

# KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>st</sup> MAY 2012 IN TALLA NAN RÒS

**Present:** Crs Mr A Davidson (Chair), Ms G Wright (Vice- Chairman), Mrs V Emmett (Sec.), Mr J Taylor (Treasurer), Mrs M Brown, Mr. D Fallows Highland Councillor.

**Apologies:** Cr Mrs A Schofield, Sgt J Crawford.

**Visitors:** Dr Boyd Peters NHS, PC Scott Haig of the Northern Constabulary.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2012

Cr Mr Taylor requested a correction – the balance in the Children’s Christmas Party fund should read £1945.44.

The minutes were then approved as a correct record. (Proposed Cr Mr. Taylor, seconded Cr Mrs Brown.)

### 2. Matters Arising

**Item 7 Floral displays in the Town:** Cr Ms Wright asked if there was any further news about arrangements for hanging baskets. Cr Mrs Emmett undertook to contact Mr. Tait.

**Item 9 AOCB: (a) Correspondence.** Cr Mrs Emmett reported further responses to MSP Mr Thompson’s letters – a reply from Network Rail about the low platform at Kingussie Railway Station, and a response from MSP Keith Brown, Minister for Housing and Transport about ScotRail’s ticket pricing policy. It was agreed neither response was helpful or supportive.

Cr Mr Fallows commented that he only knew of one other station, Dunkeld, where a low platform is still in use. Cr Mrs Brown reported a letter to the Minister from Ms Morag Campbell, Chairman of the Badenoch and Strathspey Access Panel.

After further discussion, it was agreed that after the forthcoming Highland Council elections, a meeting should be organised with all the B&S councillors and invitations should be sent to MSP Mr Thompson, Network Rail and ScotRail to try to make progress.

**Item 9 (c)** Mrs Emmett reported receipt of posters from GH Johnston, Consultants for Davall Developments about the Public Exhibition for their revised Master Plan. It was noted the date on the posters is wrong; Mrs Emmett undertook to contact the consultants requesting correct versions.

### 3. Police Matters (Sgt J Crawford)

In Sgt Crawford’s absence, PC Haig attended the meeting for this item.

Cr Mrs. Brown reported a recent complaint from a local resident about dangers to pedestrians, since there is no footpath, from vehicles speeding along Ruthven Road.

Crs Mrs. Brown and Mr Taylor also suggested consideration might be given to prioritising passage across the bridge over the R. Spey since it is too narrow for two vehicles to pass while on the bridge. They have been made aware of some recent problems when drivers, unfamiliar with the roadway, have approached the bridge too fast. PC Haig took notes of these points and undertook to pass them on.

### 4. Highland Councillor’s Report (Cr Mr D Fallows)

**The Court House:** Cr Fallows updated councillors about the proposed refurbishment project for the Court House. It has been before the Highland Council’s Projects Board and has been approved. The Ward

Manager is continuing discussions with the Kingussie Business Forum, since they have undertaken to raise the funds for the community aspect of the project.

Cr Fallows commented that it is important the Business Forum stays committed.

**Allotments:** Cr Fallows commented on the importance of Highland Council's ECS and Housing Property sections being made fully aware of the project to use part of the Am Fasgadh site for the allotments and that the project needed a below market price sale.

Cr Mrs Brown said she felt that THC officials do not appear to grasp what is wanted, she hoped the new B&S councillors will take this forward as a matter of priority. The provision of allotments on the site is part of the three pronged approach for the economic and social regeneration of Kingussie: refurbishment of the Court House, the Town Trail and the Am Fasgadh community project. It is important that all three projects are taken forward in a concerted way.

## **5. Treasurer's Monthly Report (Cr Mr J Taylor)**

Cr Taylor presented his monthly statement of the accounts. All the accounts have been made up to date to the end of the financial year and the books are with the auditors.

**KVCC Current Account** balance: £9496.65

**Donation to Town Floral decorations:** As agreed at the previous meeting, Cr Mr Taylor had provided Mr Tait with a donation of £50 from KCVCC towards the summer floral decorations (hanging baskets) for the town this year, and the cheque has been cashed.

**Town Trail Project:** He reported that he is due to issue a cheque for £500 from the grant for the Town Trail project, which represents 50% of the designer's overall fee for designing the leaflet and information boards. The remaining 50% will be paid when the project is complete. Crs Mr Taylor and Mrs Brown reported the group's satisfaction with the designer's work and contribution to the project.

**KVCC Reserve Fund** now stands at £1818.13 as a result of the (small) annual interest received!

**Senior Citizens' Party Fund** is unchanged at £4654.97

**Children's Christmas Party** fund is also unchanged at £1945.44

## **6. Planning Matters**

In the absence of Cr. Mrs Schofield, Mrs Emmett read out her report.

**Inner Moray Firth Local Plan** (on view for councillors before the meeting). Councillors agreed this was not directly relevant to KVCC and no official comment was required. The plan, however, to build a substantial number of houses in Inverness and other areas of the Inner Moray Firth, resulting in a proposed increase in population in excess of 6000, could have implications for planning developments already approved or in the pipeline in Badenoch and Strathspey, possibly reducing demand for houses in B&S and thereby easing pressure and urbanisation in the western part of the National Park. Councillors questioned where the proposed increases in population might come from and where they might find jobs.

**Laggan No. One Croft.** (Documents relating to the application for planning permission on view for councillors before the meeting). After discussion, councillors agreed there was no need to offer comment on the proposed single storey house, which will be well set back within its plot.

