



# KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2014 IN TALLA NAN RÒS AT 7p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Mr A Davidson, Ms G Wright, Mrs A Schofield, Mrs M Brown, Mr J Taylor, Mrs V Emmett.

Highland Councillor Mr B Lobban; Sgt J Crawford (Police Scotland)

Visitors: Ms L Cowie (Ward Manager) Mr T Ramage (Strathspey Herald)

Apologies: Mr J Patchett, Mr D Fallows (due to ill health).

The Chairman Mr Davidson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Before the business part of the meeting, Ms Cowie spoke to the councillors about her role as Ward Manager and changes in Ward management. She explained that during her career she has held several managerial roles in Highland Council, including as ward manager in several different wards. A reorganisation of the Ward structure took place when the previous ward manager of Ward 21 (Badenoch and Strathspey) left the Council and responsibility for management of Badenoch and Strathspey was combined with Nairn. Ms Cowie now manages both Wards. She divides her time between them, working in the Kingussie office on Mondays and Tuesdays, and in Nairn on Wednesdays and Thursdays. She principally works from home on Fridays, but attends either office that day if needed. Management of the much larger and more diverse area means she is not able to be directly in touch as frequently with community councils as before; however she is always available by email and telephone and she is supported by an assistant in both Wards; by Ms Shairon McArthur in the Kingussie, who works in the Kingussie office there on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Ms Cowie explained she has a corporate strategic role and is responsible for community management of a wide variety of resources. She works closely with the elected members and has monthly meetings on the second Monday in the month with the Badenoch and Strathspey councillors. She maintains good liaison with other agencies on Ward matters, for example with the new Police Scotland CI for the southern area, Colin Gough. She is also a member of the District Partnership between Highland Council and the NHS considering the future hospital and other health care provisions in the area. The next area meeting is due on 19<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ward Forums:** these are under review as part of wholesale Community Review and Community Planning.

Mr David Haas has temporarily replaced Mr William Gilfillan, who has recently been promoted to a new post in Highland Council.

**The Court House:** In response to questions, Ms Cowie reported that the planning application for the Court House was called in by the CNPA and is still being considered by the CNPA's planning dept. Enabling work is also taking place in the building itself to make it safe before the major reconstruction begins. Mr Ramage commented that the owner of the building behind the Court House is concerned at lack of information about the proposed purchase of his building by Highland Council so the site can form part of the larger development. Ms Cowie said she has been made aware of his concerns, the matter was raised recently by Cr. Gregor Rimmell and it is being

dealt with by the Head of Planning and Development. Cllr Lobban agreed to pursue the matter further and to report back.

At the end of the discussions, the chairman thanked Ms Cowie for her input and she left the meeting at this point.

### **Business meeting:**

#### **Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2014.**

The minutes were approved as a correct record. (Prop JT, sec. AS)

#### **1. Matters Arising**

Item 3. The treasurer, Mr Taylor reported that the Little Town of Festivals account was no longer in deficit.

Item 10(iii) CNPA's Local Plan: Mrs Emmett reported she had contacted Ms Major, who explained that the Park agreed with KVCC's representations on the draft plan, but all changes to the original draft plan have to be agreed by Scottish Ministers. The plan, plus all representations, was sent to Ministers in mid-December and is currently being considered by the Government Reporter.

#### **2. Police Matters (Sgt Crawford)**

Sgt Crawford reported two instances of property stolen from parked cars in Kingussie in the past month. He urged vehicle owners to be vigilant, not to leave property on view and to lock their cars.

He informed the councillors that the new CI Mr Gough intends to visit all community councils in the area in the near future.

#### **3. Treasurer's report (Mr Taylor)**

The treasurer presented his monthly financial report (appended).

All the lodgements in the past month have been for the Little Town of Festivals project. The only outstanding contributions due are from the Christmas festival committee and the Duke of Gordon Hotel for the Beer festival.

