

KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2011

Present: Councillors Alan Davidson (Chairman), Gwynneth Wright (Vice-Chairman), Valerie Emmett (Secretary), Joe Taylor (Treasurer & Projects), Ailsa Schofield (Planning), Highland Councillor David Fallows.

Apologies: Cr. Mairi Brown (Projects)

Visitors: PC Stuart MacKellaig (Northern Constabulary), Andrew Talbot (Traffic Warden).

The chairman welcomed colleagues to the final meeting of the current Council.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting on 4th October 2011.

The minutes were approved as a correct record. Prop: Cr Taylor; Sec: Cr Wright

2. Matters Arising

None.

3. Police Matters (PC MacKellaig, Northern Constabulary)

The Chairman welcomed PC MacKellaig deputising for Sgt Crawford, and Mr Andrew Talbot the new Traffic Warden for our area.

PC MacKellaig reported there were no pressing crime issues at present; some disturbances involving young people that occurred during the summer had been dealt with and the area was quiet now.

For the benefit of Mr. Talbot, PC MacKellaig asked councillors to identify any areas of concern with car parking in the town. A constructive discussion followed, especially about the need to rationalise and renew road markings in Kingussie High Street and King Street and the Council's request, on road safety grounds, for the introduction of 20mph limits on roads leading to the High Street where there are no pavements, since these are important routes for children on the way to and from school.

Councillors expressed the view that if parking spaces and other road markings were clearer it would encourage drivers not to park in restricted areas and thereby adversely affect the smooth movement of traffic along these roads. Letters from the Council to Transport Scotland about the parking problems along the High Street have so far not been met with a positive response. They identified particular areas of concern relating to parking along sections of the south side of the High Street where there is a (faded) continuous yellow line and where the road is already narrowed on the north side by the extension of the pavements at the entrance to Royal Court. They also spoke about the effect on traffic movements in King Street of the poor siting of a disabled parking bay close up to the traffic lights and to illegal parking on the double yellow lines opposite the entrance to the Fire

Station in King Street. The long standing omission of a traffic light on the corner of Ardbroilach Road and the High Street was also raised. PC MacKellaig thanked Councillors and undertook to raise some of these matters with the appropriate authorities. Cr Mr Fallows also undertook to speak to officials about Councillors' concerns on roads which are still the responsibility of Highland Council and with Scotland Transerve concerning the High Street. Cr Mrs Schofield reported that Transport Scotland has not replied to a letter sent on the 24th September. It was agreed a further letter should be sent. A letter about parking along King Street as well as the request for 20mph speed limits on safety grounds should be sent to the appropriate official in Highland Council.

4. Outcome of the Community Council Elections

Under the new orders for Community Councils KVCC is entitled to nine councillors. The number of nominations for this year's elections has not exceeded nine and there has been no need for a postal ballot. All six of the current Councillors stood again and have been duly elected. The new Council will meet for the first time on the 6th December. Cr Fallows commented that at the next meeting under the new rules he has to chair the meeting until a new chairman is elected and that councillors also need to elect their officials.

Mrs Emmett reminded Councillors that the new constitution enables Councils to co-opt councillors for particular projects and that perhaps KVCC should consider this option so as to increase the numbers up to the maximum nine. She also suggested that some of the local organisations should be formally asked if they would be willing to send representatives to meetings on a regular basis and/or report on their activities so as to improve communications. This was agreed and Mrs Emmett agreed to contact some of the organisations.

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

Cr Taylor presented his monthly report:

Balances as at 01 Nov. 2011

KVCC Account – Balance	£3670.10
Unpaid Cheque	£ 44.45
Total	£3625.65
 KVCC Reserve Fund	 £1816.62
 Senior Citizens Christmas Party Fund	 £5065.99
Children's Party Fund	£2017.15

6. Planning Matters (Cr Mrs Schofield)

Mrs Schofield reported that the weekly lists included no new planning applications for Kingussie. She alerted Councillors to a public meeting to be held in Talla Nan Ròs on Monday 14th November at 6 p.m. about the proposed Hydro project on the Pitmain estate above Kingussie.

7. Highland Councillor's Report (Cr Mr Fallows)

Cr Fallows reported that the planning application by Highland Council to build houses on part of the former Folk Museum site beside Mc Robert House in Duke Street has been withdrawn, but the Council is continuing with the application for dwellings along Manse Road.

He reported that recruitment of Home Care workers for Kingussie and Newtonmore is problematic; at present they are short of five home carers. He is pursuing this with Social Work Services asking what steps they are taking to ensure everyone's needs are being met properly. Cr Taylor reported in the past few days he has received some complaints about the problem, especially of home carers not turning up and elderly and vulnerable people being left without services. In one instance a home carer had not attended one very elderly frail gentleman, who was left in bed and not helped to get up and be showered. Other councillors commented they had also been picking up news of other shortfalls. Cr Fallows took notes and undertook to follow up these issues promptly.

