

KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5TH FEBRUARY 2013.

Present: Community Councillors Alan Davidson (Chair), Joe Taylor (Treasurer), Ailsa Schofield, Mairi Brown, John Patchett, Val Emmett (Sec). Highland Councillor David Fallows.

Apologies: Gwynneth Wright.

Visitors: Sgt. John Crawford, Residents Iona Malcolm and Jillian Robertson; Bob Kinnaird, Principal Glenmore Lodge; Keith Bootle, Highlife Highland Youth Service.

Kingussie, A Cycling Friendly Village: Before the business meeting Iona Malcolm and Jillian Robertson addressed the Council about their ideas for making cycling trails and a mini-adventure bike course for young people in Kingussie. They spoke about their efforts to find a suitable site for the latter, these were discussed and suggestions were put forward and they were encouraged to continue their search for suitable sites. Keith Bootle drew councillors' attention to mobile adventure cycle track equipment, which has been used with youth groups in Strathspey. The Youth Team is considering the purchase of such equipment, which can then tour Badenoch and Strathspey. The visitors drew attention to a cycle project in Carrbridge, involving the community council and other local organisations.

After good discussions, on behalf of councillors, the secretary thanked Iona and Jillian and commented that while the Community Council would support their efforts, Kingussie Councillors would not be able to be actively involved, since they are already heavily committed to other projects.

Bob Kinnaird then briefly spoke about the possibilities of Kingussie taking part in a new national initiative, for which funding is likely to be available, to turn Kingussie into a "Cycling Friendly Village". He outlined the economic benefits for Kingussie through additional tourism, as well as potential health benefits for local people through cycling.

Mention was made of a meeting to be held on Mon. 18th February as part of the "Strengthening Communities" project, organised by Karen Derrick, when these ideas will be discussed by a wider circle of interested groups. Val Emmett and Mairi Brown will attend.

Iona, Jillian and Bob left the meeting at this point.

Business Meeting.

1. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Tuesday 4th December 2012.**

The secretary asked for a correction to the draft minutes, item 4 ref Section 75 agreement. The text was amended to read: "KVCC has apparently been given £2500 for Community Care on completion of the first house and within 28 days of its occupation....."

The amended minutes were then signed as a correct record. Prop. JT, sec. MB.

2. **Matters Arising:** None.

3. **Police Matters** (Sgt Crawford of the Northern Constabulary)

Sgt Crawford referred to Insp. MacLeod's monthly report, copies were given to councillors at the start of the meeting. Several notable incidents in this report were discussed. Both Boat of Garten and Nethybridge have suffered from a number of incidents recently: theft of heating oil, theft of several trailers and breaking into insecure parked cars and theft of property left in them. The principal message to all residents is to always make sure all their property is secure.

Councillors asked about a recently reported incidence of a card skimming device placed on an ATM outside a Bank in Aviemore. Sgt Crawford explained the nature of such illegal devices to rob customers when they withdraw money from an ATM: a device that retains the customer's Bank card and a small camera to record the PIN number as it is entered by the customer. It is a well known scam organised by gangs of crooks operating both nationally and internationally. He commented that on this occasion the skimming device was quickly discovered and removed by the Bank staff, they were able to return the "lost" Bank cards to the customers, and it was unlikely any customers had lost money from their accounts. He urged everyone using external ATMs to be extra vigilant and to take precautions to ensure their PIN numbers cannot be seen as they enter them. Mrs Brown commented that she always uses the indoor ATM in the Post Office.

Cr Patchett commented on his experience when he attempted to record a disturbance at Ardvonie Park. He was asked to respond to a long list of inappropriate questions before the operator would refer the incident for immediate action by a Police patrol. Sgt Crawford undertook to pass on Mr Patchett's comments.

Mrs Brown referred back to an incident at the Parish Church discussed at a previous Council meeting. She asked if the Police database had been altered to record the correct name of Parish Church. Sgt Crawford said he knew that his colleague had made a report after the previous meeting and he would check if the change had been made. After further discussion the general opinion is that the databases of all the emergency services are not linked, so a change made in one would not automatically result in a change to others.

A brief discussion ensued about the importance of being able to provide postcodes when reporting incidents or contacting the emergency services for assistance. Mrs Brown undertook to obtain the Church's postcode and email the information to Sgt Crawford.

Sgt Crawford left the meeting at this point.

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

Mrs Schofield reported there were no relevant planning applications on the weekly list.

