



KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Present: Community Councillors: Alan Davidson (Chair), Gwynneth Wright (Vice-Chair), Joe Taylor (Treasurer), Valerie Emmett (Secretary). Ailsa Schofield, Mairi Brown, John Patchett.

Highland Councillors: David Fallows, Bill Lobban.

Visitors: Ken Tait, PC Andy Coates.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Tuesday 7th May 2013 in the Parish Church Hall.

The minutes (previously circulated) were approved as a correct record. Proposed AS; Seconded GW.

2. Matters Arising

(i) Dog Fouling. Mr Taylor reported that following the meeting he had with an official from Highland Council TECS department, Highland Council has now placed large very clear "NO DOGS" notices on the gates at each end of the Gynack Gardens and on the gate into the former putting green on Spey Street. Mrs Emmett reported she had investigated the cost of similar notices and the cost of wooden ones would be £15 each. She has put up copies of the paper posters provided by TECS on the noticeboards in King Street, but they were unsuitable for other outdoor places where fouling continues to be a problem.

Mr Lobban reported that a new post for a dog warden has been advertised. He suggested KVCC contacts Mr. Colin Clark, head of waste management about the provision of additional signs for places where dog fouling is still a problem.

(ii) Updates. Mrs Emmett gave brief progress reports on matters in the previous minutes: the CNPA Local Development Plan, the Heart Start initiative, Dualling of the A9, and the licensing application by the Topsy Laird.

3. Police Matters (PC Coutts)

Copies of Insp. Macleod's monthly statistical report was circulated.

PC Coutts reported that Nethybridge is currently suffering an outbreak of criminal incidents: theft of heating oil and break-ins with theft of tools, etc from insecure sheds, garages, barns and vehicles. He urged all householders to ensure their premises are properly secured.

He alerted councillors that it is the season when travelling workmen are moving into the area and there is often a rise in opportunistic theft with more visitors about. He urged everyone to be vigilant and to check the authenticity of workmen offering to do casual work before engaging them.

Mr Davidson enquired about the report of a burnt out car in Glen Banchor. PC Coutts reported it was a locally owned car and enquiries are still ongoing.

Mrs Brown commented on the big influx of motorcyclists in recent weeks, many of whom drive at high speeds. She commented on the dangers from poor road surfaces and potholes, and cited an incident she observed on the A9 when an accident was narrowly avoided. Mr Lobban reported that following an incident earlier in the year when 18 cars were damaged because of major road defects on the A9, the insurance companies took Transport Scotland to court for negligence, but sadly the insurance companies lost the case. Mr Tait asked if the Police use under cover motorcyclists to catch speeding drivers, and he suggested a posting on the Police Facebook page about this possibility might deter such drivers.

4. Treasurer's Monthly Financial Report(Mr Taylor)

The Treasurer presented his monthly report:.

Bank Balances

KVCC	£13072.38 (includes project grants)
Senior Citizens Christmas Party fund	£4148.45
Children's Christmas Party	£1776.85
Reserve Fund	£1808.53

Cheques Issued

All Our Stories Project	£1820.00
ditto	£208.00
Heritage Project	£42.00
Administration	£44.00
ditto	£36.00

Balances in Individual Funds

All Our Stories Project	£7600.19
Station Adopters and Railway Celebrations	£873.00
Town Trail	£968.85
Heritage	£572.60
KVCC	£3057.74
Total	£13072.38

Mrs Emmett commented that she had accepted the annual £250 for her work as KVCC secretary, but that she usually donated most of it back to KVCC, retaining only the costs incurred from printing papers. This year she had decided instead, to pay for some apple trees and donate them to the main consignment of fruit trees that will form the community orchard at Am Fasgadh. She paid for six trees that are now growing happily in airpots and are being cared for by the Highland Aspen Group at their propagation unit at the Highland Wildlife Park. She has ordered a further seven apple trees that she will pay for to enhance the main consignment of apple, plum and damson trees that will be delivered in the autumn. All the fruit trees will be cared for by HAG until the orchard area is ready for planting up.

5. Highland Councillors' Report

The Court House: Mr Fallows reported that work on the Court House is underway. Initially work has been done to stabilise the fabric of the building to provide a safe working environment for the main part of the refurbishment and alteration works.

