



KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 2014

Present: Councillors: Mr A Davidson (Chairman), Mrs A Schofield (Vice Chair), Mrs M Brown, Mr J Taylor (Treasurer), Mr J Patchett, Ms G Wright, Mrs V Emmett (Secretary).

Highland councillor Mr D Fallows

Visitor: Mr L Haxton, Community Support Officer, CNPA.

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st July 2014

The minutes were approved as a correct record. (Prop. JT, Sec. AS)

2. Matters Arising

Bank of Scotland reduction in opening hours: In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed he had not received a reply to a letter regretting the reduction in opening hours. JP commented that he has written to the MSP and MP, he has been assured they will pursue the matter. He reported that the ATM is increasingly unreliable, it was not working for two days last week; the Bank's response to his report on this matter was cursory. JT reported he has been trying to open an account without success.

3. Police Matters (Sgt John Crawford)

In the absence of a Police Officer this item was not taken.

4. Treasurer's Financial Report (Joe Taylor)

The Treasurer presented his monthly report (appended).

5. Planning Matters (Ailsa Schofield)

AS reported on recent planning applications

- (i) Retrospective application for change of use to a B&B establishment at Braeside, Old Distillery Road. Neighbour consultations did not reveal any problems. She recommended KVCC made no comment, this was agreed.
- (ii) Plans for two Hydro schemes on the Pitmain estate – already approved. A fresh application to re-site the upper power house. The Spey Fisheries Board has no objections. She recommended KVCC does not object. This was agreed.
- (iii) The estate has withdrawn an application to move a core path in order to improve the game provision. The Estate has been keeping KCDC well informed and involved in these

plans and AS has responded earlier on behalf of KVCC. JP commented that the position of a high fence was an oversight and it will be repositioned.

- (iv) Design of houses to be erected at a site adjacent to St Vincent's Hospital. Planning permission for the houses was granted on appeal, but the CNPA has imposed strict conditions, including points made by KVCC – that the contractors should ensure there will be no mud and debris on the Gynack Road and access for the ambulances must be kept clear at all times. KVCC also made comments about the design of the houses and this has been picked up recently by the CNPA.

AS circulated a draft letter she proposed should be sent to the CNPA by KVCC following up the matter that the Park should be promoting good design for all new houses built in the Park. Councillors agreed the letter should be sent.

In the ensuing discussion DF agreed that developers need guidance on good design, but the Park has to work within the Scottish Government guidelines and the chief planner has to be able to get the Government reporter on side. The Park's design competition has been deferred to 2016.

Lee Haxton suggested that the topic might be included on the agenda of a future AOCC Planning Reps meeting. (VE and AS noted this)

6. Highland Councillor's Report (Dave Fallows)

The Court House: DF reported developments over the summer period. The vendors have now agreed the final purchase price of "The Shed" site; they have already sold the building and its contents and these will be removed shortly. The building work on the Court House and the office extension can then commence; the anticipated occupation date has been set for August 2015. Discussions are ongoing about Customer Services and the provision of a manned service in the refurbished Court House.

7. Flooding (Ailsa Schofield)

In response to questions about the recent R. Gynack flooding in the Spey Street area, DF reported that there is no funding in the capital budget for amelioration work in the foreseeable future. The R. Spey and the Gynack come under the Moray catchment area and he has concerns that flood prevention schemes that might be needed in Badenoch would not be given priority compared with those required to address the serious problems in Elgin and Forres.

He was of the view that digging out the river bed would not help, the problem is mainly because of the low bridges at Spey Street and the railway, which are easily blocked by debris, including trees, originating much higher up the river and carried down in the spate. Removal of the trees on the banks could exacerbate the problem by destabilising the banks with more erosion. Tinkering with the bed of the river, etc. could conflict with the Special Area of Conservation status of the Spey and the Gynack. He has suggested that SEPA and the Highland Council engineers talk to the Pitmain Estate about their proposed lower hydro scheme to see if it could be designed to help control the river flows.

AS reported that the KCDC hydro under construction was not seriously damaged in the floods but changes to the height of the power unit platform above the water are being made to reduce potential damage in the future. Some areas of the High School were damaged by ingress of water and floors are being replaced, but damage to other properties in Kingussie was prevented by the swift actions of the Highland Council and Fire Service teams. MB reported she received a telephone

call from an elderly couple living near to the railway station, she phoned Tech Services and they responded very quickly to avert problems.

Despite major flooding problems on the line in and around the station, the Network Rail teams worked tirelessly day and night and the railway line was opened for services within a few days. AD reported that several allotments at the former Museum site were flooded when the Scottish Water storm drains overflowed. MB commented that SEPA has now changed the designation of the area from a 1 in 200 year risk to a medium risk.

Spey Bridge: DF commented he has no further news about the timescale for repairs to the bridge. JT reported that not everyone is abiding by the 3 tonne weight restriction across the bridge; DF commented if heavy vehicles are using the bridge then this is a Police matter.

8. Scottish Rural Parliament, meeting at the Lecht 25 August – report (Mairi Brown)

The meeting at the Lecht organised by the CNPA is one of 22 taking place across Scotland ahead of the conference in Oban in November to set up a rural parliament. MB, two members of KCDC and the coordinator of CLP attended the meeting at the Lecht. Vanessa Hallhead, who is a member of the group promoting a rural parliament, spoke about the concept of such a body. (She had previously spoken at a meeting of the AOCC). The subsequent group discussions were based on the four main themes of the recent Leader paper. MB expressed the view that the parliament will act as a pressure group representing rural communities and issues of concern to them.

Lee Haxton commented that the same issues are emerging from all the rural communities across the Park. Registration for attendance at the Oban conference is now open and people interested in taking part can register an interest.

MB undertook to circulate her notes from the Lecht meeting.