5. **Treasurer's Financial Report** (Cr. Mr Taylor)

Mr Taylor presented his monthly report:

KVCC account , balance	£15009.59.
This includes the following items:	
Grant for the All Our Stories Project:	£10000.00
Station Adopter's fund.	£273.00
Little Town of Festivals Fund.	£369.54
Town Trail Project.	£1118.85
KVCC Fund	£3284.20

Income since the previous report:

Grant for the All Our Stories Project	£10000
Donations to the Little Town of Festivals project	£110
Reimbursement for Station Adopters' expenditure	£181.19

Cheques issued:

Town Trail project	£19.20
Station Adopters	£63.48
Little Town of Festivals	£240.46
Hire of Talla Nan Ròs for meetings	£64.00
Planning Application fee (on behalf of the Am Fasgadh project)	£260.00

KVCC reserve fund	£1818.08
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Senior Citizens' Party Fund balance	£3617.29
Cost of the 2012 Christmas Party	£1063.68

Children's Christmas Party Fund Balance	£1118.85
Cost of the 2012 party	£168.59

Cr Taylor commented on the accounts:

Senior Citizens' Party The cost was much higher than in previous years. The Star Hotel had increased their prices, agreed in advance, and more senior citizens had attended the party in 2012 than in recent years. The balance in the account meant that without any fund raising, there would only be sufficient funds to pay for parties for another three years. Cr Davidson commented that he still had to collect the donations received by the Golf Club and he also had the donations from the Star Hotel, he would pass them all on to the Treasurer shortly.

After discussion, it was agreed that in the light of experiences at the last party, there is a need to reduce the availability of free alcoholic drinks at the party. It was agreed that in future participants might be offered just one drink before the meal, up to two glasses of wine during the meal and only one drink after the meal during the entertainment. If party goers want more drinks then they should pay for their own.

Children's Christmas Party: this party had cost less than in previous years. The party organisers planned to do some fund raising in 2013.

6. Highland Councillor's Report (Mr Fallows)

Cr Fallows provided an oral update on the progress with the Highland Council's plans to refurbish the Court House. The main priority is to bring the iconic building back into use. The purchase of the building at the rear of the Court House is proceeding satisfactorily. £2.1 million has been allocated in 2013/2014 budget to allow the refurbishment project to go ahead. When complete it will facilitate rationalisation of all the current Highland Council offices in Kingussie and all the staffs will move into the new Court House buildings.

In response to a question from Mr Fallows, Mrs Schofield reported the outcome of KCDC's decision at their Board meeting the previous evening. They decided not to take over the Business Association's commitment to try to raise funds for a community space in the Court House and run it as a shop.

Cr Fallows reported that the Highland Council had another preferred option: for another Public Service provider to occupy part of the refurbished building and contribute to the costs. He assured councillors that KCDC's decision would not prejudice the plans.

Mrs Brown asked about the future of some of the heritage fittings currently in the listed building: the original cell doors, a fine and unusual cast iron stove, the staircase and a fine copper facing plate of a fireplace in the Arts and Crafts Movement style. Mr Fallows anticipated that the Highland Council's architect is aware of such heritage items and would ensure they are not lost. Mrs Brown agreed to contact RCAHMS to find out about the records they made in the Court House during their recent visits to Kingussie, so as to make sure their findings are made available to the architect.

At the end of his contribution, Cr Fallows gave his apologies and left the meeting.

7. Evaluation of Community Councils – formulation of KVCC's response (papers circulated in advance)

Councillors briefly discussed the questionnaire and agreed that in view of the late hour and outstanding agenda items, they would defer completion of the evaluation forms to the March meeting.

8. Review of the Bulky Uplift Service – questionnaire

The short questionnaire was completed.

9. Oral report of meeting about the Youth Room at the Badenoch Centre
(Mrs Emmett, Mr Patchett and Mr Bootle)

At the "Strengthening Our Communities" meeting in December 2012, councillors had been made aware of the loss to young people of their dedicated Youth Room at the Badenoch Centre as a result of the Centre's management decision to use it for other groups. The young people had expressed their concerns that they had not been consulted over these changes. They felt aggrieved that some of their possessions had been removed, the room had been redecorated and the pool table damaged as a result of it being badly handled when it had been moved.

Mrs Emmett and Mr Patchett had attended a meeting on the 24th January in the Youth Room along with several of the youth club members, Highland Councillors, members of the Youth Team and the Centre manager to try to resolve matters.

Mrs Emmett reminded Councillors of some of the history of the agreement to provide a dedicated youth club space when funds for the Badenoch Centre were being raised. In effect the young people had then contributed £80,000 to the project on the understanding they would have dedicated space in the new Centre and also to be allowed to use one of the courts in the main hall on youth club evenings.

