

# KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2011

**Present:** Councillors Alan Davidson, Gwynneth Wright, Valerie Emmett, Joe Taylor, Ailsa Schofield, Mairi Brown.

Highland Councillor David Fallows.

Visitors: Sgt John Crawford Northern Constabulary.

### 1. Election of Officers of the New Council.

Councillor Fallows took the Chair.

Councillors agreed to be nominated for the posts they held in the previous Council. They were elected unopposed:

Post	Nomination	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman	Alan Davidson	VE	AS
Vice Chairman	Gwynneth Wright	MB	VE
Secretary	Valerie Emmett	AS	MB
Treasurer	Joseph Taylor	GW	VE
Planning	Ailsa Schofield	MB	VE

Councillors then agreed nominations for responsibilities within the Council and as representatives on outside bodies:

Kingussie Community Development Company (KCDC): Ailsa Schofield

Badenoch Learning & Resources Centre (BLRC): Mairi Brown and Valerie Emmett

Association of Cairngorm Communities (AOCC): Valerie Emmett

Kingussie Business Forum (KBF): Mairi Brown

Projects: Mairi Brown, Joe Taylor, Ailsa Schofield

The newly elected Chairman, Alan Davidson then took the chair for the rest of the meeting. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record; proposed JT, seconded AS.

### 3. Matters Arising

(i) **Report of the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party** held on Sun. 4<sup>th</sup> December

The Chairman provided an oral report. The event was very successful with 43 senior citizens and four members of KVCC attending the party. The Star Hotel had provided a very good meal at a reasonable price. As usual the staff of the hotel was praised for their courtesy and kind attention throughout.

The afternoon's entertainment was enjoyed by everyone. It was agreed the Secretary should write letters of thanks to Ms Joan Dawson and the hotel staff, and to the entertainers.

A donation was accepted from Mrs. Jo Fraser.

The Vice-Chairman then read out a letter from Kingussie resident, Mrs Ray Smillie asking that the party does not coincide with the Kingussie Shopping Sunday event in future, since it represented a clash of interests preventing some residents from attending the party as they were involved in running events and others from attending the events in the town, since they were at the party. A discussion followed. The Chairman said that in agreeing a date for the party, KVCC cooperated with the Star Hotel when they had vacancies before their annual shutdown before Christmas. Cr. Mrs Schofield proposed the Council looks at dates for 2012 early in the year to secure a date agreeable to all. It was agreed to put the item on the agenda for the March meeting, the Chairman to discuss the matter with Ms Dawson at the hotel.

(ii) **Update on the KVCC website.** Cr Mrs Schofield reported that the website is now live. It has links to websites run by KCDC and the Kingussie Business Forum. A discussion followed about links to other appropriate websites, Cr Mrs Schofield to investigate. The website address is [www.kingussiecommunitycouncil.org](http://www.kingussiecommunitycouncil.org)

(iii) **Glebe Ponds Working Party.** Vice Chairman Ms Wright provided an oral report. The working party took place on Sun. 27<sup>th</sup> November with about 30 people, including members of the Police Force and the shinty team, taking part in a variety of maintenance activities. Tarmac shavings were provided by Mr Scott Pirie and volunteers helped to barrow them around on the paths while others cut back overhanging branches. Some residents at the Hanover Housing provided much appreciated soup and sandwiches. Ms Wright expressed her thanks to everyone who helped on the day. She was disappointed though that Highland Council did not provide machinery, equipment and a skip as promised at the public meeting; the Ward Manager later apologised for this. Another working party will be held in the New Year, date yet to be fixed.

(iv) **Highland Railway Heritage.** Cr Mrs Emmett reported the response from the railway heritage adviser, Dr Ann Glen, who had sent a long list of activities that might be organised by the community in 2013 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the opening of the railway line. A discussion followed. Councillors were generally supportive but felt such activities were more the province of a local "Friends of the Railway" group or railway enthusiasts. Crs Mrs Emmett and Mrs Schofield agreed to discuss the matter in the New Year with a view to advertising the anniversary and the possible formation of a group to organise some activities.

#### 4. **Police Matters** (Sgt Crawford, Northern Constabulary)

Sgt Crawford reported he had received a letter from Scotland Transerv, who acknowledged the missing traffic light at the Cross and that it will be addressed when all the lights are eventually replaced. He had not received a response from TECS about 20mph signs and councillors confirmed they heard nothing either in response to letters sent to TECS after the November meeting. Sgt Crawford undertook to contact Mr Andrew McIver again.

Sgt Crawford reported there were no major police issues apart from a spate of minor traffic accidents in the area as a consequence of recent adverse weather conditions.

Cr Mrs Brown thanked Sgt Crawford for the donation of "survival blankets" after the recent Ward Forum. She had distributed them to Abbeyfield House and Hanover Housing for use by elderly residents and she planned to give out the rest at the Parish Church Lunch Club to elderly and vulnerable participants who might benefit from them.

## 5. Treasurer's report (Cr Mr Joe Taylor)

The treasurer provided his monthly report:

(i) **The current account** stands at £3598.65

There are unpaid cheques to the value of £576 still to be paid. This means £3022.65 is available to spend.

(ii) **The Reserve fund** stands at £1816.62

(iii) The balance in the **Senior Citizens Account** is £5065.90, with an unpaid cheque of £462.60 to pay, giving a new balance of £4603.30

(iv) The **Children's Community Party Fund** account stands at £2017.

N.B. The Treasurer pointed out that both these funds are not part of the Community Council's funds, but are just administered by the KVCC treasurer.

