



KINGUSSIE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 2015 IN TALLA NAN RÒS AT 7 p.m.

Present: Mrs A Schofield (Chair), Mr J Taylor (Treasurer), Mrs V Emmett (Secretary), Ms G Wright, Highland Councillor Mr D Fallows, PC A Courts (Police Scotland)

Apologies: Mrs M Brown.

The Meeting began with an update and presentation about the Dualling of the A9 by Ms C Tobin and her colleague Mr J Walker (CH2MHILL FAIRHURST)

The work on the whole section from Perth to Inverness is due to be complete by 2025. There are three main sections, but these are split into 12 smaller projects.

The plans for the road works are divided into three sections in Badenoch. The Drumochter to Dalwhinnie and the Crubenmore to Kincaig sections are complicated because of the statutory designations of lands abutting the A9. The section from Dalwhinnie to Crubenmore is more straightforward.

The road will not include any right turns on or off the dual carriageways, all turnings will be grade separated with underpasses rather than bridges over the road on landscape grounds. All the existing small junctions will be closed, but new accesses to properties, etc. will be provided connecting to the A9 via the main junctions. Junctions are only planned for Dalnaspidal, Dalwhinnie, Newtonmore and Kingussie.

Public consultation is regarded as a paramount part of the planning. All options will be considered even though it is already known that some are not feasible. Discussions have been held with walking groups, horse riding organisations and landowners. Once there is agreement, then the consultants will move to a preferred scheme.

Ms Tobin spoke about the recent public consultation for the Drumochter to Dalwhinnie section and she provided plans and diagrams showing alternatives for the road junction into Dalwhinnie and which emerged as the preferred option. It is hoped the section will be underway by 2018.

Public consultations are planned for the Crubenmore to Kincaig sections in November. It was agreed that separate meetings should be held in Newtonmore and in Kingussie to make best use of local knowledge in each area.

Kingussie section: Flooding is a key issue and the consultants have had meetings with the RSPB about the Insh Marshes NNR/SAC. It is important that the new road does not exacerbate the flooding and if possible to improve matters. The engineers hope to start work soon on some of the ground works.

VE undertook to provide contact details for Mr Bob Kinnaird to facilitate discussions about cycling and the consultants have agreed to meet the Badenoch Heritage about important archaeological and cultural heritage sites close to the A9.

At the end of the discussion Mrs Schofield thanked Ms Tobin and Mr Walker and they left the meeting.

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SECTION OF THE MEETING

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 7th July 2015

The minutes were signed as a correct record. Prop. JT, sec. GW.

2. Matters Arising

Ruthven Bridge: Mrs Schofield reported a time capsule was found in the old bridge as it was being dismantled. Pupils at the primary school have been invited to make up a new time capsule which will be inserted in the new bridge.

The contents of the original capsule are currently being curated at the Highland Folk Museum.

Councillors suggested it might be displayed in the Court House rather than being “hidden away” in the HFM collections. The great grandson of the engineer of the original bridge contacted the contractors to buy the plaque that was on the bridge. He was informed that it is already planned to mount and display this plaque on the Insh side of the bridge and a new plaque will be mounted and displayed on the Kingussie side. AS suggested he might be invited to any ceremony organised to celebrate the opening of the new bridge.

Spey St. car park. Mrs Emmett reported complaints have been received again about the lack of parking in the car park because of the more or less permanent parking there of several caravans, motor caravans, a mobile Pizza bar and a mobile coffee bar, plus the fencing off of a large section and installation of containers and bags of rubbish by contractors doing refurbishment work on Council houses in the area. In addition a large lorry is often parked on the site overnight to the disturbance of local residents when it starts up and leaves in the early morning. Poor drainage, with consequent flooding when it rains, results in large areas of the space being unusable and few spaces are left for local people to use on a short term basis and for visitors.

Councillors suggested that a height barrier was really needed to exclude large vehicles including caravans etc. Councillor Mr Fallows agreed to pursue the matter with the Highland Council officers responsible for the car park.

3. Police Matters (PC Andy Courts)

In the July and August period 120 offences were reported, mostly road traffic offences. There were no reports of thefts or break-ins and no fatalities. Enquiries connected to the vandalism incident in the town in July are still ongoing. PC Courts encouraged people to phone promptly if they are aware of an incident taking place. The Police will respond as soon as possible and in that way there is a better chance of culprits being apprehended.

Police officers have been busy with town and village shows; the Thunder in the Glens festival went well, and the chainsaw event is still to come.

The police team is unchanged apart from the arrival of Insp. Bob MacKay.

VE reported receipt of a letter about the disposal of Kingussie Police Station premises pending the transfer of the office into the Court House when that is complete.

4. Treasurer’s Monthly Financial Report (Mr J Taylor)

Mr Taylor presented his monthly accounts (appended).

£300 had been received from the CNPA by mistake; the money was intended for Kincaig Community Council as a grant for the provision of a portable toilet in the village. He planned to report it to the CNPA and arrange for the payment to be transferred.

Donation from Pitmain Estate. JT reported it will be given to the Bowls Club towards the purchase of a new mower.

He reported that if the Community Council ceases to exist, funds will be held in trust until a new Council is formed. He needed to ascertain though, how funds could be accessed for projects that are “looked after” in the KVCC accounts: The Town Trail, Heritage Festival Fund and the Station Adopters. VE undertook to enquire of the Ward Manager.

5. Planning Matters (Mrs A Schofield)

Mrs Schofield reported on two recent planning applications

- (i) Small housing application by Dochfour Estate on Dunbarry Road. She read out her draft response and councillors agreed to it being sent in.
- (ii) Change of use of premises at 80 High Street. The draft response was agreed.

6. Highland Councillor’s Report (Mr D Fallows)

Cr Fallows had no items to report.

7. Highland Council’s Floral Decorations and the Kingussie Memorial Gardens

Mrs Schofield reported that Highland Council has to save £46 millions from its budget. One proposal is to close the plant nurseries in Wick and Inverness, not to continue with town floral decorations and to shed several gardening posts. She is concerned about the future of the Gynack Gardens which are the central attraction in Kingussie and has won awards. She read out a draft letter to the Chief Executive. Councillors agreed that it should be sent.

8. Highland Council’s Quality Awards Scheme

The annual request for nominations has been received. KVCC has made numerous recommendations in the past and none has been successful. No new nominations emerged from the ensuing discussions.

9. AOCB

Rail services: There have been press reports about (i) changes to the Sleeper service and (ii) in order to deliver faster train travel times, the introduction of a non-stopping service between Inverness and Edinburgh/Glasgow. Councillors were reassured the sleeper service will continue to stop at Kingussie and Newtonmore. Cr. Fallows reported he has been corresponding with Abellio, who now hold the rail franchise, about the proposal for non-stopping services. He undertook to report results when received.

Housing: Mrs Schofield reported that in response to a question by a Key Worker she had looked at Highland Council’s housing policy. A report was drawn up in Nov. 2004 by the then Director of Housing. She had phoned Rory MacLeod in THC Housing Unit and was told it has not been changed since. It does not include any special category for allocating housing to key workers.

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th October 2015

Treasurer's Monthly Financial Statement

Balance £6082.08

Lodgements

CNPA £300.00

Station Adopters £87.48

Payments

Part payment towards
the commemorative Stage £250.00
Coach drive

Project Funds

Station Adopters £575.17

Town trail £368.85

Heritage £544.66

KVCC account funds £4593.40

Total £6082.08