8. Date for the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party

The Chairman reported that the date for the annual Christmas party has been fixed for **Sunday 4th December** and it will take place at the **Star Hotel starting at noon**. Several councillors expressed dismay because the date clashes with Kingussie's annual Shopping Sunday event and they are already committed to other activities in the town. A discussion followed about possibilities of changing the date, but Cr Davidson reported this was impossible because the Hotel was only able to offer the 4th since they were closing from the 5th for two weeks for refurbishment and that he had already booked a group to provide the musical entertainment after the lunch. Cr Taylor commented he was available to help, Cr Mrs Schofield also offered her services and Cr Mrs Emmett offered to help collect people who needed transport to the Star Hotel in the morning. It was agreed to go ahead and try to recruit other helpers. Councillors also agreed to review plans for future years when they meet early in 2012.

9. Community Council Website Update (Cr Mrs Schofield)

Mrs Schofield provided an update and circulated some short pieces of text about the Council that she planned to include on the website along with some photographs.

10. The Am Fasgadh Project (Crs. Mr Taylor and Mrs Schofield)

Cr Taylor gave a brief progress report. A response from the Scottish Government about the application for the community right to buy the land and buildings of the former Folk Museum is still awaited. A letter from Highland Council has confirmed that in due course they will be prepared to negotiate terms about disposal of the former museum buildings and land surplus to their requirements.

Cr Taylor reported he had recently attended a meeting in Inverness about Big Lottery schemes for funding community projects and he was encouraged with what he had heard. Cr Schofield reported that on behalf of the Allotments Group, she has sent a letter by email asking to purchase some of the land for allotments, Mr Gilfillan has acknowledged receipt of the communication.

11. The Glebe Ponds – report of the public meeting. (Cr Ms Wright)

Ms Wright gave a full report of the outcomes of the recent successful public meeting and plans for the future of the Glebe Ponds. A committee has been formed and they are busy identifying priorities which require attention: clearing and resurfacing paths, removing overhanging tree branches, removing the duck population, future policy on feeding any remaining ducks and resolving other problems. The committee is very pleased with offers of help from local people and tradesmen, and a “Work day for Volunteers” is planned for the near future. She wished to thank Laird Mr Michael Hone for his involvement and well thought out suggestions of how to manage the ponds and for his help in taking steps to remove the ducks. Mr Duncan McDonald, Highland Council Ranger is helping Ms Wright to complete competition application forms to take part in a project run by the BBC Beechgrove Garden Team. After discussion, Cr Fallows agreed to contact Mr Douglas Wilby of Highland Council to clarify the Council’s responsibilities and plans for the Glebe Ponds now that the site has passed to High Life Highland.

12. Reports of other recent meetings.

Brief oral reports were made of meetings attended by Councillors in the recent past: the Ward Forum in Dulnain Bridge on 26th October; a meeting with SSE about replacement of Pylons from Boat of Garten to Etteridge held in Kincaig in September, report of the meeting between RWE Renewables team and the Allt Duine Working group held in Kincaig on 22 September, a report of the public meeting held in Kingussie on 27th October about the new CNPA local development plans.

13. Highland Main Line -150 years celebrations (Cr Mrs Emmett)

Mrs Emmett drew councillors’ attention to the recent email (circulated earlier) from Dr Ann Glen, Heritage Advisor to the charity, Highland Railway Heritage about proposals to celebrate the 150 years since the opening of the Highland Main line through Kingussie. In discussion Cr Taylor suggested that Dr Glen be put in contact with Mr Angus Blackstock, the

last Stationmaster in Kingussie, who had amassed a good collection of railway memorabilia and who used to run a small museum at his property adjacent to the station. Some time ago he donated his collection to the Highland Folk Museum, but it has not been on show to the public for many years. Cr Taylor suggested Dr Glen should also contact Bob Powell at the Museum to find out about the collection and how it might be put on exhibition as part of the celebrations. It was agreed that the Kingussie Business Association might also wish to play a part in the celebrations by including floral displays at the station as part of their town displays.

14.20mph Road signs

In the absence of Cr Mrs Brown further discussion of this item was held over.

15. AOCB

Cr Taylor commented that in the past the Highland Council usually removed the commemorative seats on the High Street during the winter so they could be cleaned, refurbished and repainted. Several of the seats are in need of attention. Mrs Emmett agreed to contact Mr Porteous to enquire about this.

Cr Emmett reported a recent communication from Network Rail about their intentions to install a 20m high lattice mast and equipment cabin on their land along Market Lane as part of their improvements to railway communications. The plans fall under their Permitted Development Rights. They plan to inform local residents who live close by to the site about their plans before construction commences. Councillors looked at a map showing the site location.

The meeting closed at 21.30.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th December 2011 in Talla Nan Ròs at 7 p.m.