

KINGUSSIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd November 2009 at 7 p.m.
in Kingussie High School.

Present: Councillors Mr A Davidson (Chairman), Mr T Wade (Treasurer), Mrs V Emmett (Sec.), Mrs A Brown, Mrs A Schofield, Mr M Stone, Mr J Taylor Mr D Whyte.

Absent: Councillors Mr C MacRae, Mr N MacAulay

Visitors: Mr K Bootle and Mr S Sangster (Highland Council)

1. **Apologies:** Councillors Mrs G Wright, Mr D Fallows.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the Councillors and visitors.

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (5th October 2009)

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record. Prop. Mr Taylor, sec. Mrs Brown.

3. **Matters Arising**

Hanging Baskets: Cr Mrs Schofield asked if there was a date for the removal of the hanging baskets from the High Street as the plants were now decayed. The Chairman agreed to contact Mr Reid.

Transerve correspondence: The Sec. reported a reply had been received from Transerve about the road markings, painting of the lampposts and the welcome signs at each end of Kingussie. The company hoped to renew the car parking road markings shortly, but painting of the lampposts was more uncertain. They planned to re-design the welcome signs but had no budget to replace them this year. After discussion it was agreed to invite the engineer to a Council meeting to discuss the new designs so that the Council might have an input and point out that Kingussie is the capital of Badenoch.

Mrs Schofield asked why the landscaping at the north end of the town fell through and if there was a possibility it might be resurrected. Mr Taylor asked if there was funding for the inclusion of Gaelic on the new signs.

4. **Youth/Fusion Events in the Badenoch Centre (Mr Bootle and Mr Sangster)**

Mr Bootle reported there were concerns that young people were not availing themselves of the opportunities provided by the Highland Council Leisure Centres at weekends. Highland Councillors had agreed to provide some funding for special events to try to attract the young people to use them. It was decided to target areas where there had been incidences of anti-social behaviour and Badenoch was included.

The Council was providing £6000 to the Badenoch Group to facilitate six events, one each month in the period from November 2009 to May 2010. The target group is to be 12-16 year old pupils attending Kingussie High School. Discussions have been held between the youth workers, Active Scotland and youth representatives to plan a range of activities likely to attract the age group. The groups had suggested a range of sports activities, art projects, movie making, a fashion show, food preparation, music, drama and some more exciting sports such as abseiling, hire of the climbing wall and night time mountain biking.

The funding will also be used to provide transport so that youngsters living in the outlying villages can be brought to the Badenoch Centre, but parents have to sign a consent form agreeing that their children can travel on the coaches. This will give reassurance to the organisers that parents know where their children are on those evenings. Youngsters turning up without written parental permission will not be allowed to travel nor gain admission.

The main events planned for 14th November will be a “Blue Light Disco” in the Sports Hall, and the start of an art project in the youth room. There will also be a news/diary board so youngsters can suggest ideas for other activities for future meetings. The Police are supporting the projects and offering their help. It is hoped that if these “pump priming” events are successful then they will become self-sustaining, but the young people themselves will need to help raise the funds for them.

Mr Sangster said it was important that the young people were involved in the planning and the delivery, and a group would be making a presentation to the Ward Forum on the 11th Nov. in the Badenoch Centre. He then told the Councillors about the “Street Football” events held in Aviemore and Grantown-on-Spey in 2008 where there were concerns about anti-social behaviour late at night. The events comprise five-a-side football matches held in a suitable open space in the late evenings, with the play area bounded by high netting and supervised by the youth workers. The scheme has the support of the Police and Caledonian Thistle football Club supporters, who have provided the funding for “strip” for the players. If the need arose in Kingussie, then such events could be provided at an agreed location.

A discussion followed to try to identify a suitable location in Kingussie where there would be minimum disruption to residents. It was agreed that at present there appeared to be little anti-social behaviour. The High School has been putting on a range of after school activities and the Youth Workers are cooperating with the School. In two years time Aviemore will have its own youth facility as part of the new community school and it is anticipated that fewer Aviemore pupils will travel to Kingussie for leisure activities.

Mr Sangster reported a very good return from pupils to the “Our Community” project survey and they are following up the issues identified by the young people to see how they can be converted into projects. The Head Boy at the High School is in the team.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bootle and Mr Sangster for their presentations.

5. **Planning Matters** (Mr Davidson & Mrs Schofield)

Mrs Schofield reported that the weekly list of planning applications included an application to demolish the former Strathy Bairns buildings and replace it with a private house. It seemed straightforward and she felt there was no need for the Council to respond. This was agreed. The application for a new lodge for the estate keeper at Pitmain has been approved but with many conditions attached.

The Scottish Government is making many changes to planning regulations and procedures and she hopes to report on progress at a future meeting. One of the plans is to introduce e-planning, where notifications would be sent out by email.

6. Highland Council Review of Community Councils (Mrs Emmett)

New standing orders, a draft constitution and other papers from the Highland Council were distributed to Council members. The secretary asked member to read the papers and she would put the item on the agenda for the December meeting.

The secretary reported she has been in discussion with other Badenoch Community Councils about the revision of Community Council boundaries and she has arranged a joint meeting for the 19th Nov. where representatives from Kincaig, Kingussie, Newtonmore and Dalwhinnie CCs and the Laggan Community Association would meet and agree the new boundaries. The Chairman, secretary and Cr. Mr Taylor would attend the meeting on behalf of Kingussie.

7. Scottish Boundary Commission Proposals for new Electoral Boundaries (Mrs Emmett)

The Secretary reminded the Council that one of the first actions of the new Council after the AGM was to write a letter to the Commissioners objecting to the proposals as they affect Badenoch (Kingussie) electors.

