



KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5th NOVEMBER 2013 IN TALLA NAN RÒS

Present: Crs. Mr A Davidson (Chair), Ms G Wright, Mrs A Schofield, Mrs M Brown, Mr J Taylor, Mrs V Emmett. Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows. Sgt. J Crawford (Police Scotland)

Apologies: Cr Mr J Patchett

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 1st October 2013.

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

2. Matters Arising

Ms Wright reported a fresh incident of vandalism at the Glebe Ponds, when an ornamental planter was thrown over the fence onto the railway property.

3. Treasurer's Monthly Financial Report

Mr Taylor presented his monthly financial report (appended after the minutes.)

4. Police Matters

Sgt Crawford reported that he had followed up the query about signage at the Police Station. A policy decision has been made that no signage will go up about opening times. Officers are still based at the station, but not at fixed times. Instead members of the public are required to phone the central number (on display) if they have a query and an officer will follow it up.

In response to questions from councillors, Sgt Crawford reported that the recent incidence of vandalism when cars parked along the High Street were damaged is still being pursued. It took place in the early hours of a Sunday morning when few people were about.

He reported there have been several incidents of housebreaking further along the Strath. He urged all householders to make sure their properties are secure.

He reported that the Police have followed up reports of noisy nuisance in the evenings by occupants of cars parked in Ardvonie Park; they have not been causing any damage however.

Cr Davidson drew attention to three vehicles that appear to be permanently parked on the High Street, one outside the Cooperative store and a van parked opposite on yellow lines. He also reported an incident of a vehicle parked for long periods in a dangerous position at a road junction causing problems for other motorists in Newtonmore.

5. Planning Matters

Cr Mrs Schofield reported planning applications on the weekly list:

- (i) For the erection of two houses on the garden land beside Brookville in Gynack Street. After discussion it was agreed not to object to the application, but to request the design of the new properties should be sympathetic to existing nearby properties.
- (ii) For an industrial building to house a wood chipping plant on Market Lane for use in the biomass heating system at the Duke of Gordon Hotel. The hotel's owners have already been carrying out the wood chipping operations on site, and this has resulted in serious problems of noise and dust affecting adjacent private properties. Following consultation with TECS, the owners now wish to erect a building in which to carry out the chipping operation to try to reduce the problems. Lorries will deliver tree trunks to the plant and after chipping, the wood chips will then be taken by vehicle (described as similar to a fork lift truck) to the Hotel for use in their biomass plant. All the wood chipping operations will be done inside the proposed building between 7a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon-Fri. TECS is setting more restrictive conditions than those included in the application. Apparently the CNPA is not calling the application in, but has asked to be consulted. The application includes statements that should there be sufficient demand, they will supply wood chips to other users. A lengthy discussion followed about whether sufficient steps are being taken by the applicant to minimise dust, noise, provide effective sound-proofing and ensure road safety when the chips are taken to the hotel, since the route runs past the schools. Councillors also expressed concern that sale of chippings from the site to other users could potentially increase the number of days on which the plant is operational and the amount of traffic using Ruthven Road. Mrs Schofield undertook to prepare a response on behalf of KVCC.
- (iii) Application to erect a property on West Terrace. Mrs Schofield read out the response from the Head of Planning to KVCC's complaint about the way KVCC's response to the application had been dealt with. The secretary undertook to make copies of the letter to circulate to councillors.
- (iv) AOCC Developers' Meeting. Cr Schofield reported that the Chairman of the Association of Cairngorm Communities recently asked her to attend a Developer's meeting organised by the CNPA. She has prepared a report for the AOCC which has not yet been circulated to its members. She gave an oral report of the main points to the councillors.

6. **Ward Forum Report.**

Cr Mrs Brown provided a brief oral report about the new system for managing the R. Spey that is to be introduced in 2016, with Moray as the lead body for the whole of the river catchment. Cr Fallows commented that Highland Council is still responsible however, for the Badenoch and Strathspey part of the R. Spey catchment.

7. **Highland Councillor's report.**

In response to a question, Cr Mr Fallows replied that the planning application for the refurbishment and extension of the Court House is imminent.

He reported that a restructuring of Council departments is underway, with a reduction in the number of directors, resulting in big financial savings.

Cr Mrs Brown asked for clarification about Highlife Highland. Cr Fallows reported that while it is now an arms' length organisation and some employees were transferred across when it formed, the organisation still uses Highland Council for the provision of certain services. Over time HLF will

become more distant in its operations, although Highland Council will retain overall responsibility for policy.

8. Arrangements for the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party.

Cr Ms Wright reported that it is no longer possible to use the Star Hotel as the venue. On behalf of KVCC she has been investigating alternatives: (i) to use Talla Nan Ròs as the venue and hire an external caterer; (ii) to use the Duke of Gordon Hotel, where the lunch will cost £14.50 a head. In view of the higher cost per head, Councillors reviewed arrangements to keep overall costs down and agreed that diners should only be provided with one welcoming drink on arrival and wine at table; additional drinks after lunch however, must be bought at the bar and paid for by individuals. Ms Wright undertook to contact the Duke of Gordon Hotel again; if the management was willing then she would make a booking for either the 8th or 15th December, whichever suited the hotel.

9. Townscape

Cr Mrs Brown expressed concern about the state of the High Street, which she described as looking very sad. The town loses another shop when the Trading Post closes on 16th November. Councillors share her concerns, expressing the view that there appears to be a lack of pride in the properties. At the end of a lengthy discussion, the Chairman agreed to draft a tactful letter to High Street business and home owners expressing the concerns. It was agreed that the Business Forum should be approached to be co-signatories.

10. AOCB.

- (i) Cr Mr Taylor reported a query by a resident as to why Kingussie does not have flashing speed signs on approaches to the town as are installed in several other villages along the A86. Following a discussion, the secretary agreed to contact the Ms Cowie, Ward Manager about who to contact at BEAR, who now have responsibility for the road to enquire if such signs could be installed.
- (ii) **Little Town of Festivals:** Cr Mrs Emmett reported that the application for the Creative Scotland's "Creative Place" award has been shortlisted. Mrs Graham, who is leading the application will make a presentation in late January to the committee considering the application. Ullapool and Helmsdale are also short-listed in the same category as Kingussie.
- (iii) Letter from Highland Council: **Training of Councillors:** Possible dates are 20th November in Boat of Garten and 26th November in Inverness. Councillors discussed their availability. Cr Mr Davidson undertook to accompany Mrs Schofield to the Inverness training event, providing he could rearrange his work schedule.
- (iv) The secretary informed councillors of a new **Public Exhibition about the Dualling of the A9 – Kincaig section** on Mon. 18th November in Kincaig Hall from 12 noon to 7 p.m.

In the absence of Mr Russell Jones to speak about the "Lucky 2B Here" campaign, the meeting closed.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 3rd December at 7p.m. in Talla Nan Ròs.

KVCC Financial report for November 2013.

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| Balance in the KVCC account | £7359.47 |
| Senior Citizens' Party Fund | £4148.35 |
| Children's Party Fund | £1776.85 |
| Reserve Fund | £1819.53 |

Cheques Issued

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| All Our Stories Project | £1854. 90 |
| Railway anniversary | £2012.53 |

No lodgements

Individual accounts:

Projects

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| All Our Stories | £1869.25 |
| Station Adopters/Railway anniversary | £833.17 |
| Town Trail | £368.85 |
| Heritage | £615.00 |

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| KVCC account | £3859.47 |
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| Totals | £7539.47 |
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J Taylor
KVCC Treasurer.