At the January meeting the Youth Service had conceded that the space was a Youth Room and not a multi-use space.

Mr Bootle reported that in recent years, the number of young people using the Youth Club had fallen away. In 2012 the young people had been asked to put forward their ideas to regenerate the youth club, only to be told their Youth Room was no longer for their sole use and they no longer had use of the court in the main hall. The young people had previously raised the funds for a new Pool table and hydraulic trolley to enable it to be moved safely. The Centre management had responded by saying they could only have a folding pool table, which would occupy a smaller space. Mr Bootle reported he was now waiting for a price of a replacement proper table in order to go ahead with the order for it. At the end of the January meeting it was agreed that the Youth Service would organise a "Fusion event" on the 21st February with various activities likely to attract young people to join the youth club again. The plans are to run youth club activities on Monday evenings for S1 and S2 age groups and Wednesday for older students. The Centre management has also agreed that the youth club will be allowed to use one of the courts in the main hall for an hour each Monday. A new committee made up of youth workers, young people and other residents is now needed. The HLH budget has sufficient funds to employ several session youth club leaders and they also plan to recruit a team of volunteers from the locality to run special activities. Recruitment has been very successful in Aviemore and he hoped it would be so in Kingussie and Newtonmore. In response to a question from Cr Mrs Schofield about the publicity for the Fusion event, Mr Bootle replied that this was in hand.

A meeting to review the outcomes of the Fusion Event is to be held on the 28th February. Cr Mr Patchett offered to attend to represent KVCC and he was thanked for his offer by Mrs Emmett, who had intended to attend as well.

Councillors thanked Mr Bootle for attending the meeting and he departed at the conclusion of this item.

10. Pitmain Estate – donation for community activity

The secretary reported that she had been approached by Mrs Adamson of Service Sports about proposals for use of the annual donation by Pitmain Estate for community activities or projects. The donation is the income for the sale of fishing permits by Service Sports on behalf of the Estate. KVCC usually provides suggestions of good causes to which it might contribute. In previous years donations have gone to the Therapy Garden project at St Vincent's Hospital and towards the cost of a new community minibus. The value of the donation this year approaches £1200.

Mrs Adamson, a member of the Kingussie Heritage committee, had suggested that in view of the interest in and successful activity associated with the heritage of Kingussie, the donation might be given to the Heritage committee to take forward their projects. She also suggested that part of the donation might be used to support the wide range of community activities being planned by this committee for a weekend in September to coincide with the 150th anniversary of opening of the Highland Main line through Kingussie. The arrival of railway had contributed greatly to the development of Kingussie.

Councillors agreed unanimously to Mrs Adamson's suggestions and the secretary undertook to contact her.

11. Highland Mainline Railway 150th anniversary – plans for celebration (Mrs Brown)

Cr Mrs Brown reported the outcome of a meeting of the planning group earlier that day.

The plans are going well and the events are now planned to run from Thursday 5th to Sunday 8th September. The events include

- (i) A social event and rail heritage history talk on Thurs. 5th
- (ii) A “Railway Supper” to be organised along with one of the local hotels and showing of the celebrated film “The Railway Children” on Fri. 6th
- (iii) It was hoped to provide a subsidised rail travel event to Dalwhinnie and coach ride back, principally for children on Sat. 7th.
On this day the legacy exhibition would also be launched. In the evening there would be a ceilidh with a railway theme.
- (iv) An outdoor community activity with a local historical railway theme is planned for Sunday 8th with several notable Kingussie people dressed in costume of the time.
- (v) An art competition for children linked to the “All Our Stories” project is also included in the celebrations, with their artwork to be exhibited in Talla Nan Ròs.
- (vi) ScotRail has also agreed to pay for the reproduction and framing of old photographs of local railway features and events and for their permanent display in the waiting room at Kingussie Station. Mr Moffett is busy sourcing these photographs.

12. Correspondence

In view of the very late hour and considerable length of the meeting, these items were dealt with quickly.

(i) Community Payback Scheme.

Several suggestions were put forward as to where this scheme might be used, e.g. to help the volunteers at their working parties at Glebe Ponds.

(ii) THC correspondence – Winter Resilience idea by TECS

Councillors agreed that the suggestions made by TECS were not suitable for Kingussie, with its strongly sloping streets and roads lacking pavements. Cr Mr. Taylor commented that he always clears snow from the pathway outside his house in Duke Street and he hoped other residents do the same.