## **7. Progress Report on Am Fasgadh and Allotments (Crs Mrs M Brown and Mr J Taylor)**

**Town Trail:** Cr Mrs Brown reported that the Town Trail leaflet is ready to be printed and good progress has been made with the design and layout of the information boards to be sited at points along the trail. She also indicated that there is a possibility of obtaining funding for an oral history project as a consequence of the rich work arising from the Town Trail project.

After the forthcoming elections, the Am Fasgadh group plans to invite all the B&S councillors to a meeting to discuss the project's vision.

**Allotments:** see comments under Item 4.

## 8. Correspondence

- (i) Mrs Emmett reported an email from Mr Richard Crawford, a member of Inverness South CC, prompted by the Inner Moray Firth Local Plan and expressing concerns about some of the proposals in it. He invited the views of other CCs to the idea of the formation of a local CC association. KVCC councillors felt that it was more appropriate for the Inner Moray Firth group to work together, since their priorities were likely to differ from those of the CCs in the CNPA area. Cr Fallows reminded councillors that there is already supposed to be a B&S CC association, with meetings organised by Mr Rainey Brown of VABS. He regretted that it has not met for some time. He commented on the success of the recent meeting of Badenoch CCs with the MSP, organised by KVCC; he felt this had been productive and hoped there might be similar meetings in the future. Mrs Emmett commented that she represents KVCC on the Association of Cairngorm Communities, which includes representatives from all CCs in the CNPA area along with some other associations that operate in the National Park. This group usually meets at least twice a year; she regretted that not all Badenoch CCs attend.
- (ii) Mrs Emmett drew attention to the invitation to attend a seminar "Achieving Impact with Community Benefit/Investment" on Wed. 30 May in Strathpeffer Pavilion.

## 9. Dates: AGM and next meeting

Cr Mrs Emmett commented that the Council is due to hold its AGM in June and that it is usual to combine it with the usual monthly meeting. However, the scheduled date of the next monthly meeting – Tues 5<sup>th</sup> June, is a special public holiday to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and it would be inappropriate to meet on that day. Councillors agreed to defer the meeting and meet on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June, providing Talla Nan Ròs is available. Mrs Emmett agreed to cancel the booking for the 5<sup>th</sup> and re-book the foyer for the 6<sup>th</sup>.

## 10. AOCB Future Provision of Health Care in Badenoch and Strathspey.

*(This item took place towards the start of the Council meeting, so as not to delay the visitor.)*

Dr Boyd Peters, Local Clinical Lead, was welcomed to the meeting and thanked for taking up the Council's invitation to discuss health care in our area. Dr Peters thanked councillors and commented that he appreciates the opportunity to talk to community councils about the need for them to be part of the consultations for future healthcare in the area.

He began by explaining that the backlog of maintenance work needed to bring both St Vincent's and the Ian Charles Hospitals up to standard to comply with new medical and health care regulations for community hospitals is likely to cost in the region of £5 to £6 millions, with £3.2 million needed at St Vincent's and £1.8 million at the Ian Charles. The maintenance and running costs of old inefficient buildings are very high, and there are also a number of health and safety issues to be overcome. It is highly probable that in ten years time, one or both of these hospitals will be closed because they will be unable to comply with new regulations. Currently no plan is in place for their replacement. He feels it is important that health care professionals and all the local communities begin to plan for what will be needed in the future.

He suggested that, if communities can agree, then the best plan would be for a single new state of the art community hospital, built at a suitable site within the Strath. Nigel Small, the senior manager for NHS Highland, is in the process of commissioning consultants to look at what is needed for health care in the future, including a range of possibilities for a future community hospital. Dr Peters hopes the consultants will come forward with a plan.

Community consultation will be important. A new hospital will need properly integrated services, including the transport infrastructure. The area served by the local medical teams and existing hospitals and including the NHS out-of-hours care teams is very large, stretching almost to Roy Bridge west of Loch Laggan to close by Tormore Distillery near Advie, a distance of more than 70 miles along the main roads.

A wide ranging and useful discussion ensued, including discussion of the current services provided at St Vincent's and Ian Charles, which includes some chemotherapy treatment at the latter, saving patients the need to travel to Inverness for treatment.

Other topics included care in the community, including the need for health care teams to provide rehabilitation and re-enablement of patients in their own homes. The opportunity now exists to carry out such programmes since NHS is taking over the care in the community role from the Highland Council. These will require specially trained teams to work intensively with elderly and frail patients in their homes to encourage them to do daily tasks themselves and stay independent for as long as possible, but this requires investment. Tele-health care, which includes modern sophisticated monitoring devices is also available to extend the time that older and less mobile can live at home. It was agreed that health care provision must still include residential care for those who become too frail to stay in their own homes and who will need round the clock nursing and care. Health care developments must include residential care homes in the broader plans for a new integrated community hospital and allied services.

Dr Peters commented that the Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey area has just been given a grant of £50,000 to help to train care workers. The lion's share of the money (£36,000), however, has been allocated to Nairn and Ardersier, where good home care worker teams are already in place. The residue of only £14,000 is coming to Badenoch and Strathspey, which does not yet have adequate home care teams. Councillors were amazed at this news and felt the division of the funds should be reversed if home care was ever to be adequate in this area. Cr Fallows commented, that if he is re-elected to Highland Council on 3rd May, he will follow this matter up as a priority.

Councillors thanked Dr Peters for giving up his evening to update and discuss these important topics. They commented they felt better informed and looked forward to further opportunities to be consulted in the future.

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in Talla Nan Ròs**

The routine monthly Council meeting will be preceded by the AGM starting at 7p.m.