



# KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2016 following the AGM

**Present** Community Councillors: Mrs A Schofield, Mr J Taylor, Mrs V Emmett, Mrs S Rowley, Mrs I Malcolm, Ms J Morse. Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows

**Apologies:** Mrs M Brown, Mrs F Dallas.

**Visitors:** Mr L Haxton (CNPA) Mrs K Birkby (RSPB) and Mrs C Vis Christie (RSPB)

The business meeting was preceded with a presentation from Mrs Karen Birkby, Manager of the RSPB Insh Marshes National Nature Reserve (NNR) and Mrs Catherine Vis Christie, RSPB Community Engagement Officer about the potential effects of the A9 dualling on the NNR.

Mrs Birkby and Mrs Vis Christie reported to the Council about recent discussions between the consulting engineers for the dualling of the A9 section across the RSPB's Insh Marshes Nature reserve. The RSPB has several major concerns about the potential adverse effects of the new road constructions and bridges across the reserve. The Reserve is of international importance and most of it is covered by special conservation protection designations for the site as well as the flora and fauna, especially the breeding birds, some of which are now of national and international concern because of serious declines in numbers in recent years.

They showed draft plans and there was a good discussion about the different options for the road bridges across the reserve. They were concerned that several of the draft designs require an additional land take and encroachment on the marshland reserve. One of the draft designs however, would open up the possibility of enhancing the flow of the river across the land by including removal of part of the existing causeway, and thereby the possibility of reducing the flooding of adjacent land towards Kingussie, as well as allowing the river course to move over time. The current high road embankments result in mortality of some of the wildlife such as otters and wading birds attempting to cross the roadways. There was general agreement about the preferred option. The consulting engineers are still working on their designs and intend to hold further public consultations soon, probably later in the summer.

Mrs Schofield thanked Mrs Birkby and Mrs Vis Christie for alerting the Council to the problems and concerns and the opportunity for the discussions. The visitors left the meeting at this point.

## Business Meeting

1. **Minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016** (already circulated)

### Corrections:

**Item 2.** Mrs Morse, not Cllr Fallows, had reported that the Highland Wildlife Park and not Highland Council plans to erect a bus shelter at the entrance to the Park. Cllr Fallows only reported the provision of an new bus shelter outside the Duke of Gordon Hotel in Kingussie.

**Item 8.** Add: Mrs Morse had suggested asking Caberfeidh Horizons to assist in care and maintenance of the community seats.

**Item 10.** Correction Mrs Brown had reported on a Marketing Strategy not a Business Strategy.

Corrections were made and then the minutes were approved as a correct record.

2. **Matters Arising.**

**Item 8.** Mrs Schofield reported she had approached Caberfeidh Horizons about help with care of the community seats; sadly they are unable to assist in this task. Mrs Rowley was thanked for renewing the commemorative lettering on the seats.

**Item 11.** Several councillors commented that KVCC does not own a marquee, they were unsure as to who owns it.

3. **Police Matters** (PC A. Courts)

PC Courts provided a brief oral report on recent incidents. There had been 41 incidents, (fewer than in May) and mostly connected with road traffic offences. One concerned dogs straying onto the A9, another an HGV driver exceeding his permitted driving hours, there was one incident of dangerous driving and several offences connected with speeding along the A9 section affected by the roadworks. He reported a recent collision at the junction of the A9 slip road and the B9152 when damage was sustained to two motor cars. The police team had also dealt with several telephone calls from the public about IT scams and two personnel medical matters. Finally he commented that the Police supervision of the Bikeathon event had gone well.

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

Mr Taylor presented his financial report for the month ending 31<sup>st</sup> May. (appended)

5. **Planning Matters** (Mrs A Schofield)

Mrs Schofield presented her reports on recent planning applications:

**16/02236/FUL** Installation of a flue and support mast for the biomass facility in the grounds of the Hanover Housing complex Glebe Court, The Glebe. A prior planning application was granted (12/00002/FUL) which included the installation of a flue and mast. However due to subsequent technical requirements, the flue and mast installed differs from the original application. We were supportive of the original application, so no need to respond.

**16/02376/FUL** Brinacory, 5 Kerrow Drive, Kingussie. Fresh application for extensions to dwelling, with amended rear extension from that previously approved under 13/03446/FUL. The applicant had to reapply as a result of wishing to make what are minor modifications to the previously approved

consent (Extension to kitchen slightly longer). We made a neutral response to the original application but said that we welcomed anything likely to improve the condition of current housing stock. No need for further response.

**16/02181/FUL** The Dell, Kingussie Camanachd Club's Shinty Pitch, Ruthven Road, Kingussie. Erection of two permanent portacabins/team rooms and a 100 seater grandstand at The Dell Shinty Pitch, Ruthven Road.

Proposed response: Kingussie & Vicinity Community Council are fully supportive of this application. Kingussie Camanachd Club has been an important part of Kingussie since 1890, both recreationally and culturally. We know that the intention is to improve facilities at the ground to enable the Club to host matches at a National level. Not only will this benefit the Club it will benefit Kingussie as a whole by attracting more people into the town, which can only be good for local shops, cafés and businesses.