She reported that the secretary of Kincaig Community Council has passed on copies of correspondence between Kincaig and the Commissioners and the Secretary of State for Scotland. It appears that the Commissioners do not intend to take account of any of the objections to their proposals affecting Badenoch, but will put forward their own unamended proposals to the Sec. of State next year. He has replied to Kincaig that he cannot intervene since they are independent commissioners and his role is merely to place their recommendations before the UK Parliament for approval.

Mrs Emmett then read out draft letters she had prepared to go to the Secretary of State, the First Minister, Mr Danny Alexander MP and Mr Fergus Ewing MSP expressing Kingussie's concerns about the refusal of the Commissioners to take electors' views into account. Councillors agreed the drafts and the letters were signed by the Chairman for posting.

8. "Our Community – A Way Forward" (Mrs Brown and Mr Taylor)

Mr Taylor reported that a meeting has been organised for Sat. 21st November afternoon in Talla Nan Ros for further public consultation about the order of the priorities emerging from the household survey. He and Mrs Brown had recommended an alternative strategy be considered because they felt another drop-in session was likely to be poorly attended and thus unproductive; but the project team wished to pursue the strategy they had used with other communities regardless.

Although the project team was pleased with the overall level of returns to the Household Survey, one area of the town was poorly represented because households there had not returned their forms. The Chairman reported that not all households had received the forms. Mr Taylor said steps had been taken to deliver forms where this was known and he had delivered some himself, but since none of the forms included a tracking code there was no way of following up fully missing households.

Mrs Brown reported the next stage after the meeting on the 21st is to involve a number of agencies about who should take responsibility for taking the priorities forward.

9. Report from the Highland Council

In Mr Fallows absence this item was not taken.

10. Christmas party for Senior Citizens (Mr Davidson)

The Chairman told Councillors that the party will be held in the Star Hotel on Sunday 29th November starting at 12.30p.m. He asked all the Councillors to help.

Application forms were in the Post Office and there will be posters on the town's noticeboards. Mr Davidson said he would contact Bill Longstaff and Peter Davidson about assistance with transport.

11. Highland Council Draft Local Transport Strategy (Mrs Emmett)

The secretary reported she had received notification of the consultation by email with a link to a website. The report was more than 100 pages long and so she had requested a hard copy. She had quickly read some of the report on line and was disappointed not to find any references to local transport provision for Badenoch, no account appeared to have been taken of the outcomes of the Ward Forum meeting on transport in August in Laggan. When the hard copy arrived she would go through the report and draft a response from the Council – for consideration at the December meeting.

Cr. Mrs Brown commented on her recent experiences of using local transport when needing to travel frequently to Raigmore Hospital. It costs £10.80 to travel from Kingussie to Inverness and a weekly season costs £40. While it is possible to purchase 10 tickets, each costing £3 to travel by train from Dornoch to Inverness, there is no similar deal for travellers from Badenoch to Inverness. In Nairn it is also possible to purchase books of ten tickets at a reduced cost of £3 per single journey. These were reported to be the result of a HiTrans initiative. In Mrs Brown's opinion Badenoch residents are being unfairly discriminated against – where was the equality of opportunity policy?

12. Public Memorial to Mr A Bennett (Cr Davidson)

The Chairman reported he had been approached by two residents about a establishing a fund for public donations towards a memorial to the late chairman Mr Bennett. A discussion ensued where questions were asked about the nature of such a memorial and whether the family would want one.

It was pointed out that his funeral was very well attended and substantial donations were given to charity nominated by the family in his memory. The Council, the Lights Committee and the Fishing Club had each donated sums for the provision of the memorial bench at the Duck Pond. Crs. Wade and Whyte suggested the family be asked if they would like a further memorial. Cr Wade said he doubted if the Council was legally empowered to set up such a fund and accept donations.

13. Correspondence Received

The Sec. reminded councillors of the forthcoming Ward Forum in the Badenoch Centre on Wed. 11th November, the topic for discussion is "Youth".

14. AOCB

(i) Local Holidays.

It appears that in the past Newtonmore took responsibility for setting dates for local holidays and Kingussie agreed to the same dates. The Sec. agreed to contact the new sec. at Newtonmore about 2009 dates.

(ii) Street signs outside shops in the High Street

Cr. Wade asked if the Council should respond to the letters sent by Transerve to local High Street businesses about the need to remove signs and other items placed on pavements outside their shops. The Chairman reported it was not a Community Council matter. Since the High Street is a trunk road (A86) the law regarding signs obstructing pathways applied. Businesses wishing to place a sign on the footpath have to apply for planning permission, with the agreement of the landowner if they do not own the forecourt in front of their business.

After further discussion, the secretary agreed to email Mr Fallows to find out if other towns have been similarly affected.

(iv) In response to a question by Cr Schofield, the secretary reported that no response had been received from Mr Gilfillan about the repair of the former Alldays premises on the corner of High Street and Gynack Street.

(v) In response to a question from Cr. Brown, Mr Wade reported that George Simpson had told him it was impossible to find the funding for adding inscriptions to the War Memorial because the cost was too high.

15. Date and venue of the next meeting.

It was agreed that the Maths Base in the High School was a much more suitable venue than the School Library for Council meetings. The secretary undertook to contact the School to ask for a change to the maths base for future meetings. It was agreed to hold a meeting in December, but not in January.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 1st December at 7p.m in the Maths base on the first floor of the High School.

The meeting ended at 9.05 p.m.