Councillors asked about the fate of the original cell doors and old iron stove. Mr Fallows suggested writing to Mr Gilfillan to request that if these listed items are not to be retained in the building they should be given to the Highland Folk Museum and not consigned to the scrap heap. It was suggested that if the old large table from the Court Room and used by the lawyers during hearings is still in the building it, too, might be given to the Museum as part of the Court archive.

Kingussie High School: Mr Lobban commented that completion of the building work is running about two weeks late and the estimated final date is now very close to the start of the autumn term. All the temporary accommodation will be removed on the 1st July. Twice weekly meetings are being held with the site engineers. The plan is to open the school on time, but if it is delayed the contractor will be subject to a financial penalty.

Mr Tracey, the current Headteacher is retiring in October. Interviews are being held on the 25th June for a new Headteacher. The new Deputy Head starts on the 8th June. In response to a question, Mr Lobban commented that there are still several unfilled teaching vacancies including a Principal Teacher for Modern Languages.

6. Planning Matters. (Mrs Schofield)

Mrs Schofield reported there was only one planning application, which was straightforward and did not need a response.

7. Consultation by Highland Council: Policy on Managing Obstruction on the Adopted Road.

(correspondence circulated in advance)

The consultation document concerns the placing of objects on road boundaries, such as advertising sandwich boards outside premises, tables and chairs on pavements outside cafes, street markets, and display of high level bunting and banners. The document also includes a policy on charging and insurance. Mrs Emmett commented that since the policy affects businesses, a copy of the communication had been forwarded to Simon Cook, chairman of the Business Forum so that it could be circulated to all businesses likely to be affected and for discussion at their next meeting.

In discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) Since the High Street is classed as a trunk road, responsibility for it lies with Transport Scotland. High Street businesses had received a similar communication from this organisation a couple of years ago instructing them to remove objects from the pavements.
- (ii) Only the side streets will be affected by the Highland Council policy.
- (iii) Councillors agreed that such a policy is overkill for rural areas and if applied could threaten businesses and prevent villages and rural towns from promoting events, etc., since it goes so far as to prohibit the fixing of banners to railings and street furniture and the need for prior permission to display signs plus indemnity insurance.
- (iv) The biggest obstructions on the High Street pavements are the traffic light stands at the Cross and the large steel box housing the controlling equipment outside the Post Office.

Mr Fallows commented that, in his view this issue should be devolved to the new Area Committee and be dealt with by the local Highland Councillors. He recommended that traders get together and do their own policing.

Mrs Brown commented on the need for a discussion about the Townscape as a whole and this should be done at a joint meeting of KVCC and the Business Forum.

8. Town Floral Decorations.

Mr. Tait was invited to address the Council. He explained that the funds were urgently required for purchase of plants for the hanging baskets. The voluntary donation scheme had not worked, despite several traders having donation tins on their counters. He estimated he needed about £900.

At the end of an extended discussion, councillors agreed to make a one-off donation of £400 to the Floral Fund.

The treasurer stressed that KVCC does not have the funding in its budget to make substantial annual donations, the annual budget allowance from Highland Council was for running council affairs and this budget was going to be cut in future years. The Community Council does not organise funding activities, instead there is a need for a separate fund-raising committee similar to the group that organises the Christmas lighting. It was suggested that a fund raising committee might pursue a proposal, made two years ago, to invite residents to "sponsor a basket".

Mr Tait thanked the Council for the donation.

9. AOCB

(i) **"All Our Stories" project** .Mrs Brown updated councillors. A successful training event had been held with ten people willing to take on the role of interviewers and recording people's reminiscences.

(ii) **Youth Matters**. Mr Patchett reported that the re-opening of the youth room had been postponed again. In his view there is a need to involve the High School.

(iii) **Notice boards**. Mr Patchett was thanked for taking responsibility for looking after the public notice boards in King St. They are noticeably improved.

(iv) **Post Offices**. The latest news is that the Post Office is improving its terms for the services that the Kingussie Postmaster can provide. The current providers in the Aviemore PO want to give up, so the Post Office is looking for a new provider, it will remain a main PO and not become a sub-PO.

The meeting ended shortly before 10 p.m.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 2nd July 2013.