Cr Taylor commented on the need for a Community Council policy on donations from the KVCC to other organisations involved in community affairs. The annual budget received from Highland Council is intended for running KVCC affairs and he was concerned that the budget is to be reduced in future years. Councillors are entitled to claim expenses for travel and fees for meetings but at present none do so. He had recently been asked to pay out £40 for drinks for the Pipe Band after the Shopping Sunday event and he had done this. A brief discussion followed. It was felt that cost incurred by the Pipe Band on that day should be paid for by the Business Forum and not the Community Council. It was noted the treasurer of the Business Forum has said that the Shopping event should "wash its face".

It was agreed to put discussion of a policy for donations on the agenda for the next meeting.

## 6. Planning Matters (Cr Mrs Schofield)

(i) **WWTW:** Scottish Water has submitted a revised planning application for the proposed new Waste Water Treatment Works. It follows observations from Scottish Water's preferred contractor, Halcrow, that some of the existing plant could be used for the new plant saving money and reducing the proposed footprint. Cr. Mrs Schofield expressed some concerns about this, the existing plant and associated equipment have been in use for very many years, they are old and might be dated and worn. The result might be a less than high quality plant for Kingussie. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to invite a representative of Scottish Water to a meeting to discuss their new plans. Councillors also regretted that Scottish Water has already devastated some of the mature trees on the site, reducing them to poles akin to bare telegraph poles; this action might not have been needed if the new plans go ahead.

(ii) **CNPA Local Plan:** Cr Mrs Schofield agreed to write the KVCC response and ensure it meets the fast approaching deadline for responses.

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

(i) **St Vincent's Hospital:** Cr Fallows expressed his concerns about the closure of a ward at St Vincent's Hospital as a consequence of staff shortages due to staff illness. He was vexed that such action could have been avoided had staffing numbers been maintained by recruitment of new staff following recent retirements.

At a recent meeting held in Kingussie about the future of the Hospital, Mr Nigel Small went on record saying there is still a backlog of outstanding repairs to be done to the value of £3.2 millions.

- (ii) **Care at Home.** Cr Fallows reported continuing difficulties with these arrangements, there are still worrying issues about carers not turning up to look after people in their care. Apparently 18 people were interviewed very recently for posts in Badenoch and Strathspey but the outcomes are not known. At the recent meeting in Kingussie Mr Small had admitted there are unmet needs in fulfilling the Care at Home policy; they are 5 FTE staff short.
- (iii) **The Court House** The project is still moving forward. Cr Fallows reported a major project meeting was held today (6<sup>th</sup> Dec.) but he was not involved and had no information about the outcome.
- (iv) **Highland Folk Museum** There is to be a public meeting when the plans for the new buildings at the Newtonmore site will be on view.

8. **Proposed Town Trail** (Cr Mrs. Brown)

Cr Mrs Brown provided an oral report on progress.

The Town Trail is part of a three-pronged approach to the economic regeneration of Kingussie. Simon Green of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monument s in Scotland (RCAHMS) visited the town recently and met members of the ARC. In the company of the Town Trail project group (KVCC, KCDC, KBF and ARC) he walked the proposed town trail and provided helpful comments on it. Since then members of the local ACCESS group have provided advice on DDA compliance and members of the project team have walked the proposed trail to check for any potential difficulties and how to achieve compliance.

The CNPA has agreed to provide £5K as a 75% contribution towards the design and printing of a Town Trail booklet and provision of interpretative boards and markers.

The next meeting of the Project committee will take place on 16<sup>th</sup> December. On this occasion the intention is to record the memories of some older longstanding residents for inclusion in the booklet.

In the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that a downloadable application onto an “i player” might be considered in addition to, or as an alternative to, a printed booklet.

9. **Am Fasgadh Progress report.** (Crs Mrs Brown, Mrs Schofield and Mr Taylor)

The Am Fasgadh project has now been registered with the Community Right to Buy.

**Site for Allotments:** Councillors expressed their thanks to the four local Highland Councillors for their efforts to obtain the land for allotments for the local community at no cost or for a peppercorn rent. Cr Fallows agreed to pass on this expression of thanks to his colleagues. Part of the allotments project is likely to include the provision of a community polytunnel. The team has also been in discussion with Caberfeidh managers about the provision of a community garden as part of the long term development of the Am Fasgadh site.

A brief discussion followed about the Highland Council’s planning application to build four bungalows on part of the Am Fasgadh site along Manse Road. The outcome of the application is not known for certain.

10. **Draft National Park Plan and Local Development Plan:** – deal with under item 6.

11. **St Vincent’s Support Group** (Cr Mrs Brown)

Mrs Brown reported the formation of a support group at a recent public meeting. Rev Helen Cook has accepted the post of Chairman of a large committee and well-known TV presenter Aggie

Mackenzie (from Rothiemurchus) has agreed to be Patron. A meeting of the new committee is planned for 10 a.m. on the 12<sup>th</sup> December in the Church Hall.

12. **Twenty's Plenty** – dealt with under item 4.

13. **AOCB.**

- (i) The Vice-chairman Cr Ms Wright showed councillors a Christmas card received from Belinda MacDonald. She agreed to pass on Councillors' good wishes to Ms MacDonald.
- (ii) Cr Mrs Brown reported a communication from Alastair Goodall of Stagecoach about the upgrading and improvements to local bus services starting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011.
- (iii) Cr Mrs Schofield reported concerns about the gritting (or lack of it) of Gynack Road on Sundays despite it being the sole access route to St Vincent's Hospital. She had noticed that the road had been very icy on Sunday 4th December, the date of the Senior Citizens Christmas Party when elderly residents had needed transport to the Star Hotel. Councillors echoed the concerns about ease of access for emergency vehicles, for patients and their families if the road has not been gritted.

The meeting closed at 2200hrs.

**Date of next Meeting:** Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at 7p.m. in Talla Nan Ròs, Kingussie.