(iii) NHS Briefing Note

Mrs Emmett drew councillors’ attention to several short items in this communication.

13. AOCB

(i) Dog Fouling of public places in Kingussie.

Mrs Emmett reported she had received two significant complaints shortly before the meeting from concerned local residents about the increase in dog fouling of public places, the old shinty pitch near Dunbarry Terrace and the football pitch at the Market Stance had been cited. Other councillors agreed they had also been made aware of a growing problem of contamination of several public areas.

Several owners of dogs (said to be larger breeds) are apparently not taking responsibility for removing their dogs’ faeces during exercise walks. As a result, pathways and recreation areas used

by the community, as well as pavements outside houses are being badly contaminated by dog excrement.

Contamination of land by dog faeces is a well-known serious health hazard, especially to children and young people if they accidentally pick up faeces on their skin and clothing while out playing on grassland, etc and the faeces then become ingested. The larva hatching from minute eggs of internal parasitic worms excreted by infected dogs are known to cause loss of sight, including blindness, as well as other nasty internal infections (Toxacariasis) if they are ingested by people. Children are especially at risk.

Dog owners are encouraged to pick up their dog's "Poo" in a plastic bag and put the bags in bins provided along streets and by public play areas, etc. It appears that some Kingussie dog owners are not doing this and other public-spirited responsible dog owners are apparently now taking to picking up the excrement left by dogs other than their own so as to reduce the contamination.

Mrs Emmett reported that free plastic bags are available from the Service Point for all dog owners to collect and then use to ensure the land is kept clean and free from contamination.

Before the meeting Mrs Emmett had tried to contact the local Dog Warden, only to discover she had changed jobs in Highland Council and there is currently no warden assigned for Kingussie. Another official based in Inverness, who has responsibility for our area, is on leave until mid February, but the temporary Ward Manager for Badenoch has left a message for him drawing his attention to the problem in Kingussie.

It was agreed that a letter from KVCC should be sent to this official asking for a response and some appropriate action promptly.

(ii) Glebe Ponds – report from Ms Wright.

Mrs Emmett provided copies of a brief written report from Cr Ms Wright about the recent good work at Glebe Ponds by the team of volunteers:

"In the last year the committee, with the help of some volunteers, has made great inroads on tidying the ponds. We managed to obtain funding the Highland Council's Ward Discretionary Grant scheme, and using voluntary labour we have laid new paths to the standard that meets all requirements for disabled access. All wooden pathways have been wire netted to improve safety.

We plan to plant a meadow area with indigenous wild flowers in the spring to encourage bees and butterflies. A grant from SNH has also allowed us to organise tests of the water quality and undertake a study to determine our future plans."

Cr Mrs Schofield reported she recently learned that the Glebe Ponds committee has a copy of a plan showing the inlet and outlet routes of water at the Ponds, previously thought not to be known.

It is not yet known what effect there might be on the water levels at the Ponds from drainage of the land at the proposed housing developments at the northern end of town above Kingussie, any such effects will only be discovered as the roads and houses are built.

It was agreed that since the Community Council is a statutory consultee for all local planning applications, it would be helpful if Mrs Schofield could have sight of this plan to inform responses

she makes to planning applications on behalf of KVCC. It was agreed to write a letter to the Glebe Ponds committee with this request.

(iii) Kingussie Post Office

Cr Mr Patchett reported the outcome of a recent meeting he had with our MP, Danny Alexander regarding the future of the Post Office. Mr Patchett had previously been in correspondence with the MP and Councillors had received copies of the MP's reply giving assurances about its future. Sadly the future is less rosy as the Royal Mail is reducing the number of services that our Postmaster can offer to the public, to the point where the Postmaster's future is becoming less financially viable and Kingussie is in serious danger of losing its Post Office.

(iv) Notice boards in King Street

Cr Mr Patchett asked who is responsible for looking after the two outdoor notice boards in King Street, he along with many other residents assumed they belonged to the Community Council. Councillors commented they were not sure about this assumption, but they agreed the boards, which had been in place for many years, were intended for use by community groups to advertise their community events.

Mr Patchett commented that the boards are increasingly being used by commercial organisations and they are also very untidy with out-of-date notices, etc. He offered to make a laminated notice to go on the larger board saying that this board was not for use by commercial organisations, but for use by community groups only. Councillors thanked him for his offer and also agreed that they would all would take responsibility for removing out of date notices when they passed by and for keeping them tidy.

The meeting finally closed at 2240 hrs.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 5th March.