. KVCC responded to Highland Council and the CNPA, who called in the plans, on the planning application expressing serious concerns about many aspects of the plans and raised objections to some of them. Councillors were concerned about effects of heavy construction traffic on roads through the town during the construction period, permanent problems of odour as a result of aspects of design of the new plant, and access via the bridge over the R. Gynack used by the High School. The CNPA has now granted planning permission with conditions. Some of these are intended to address ours and others concerns. Once the new treatment works are complete it will mean that new housing can be built in Kingussie.

Senior Citizens' Christmas Party Despite the freezing weather and extremely hazardous road conditions, the annual party went ahead as planned at the end of November. Once again it was held at the Star Hotel and more than 40 senior citizens took part. On behalf of the Community Council, the Chairman expressed thanks to the managers and staff of the Star Hotel for hosting the event and providing an excellent lunch, and to the musicians who entertained the partygoers during the afternoon.

Floral Decoration Scheme – Hanging Baskets The Community Council welcomed the new floral decoration scheme in 2010 with the provision of new hanging baskets along the High Street and King Street. The Chairman thanked Mr Ken Tait of The Trading Post for organising the new scheme and watering the baskets during the summer months. The Community Council had made a substantial donation to the scheme in 2010.

Freedom of Kingussie to Tommy Wade On behalf of the Community Council, the Chairman offered congratulations to former Community Councillor Tommy Wade on the award by Highland Council of the Freedom of Kingussie. Tommy gave many years valuable service as a Community Councillor, latterly as Treasurer and he only finally retired in May 2010.

The presentation to Tommy of the Freedom and a scroll will take place on Saturday 18th June, and afterwards the Chairman will give Tommy a gift on behalf of KVCC as a measure of gratitude for his lengthy contribution to Community affairs. Whilst none of the Councillors is sure exactly what benefits the Freedom of Kingussie bestows on Tommy, apparently it does include permission for him to graze his cattle along Kingussie High Street!

4. Treasurer's report (copy of the audited accounts circulated at the meeting)

Cr Mr Taylor presented his Treasurer's annual report with copies of the statement of the audited accounts. The accounts have been audited by Peter Munro Chartered Accountants in the town, and this year they have made no charge for their work. Councillors expressed their thanks to Peter Munro and staff and asked Mr Taylor to pass on this message.

Cr Taylor then explained that the accounts now have to be presented in a new format required by Highland Council. As well as the accounts for the Community Council the new format also has to include the accounts of both the Senior Citizens Fund and the Kingussie Community Children's Party Funds. These two funds were formerly presented separately since they are not part of KVCC's funds and cannot be used by the Council, but they are administered by the KVCC Treasurer on their behalf. Cr. Taylor went on to explain certain entries so as to clarify the position: e.g. the entry for honoraria - the former Treasurer Cr Wade always declared these in arrears, whereas Cr Taylor prefers to show them in the year which they are paid; so the entry for honoraria in the 2010/2011 accounts are for

two years – payment to the secretary as required by Highland Council and the honorarium taken by Mr Wade when he was treasurer.

Senior Citizens Fund. The balance in the account is still very healthy and no fundraising was necessary in 2010; but the cost of the Christmas party was greater than the income for it and so the reserve fund was eaten into by a small amount. However, the balance is such that fundraising will not be needed for many years yet.

The Community Children's Party Fund. As a result of fundraising by the organisers the income in 2010 was well in excess of what was spent on the party and the bank balance is still very healthy. Councillors formally adopted the financial statement.

5. Adoption of the New Constitution and Standing Orders for all Highland Region Community Councils.

The Chairman explained to the visitors that, after a lengthy period of consultation in 2010, Highland Council has recently produced new common constitution, standing orders, code of conduct, election and accounting procedures based on model orders from the Scottish Government. These new documents are applicable to all Community Councils in the Highlands. Community Councils are required to adopt and follow them.

Under the old rules elections to the Community Council would have taken place in May this year, but Highland Council requested deferral of all elections until November when the new procedures are fully in place. The Highland Council will administer the elections. At this time all Community Councillors will stand down rather than retiring by rotation and new Councillors will be elected for four years. Current Councillors will be eligible to stand for election if they so wish. The new rules include a formula for determining the number of Councillors, in Kingussie's case there will be nine Councillors from now on.

At this point, as agreed at their May monthly meeting, Councillors adopted the new orders and, as required, the papers were signed by three councillors: Cr Mr Davidson (Chairman), Cr Ms Wright (Vice-chairman) and Cr Mr Taylor (Treasurer).

Cr Mr Taylor reminded fellow councillors that under new procedures, Council may not re-visit a previous decision for six months (Standing Orders p. 38 para 5.4).

6. Dates of KVCC Meetings 2011/2012

Under the new standing orders, Community Councils should meet at least six times each year.

Councillors agreed to continue to meet ten times a year, on the first Tuesday in each month in Talla Nan Ròs. (No meetings will take place in August and January.)

The secretary undertook to publish and circulate the dates of meetings up to the next AGM and to post a notice of the dates on the new noticeboard when it is in place.

7. Any Other Business

Cr Mr Stone announced his resignation from the Community Council with immediate effect and he withdrew at the end of the meeting.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

After a short break for refreshments, Councillors and visitors listened to an illustrated talk by Ms Paula Betts of Highland Council, about the new arrangements for refuse and recycling collections, which come into effect at the beginning of July.