#### **4. Planning Matters (Mrs Schofield)**

The weekly list included only one local application for the installation of an air sourced heat pump, which did not need a response from KVCC. A planning application for the erection of a dwelling at Brookville in Gynack Street was dealt with by Highland Council under delegated powers and refused. Mrs Schofield updated councillors on the appeal lodged by Davall Developments. The target date for the Government Reporter's determination is 12 March.

#### **5. Highland Councillor's Report (Mr Lobban)**

**Proposed Closure of Service Points** and installation of self-assisted terminals: Cr Lobban updated councillors. The proposals, together with communities' concerns and objections at the loss of direct services are due to be discussed in full Council at its meeting in the week beginning 10<sup>th</sup> March. Highland Council is under severe financial pressure, however, and savings have to be found somewhere.

**Loss of services and facilities:** Mrs Schofield commented on the number of local facilities in Kingussie that have already been lost in the seven years: The Highland Folk Museum; the Council depot; the Education Office; the Putting Green; Traffic Warden; Dog Warden. In prospect are losses of the Police Station and St. Vincent's Hospital.

She asked about the future security of the Wade Centre. Mr Lobban doubted it was under threat; it was more likely that money will be spent on it. NHS surveys are in progress and money has been found to upgrade the Centre.

**Redevelopment of Health Care.** A three month consultation is in progress. Community transport is integral and must be joined up.

**The Community Council has received information about new electoral reviews by the Scottish Government**

**Boundary commission:** A new review of local government electoral arrangements has begun. The Boundary Commission intends to start a series of meetings with individual community councils to discuss reviews. The Commission is making recommendations about:

- The number of councillors in each authority;
- The number of wards for local government elections and their boundaries;
- The extent of council areas.

Apparently the plan is reduce the number of Highland councillors by eight. In discussion Cllr Lobban commented that the balance is likely to shift away from rural areas in favour of urban areas, since boundary changes will be based numbers of electors. Each councillor should represent the same number of electors as nearly as possible. It was agreed that this could disadvantage rural communities and ignore issues surrounding rural deprivation and poverty. The review has to take account of the interests of effective and convenient local government and which local ties would be broken by new boundaries; and special geographical considerations also have to be taken into account.

Public consultation is expected to begin in May 2014. Later stages will comprise consultation on proposed ward boundaries. Councillors wondered if Badenoch and Strathspey will still be a ward. The Commission expects to make its recommendations to Scottish Ministers in 2016 in time for implementation for local government elections in May 2017.

## **1. AOCB**

**Heritage Festival:** Mrs Brown gave details of the finalised programme for the festival which takes place from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> April.

**Correspondence:** (i) a letter from Scottish water about a public conference in The Townhouse Inverness on 12<sup>th</sup> March at 5.30 p.m. to discuss their performance and plans for the future in the Highlands.

(ii) A letter from MTR Corporation, one of five companies shortlisted for the ScotRail franchise. Others shortlisted are Arriva, Abellio, First Group, and National Express.

(iii) A letter from Local Energy Scotland about their service for community groups involved with or considering renewable energy developments.

Mrs Emmett reminded councillors of the Leader consultation taking place the following evening (5<sup>th</sup> March) in the Duke of Gordon Hotel. Most of the councillors indicated they planned to attend.

**Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 at 7 p.m. in Talla Nan Ròs.**

The councillors will be joined at the beginning of the meeting by Mr O Bray, Rector of Kingussie High School.

## **Appendix: Financial Report for March 2014**

### **Current Account Balances**

KVCC	£5354.03
Senior Citizens' Party fund	£2528.65
Children's Christmas Party Fund	£1552.86
Reserves	£1819.53

### **Lodgements**

Little Town of Festivals Project	£130.00
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### **Payments**

All Our Stories Project	£1061.03
Secretary's Allowance	£250.00
Administration	£76.00

### **KVCC Account Balances**

All Our Stories Project	£535.41
Station Adopters & Rail Anniversary	£575.17
Town Trail	£368.85
Heritage Project	£535.80
KVCC	£3338.80

<b>Total</b>	<b>£5354.03</b>
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