9. AOCB

(i) **Communication from Dochfour** estate re potential development of the area of land in Dunbarry Road.

VE reported she has received an email from the Factor inviting KVCC to discuss their ideas with councillors on one of three dates: 6th, 7th or 8th October. Councillors are already involved in two other meetings that week: KVCC monthly meeting on Tues. 7th and a visit to the recently completed new Waste Water Treatment Works in Kingussie courtesy Scottish Water on Wed. 8th.

Councillors agreed that VE should contact the Factor and offer to meet them on Mon. 6th during the day. AD, AS, JT and VE agreed to take part.

(ii) **Licensing application:** variation of premises licence, Cooperative Food Group 24 High Street Kingussie.

AD commented that this application is for Murchies premises, which has been acquired by the Coop. The takeover is at the end of September, when the store will close for refurbishment; it will re-open in November. The new store will be a “New Generation” shop, selling a wider range of items than is normally sold in smaller stores.

(iii) **Email from Iona Malcolm** about a meeting in the Youth Room at the Badenoch Centre on Wed 10th Sept. at 7p.m., consultation about proposals for a bike park, outdoor gym and children’s play park at the former putting green site adjacent to the Bowls Club on Spey Street.

Councillors discussed the email, which was circulated in advance.

The following points were made:

- (i) AS expressed surprise at news in the email that KCDC has agreed to submit applications for grant funding for the projects. As a director of KCDC, she confirmed that the Board has not discussed this proposal and therefore directors have not agreed as a body to undertake such applications.
- (ii) The site is adjacent to the R. Gynack and is subject to flooding. It was flooded in the recent episode in August and in the previous floods in December 2006. At present the part of the site adjacent to the railway is covered in a deep layer of sandy debris. It was previously set out as a putting green, which was well used by local and visitors. It was damaged in the 2006 floods and sadly was not reinstated.
- (iii) The site is small and is unlikely to be large enough to accommodate all the projects proposed by Iona.
- (iv) The email implies the projects are quite well advanced and councillors queried the extent of consultation that might have been done already about demand and need for the different activities and the views of neighbours.
- (v) A bike park will generate noise and the intrusion might well give rise to complaints from neighbours. Several councillors expressed the view that a bike park is not compatible with the historic bowling club and complaints might well ensue from the club's members. It was also felt that the provision of a bike park adjacent to the Old Post House might adversely affect the owners' holiday business there and potentially the value of the property.
- (vi) Councillors expressed concern about possible disturbance to the residents of the Abbeyfield Home opposite the site, which is a special care home for fragile elderly people. The circulation list for the email does not appear to include the management of Abbeyfield. MB undertook to speak to a member of the management committee there.
- (vii) Councillors asked about the safety since the site opens onto Spey Street which is busy with motor traffic and there is no parking for parent' cars if they bring their small children to use a play park.
- (viii) Councillors queried the need for an additional play park since there is already a good safe play park at Ardvonie Park away from traffic and adjacent to good parking; there is another safe and well used play park off Campbell Crescent where most children live.
- (ix) In conclusion councillors support the proposal in principle if there is sufficient demand for a bike park from young people in the community, but that the proposed site is not appropriate for a bike park.

Lee Haxton mentioned that a bike park has been constructed at Carrbridge and he suggested contacting the Community Council there about it. VE and AS undertook to speak to their councillor representative at the Association of Cairngorm Communities meeting on the 4th September.

VE, JT, MB and JP agreed to attend the meeting on the 10th Sept.

(v) Return of Water Voles to Insh Marshes NNR.

JT commented about a news item that day about the return of water voles to Insh Marshes NNR. The item was broadcast on Radio Scotland and reported in the P&J and The Scotsman – each reported the site as being in Strathspey whereas, of course, Insh Marshes is firmly in Badenoch. He

spoke to a member of the RSPB staff at Insh about the inaccuracy and was told they correctly reported it as Badenoch. He then took the matter up with the Radio and Newspapers. The heritage group made up of representatives from all the Badenoch communities is working hard on the Badenoch Heritage Strategy to publicise the historic area and this is undermined by the frequent mis-reporting about features in Badenoch as being in Strathspey!

(vi) Caravan sites

AS reported receipt of a telephone call from a resident (owner of a motor caravan) suggesting the old Folk Museum site could be turned into parking for motor caravans. In the ensuing discussions it was agreed the site was quite inappropriate for such use.

DF commented there are already several caravan parks in the Strath for touring caravan and motor caravans. The nearest sites to Kingussie are in Newtonmore and Dalraddy.

All sites have to be licensed and supervised; owners of vans have to pay fees for emptying their chemical toilets and taking on fresh water. They are not permitted to use public toilets for such activities, and indeed would incur a fine if they tried to do so.

(vii) Healthcare re-design.

MB reported she had attended a healthcare redesign meeting about the provision of a new hospital. The chosen site for the hospital will be put before the Health Board on the 7th October.

There being no other items for discussion the meeting closed at 2045.

Date of Next meeting: Tuesday 7th October at 7p.m.

KVCC TREASURER'S MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT, SEPTEMBER 2014 (to accompany the minutes of the meeting)

BALANCES

KVCC account	£6020.36
SENIOR CITIZENS' PARTY FUND	£2528.65
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY FUND	£1552.26
RESERVE FUND	£1821.27

PAYMENTS

TALLA NAN RÒS (for room hire)	£44.00
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LODGEMENTS

HIGHLAND COUNCIL GRANT	£1267.64
ALL OUR STORIES (sale of DVDs)	£30.00

PROJECTS

STATION ADOPTERS	£575.17
TOWN TRAIL	£368.85
HERITAGE	£484.66
KVCC	£4591.68

Total	£6020.36
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J Taylor KVCC Treasurer.