This was agreed unanimously.

**2016/0143/LBC** Balavil Mains Farmhouse Kingussie. Conversion of redundant farm buildings to visitor facilities and commercial use, including alterations and extension of existing structures. Construction of new buildings for cafe, catering and events use, formation of vehicle parking areas.

Proposed response: While welcoming investment in our local estates we cannot support anything which we feel is likely to harm our community, therefore we object to this application. Our grounds for objection are as follows:

1. It is contrary to the CNPA Local Plan, as there is no history of commercial usage and the area is not zoned for commercial purposes.
2. The application appears to indicate access to the A9. We would point out that works are in the process of being scheduled to make this road into a dual carriageway, and that as a result the number of access points will be reduced as a matter of safety.
3. When the A9 was constructed in 1975 there was a moratorium on building services adjacent to the road. The reason for this was to ensure the continued prosperity of the settlements along the route, which already have appropriate services.
4. The CNPA Policy for supporting economic growth (Local Development Plan 2015 page 21) states that retail development will be supported out of settlements only: "where the development supports economic vitality and viability of that community. Developments should have no adverse impact on neighbouring properties and should have no detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of that settlement/centre". We would argue that such a development would have a catastrophic impact on the vitality and viability of Kingussie, as we are likely to see a dramatic decrease in visitors to the town.

The policy goes on to say that: "The policy will be used to support appropriate economic development, which ensures sustainable growth and supports our communities. It is intended to protect communities from inappropriate development and loss of existing facilities, and help keep them vibrant and sustainable". In our view the commercial attraction being proposed is unlikely to keep Kingussie either vibrant or sustainable; as we have no doubt that it would completely annihilate Kingussie, along with all of its independent cafés and businesses. No doubt it will be

argued that such a development would provide opportunities for employment, but we believe that this would be at the expense of existing jobs. Also, as we understand that our local businesses are currently struggling to recruit and retain staff, this is likely to mean staff travelling in from elsewhere, not particularly beneficial to the local community. We understand that the House of Bruar near Blair Atholl has exactly this sort of staffing issue, as some of their staff travels from as far away as Dingwall.

We are surprised that the applicant wishes to establish a major development on the A9, yet has not undertaken to consult with the communities which are most likely to be adversely affected. The proposal to include 136 car parking spaces, 7 disabled spaces, 5 coach parking spaces, a café, farm shop, estate shops and events space indicates the scale of the development, for which the applicant would no doubt expect to see a significant financial return. We believe that this would be at the expense of nearby local communities, and have no doubt that there would be serious implications for many settlements in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Finally, we wish to say that should this application be granted there is no doubt that it will turn Kingussie into a ghost town, as due to its close proximity to the A9 it is more likely to attract people away from Kingussie than into it.

The response was agreed unanimously.

#### **6. Highland Councillor's Report (Mr D Fallows)**

Mr Fallows reported that the Art Society, who runs the Iona Gallery, is pursuing funding for further works to enable them to continue to improve and upgrade the Gallery.

#### **7. Correspondence**

**Licensing Application for the Silverfjord Hotel.** Councillors discussed the application. It was agreed to support it, but to add a caveat about the limited parking on the hotel's land and in the vicinity of the hotel especially for coaches. They also commented on the opening hours and that consideration should be given to neighbours given the proximity of sheltered housing and other residential properties.

#### **8. Reports of Meetings of Outside Groups and Organisations**

- (i) **Kingussie Community Development Company.** Mrs Morse reported that Highland Council is to sell some waste land close to the tennis courts and the R. Gynack to KCDC for £1.
- (ii) Mrs Emmett provided a brief oral report about the recent meeting of the Association of Cairngorm Communities held at Am Fasgadh, Highland Folk Museum.
- (iii) Mrs Rowley reported on the success of the Bikeathon and Cycle Fest events held on the same day earlier in the month.
- (iv) **Water supplies:** Mrs Rowley commented that a consultation about the water supplies organised by Scottish Water is to be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> June at the Duke of Gordon Hotel. The Badenoch and Strathspey Water Action Group is to meet the MP and Scottish Water on the 17<sup>th</sup> June.

## 9. AOCB

- (i) **A9 dualling Plans:** Transport Scotland is holding consultation meetings in Aviemore (16<sup>th</sup> June) and Carrbridge (17<sup>th</sup> June) about the plans for the Dalraddy to Slochd section of the road.
- (ii) Mrs Schofield reported a letter from the Kingussie Business Forum requesting financial support for the floral decorations on the Gynack Bridge. Councillors agreed to a donation of £200.
- (iii) Mr Haxton (CNPA) commented that the National Park Authority will shortly launch its consultation of the Cairngorms Partnership Plan. It will contain nine “big questions”.

**Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July at 7p.m. in Talla Nan Ròs**

## Appendix

### TREASURER’S FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016

**Current Balance in the KVCC account**    £4376.22

#### Payments

Talla Nan Ròs (meeting room hire)    £78.00

#### Project Accounts

Railway Station Adopters’ Fund    £525.17

KVCC    £3851.05

Total    £4376.22