

**ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNTY BUILDINGS, WIGTOWN,
ON MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2014 FROM 7.30 PM**

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www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT		
Andrew Wilson	Nick Walker, <i>Convenor</i>	Jak Kane
Willie McCartney	David McAdam	John McDowall
Betty McGowan	Robin Richmond	John Jennings
Brian Vogan	Robert Harford	Carl Davis

IN ATTENDANCE		
Cllr Jim McColm	June Robinson, <i>Mins Sec.</i>	Louise Kerr, <i>Galloway Gazette</i>
Nicola McFadzean, <i>Police Scotland</i>	Cllr Alistair Geddes	David McKay, <i>Free Press</i>
David Moran, <i>Treasurer</i>	Margie Tolstoy	Matt Kitson

APOLOGIES		
Cllr Graham Nicol	Lynn Drysdale	Agnes Cluckie

0 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Nick Walker welcomed all to the meeting, and noted apologies. A particular welcome was extended to Cllr Brian Vogan, attending his first meeting.

1 POLICE REPORT

Andrew Wilson summarised email from staff about Dumfries Control Room closure, requesting support in campaign against this. Concerns about lack of consultation. Concerns about loss of local knowledge. Concerns too that the result may reduce Police patrol staff because of need to divert officers to support central control rooms, providing local knowledge. Resolved to express these concerns to Divisional Commander Kathleen Thomson, Cabinet Secretary for Justice Kenny MacAskill, and Police Scotland Authority Chairman Vic Emery. Other Machars CCs to be notified in hope they respond also.

ACTION ANDREW WILSON

Police Station public counter closures will proceed from 3.3.2014, but Newton Stewart Police Station will be open from 8.30 am to 2.30 pm, Monday to Wednesday.

Nicola McFadzean, Police Scotland, gave a brief report:

Recent spate of van and house break-ins. One person has been cautioned and charged with house break-in from summer 2013, and two people have been cautioned and charged with more recent break-in. As always, Police recommend the public be vigilant and report anything suspicious (telephone – 101). Two campaigns at present - Driving Licences, starting 14.2.2014, and seat belts / mobile phone.

Questioned about action in relation to drugs, it was reported that a programme of education takes place in schools by designated police officers, with input from NHS, Social Work, Education Dept, etc.

Concern about parking near new Mercat Cross again, and PC McFadzean will ask patrols to monitor this.

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (13.1.2014)

Adopted without modification: prop. Andrew Wilson, sec. John McDowall.

Matters arising:

David Moran confirmed that Ray McGinn agreed to continue as Independent Examiner of Accounts.

June Robinson reported that Douglas Ewart High School identified no young people interested in representing youth on CC. Agreed that Andrew Wilson approach Stephen McGarva re Youth Group at Baptist Church), Robert Harford approach youth workers at Kaos Café, and Carl Davis approach leaders at Scouts. **ACTION ANDREW WILSON, ROBERT HARFORD, CARL DAVIS**

Christmas costs £620, all settled except Tree; income £631. Jock McDowall to chase up Tree invoice.
ACTION JOHN McDOWALL

3 PLANNING WORKING PARTY (John Jennings, Robert Richmond, Nick Walker)

Report provided before meeting as follows:

We met on 22.1.2014 (present: John Jennings, Nick Walker; apols: Robin Richmond) to consider six core items, and decided as follows. There will be a Planning and Wind farms meeting on 6.2.2014 which we can update about orally at CC meeting.

Define coordinator role

Convene Planning WP meetings when needed, and ensure applications are allocated for review, decision about whether relevant for CC to respond, and when indicated log request for submission with planning officer; then ensure summary and draft core elements of suggested response are completed; coordinate feedback to CC meetings in the week before meeting, ensure full CC has info. about major applications where broader input from others may help in figuring out initial draft response.

Choose coordinator

Nick Walker agreed to be coordinator.

Consider remit, approach

Receive planning applications weekly summary list and all WP members to check for possible items needing consideration. Emails with WP to decide who will review and how much detail needed. Details available on e-Planning system of D&GC website (www.dumgal.gov.uk/planning) but copies of complex consultations usually available from relevant Planning Officer.

Agree cases that are likely to warrant formal CC submission to Planning Dept. and where necessary seek additional time to respond meaningfully. Meet to discuss and agree draft response when necessary.

Update full CC by email pre-CC meetings, including sharing summaries and draft responses, and general advice, to support discussion at CC if necessary, and to gain CC agreement to terms of draft response. As resolved by full CC, finalise and submit formal responses.

Current applications

Auchleand Wind farm. EXTENSION - RESPONSE NEEDED BY 7.2.2014.

CC has already resolved to oppose application by majority vote (8 to 3, and 3 abstentions). Discussed core elements of objection including: hugely disproportionate to landscape, impact on tourism, applicants misleading implication that tourism may be enhanced and that community council engagement sessions were generally positive, local disruption during construction, proximity of numerous dwellings within zone that vibration and low frequency sound is known to cause potential harm to health, significant visual intrusion and distraction to drivers due to scale and proximity to road, out of keeping with development plan areas of consideration for wind farms which are not yet exhausted, potential saturation across Wigtownshire as a whole.

Nick Walker to draft response and share with WP then for submission per CC instruction.

Meeting of CC plus Kirkcowan and Cree Valley CCs with developers on 4.2.2014 to hear more about proposal and to start discussion about community benefit should the plans come to fruition.

No additional significant applications in subsequent weeks.

Other Wind farm proposals

Shennanton – next Community Liaison Group meeting being arranged. Airriequhillart, Mindork, Millairies – no update.

Plan for feedback to CC

Coordinator to summarise activity and recommendations prior to each CC meeting, and circulate CC with recommendations for decision at meeting.

Future meetings

Dates to be set as needed. Some discussion and agreement can be by email. Meetings need not be in public. Note meeting arranged by D&GC about wind farm planning process and community benefit 6.2.2014 - WP to attend if possible

Recommendations

CC approve report, decisions and actions.

Nick Walker 03.02.2014

Additional info. Planning WP attended meeting about Planning and Wind farms for all Wigtownshire CCs run by D&GC on 6.2.2014. Meeting was informative. Community Benefit officer for wind farms (and other developments) appears helpful, and can support communities even where D&GC policy on sharing community benefit is not adopted by developers.

Also, Nick Walker attended Community Liaison Group meeting with developers of Auchleand wind farm proposal. This was helpful to clarify plan details in final preparation of CC's submission to Planning Dept. objecting to the proposal. Also helpful to establish communication in preparation for consideration of community benefit if approval is granted.

Report and additional information accepted and approved by CC.

4 CONSULTATIONS WORKING PARTY

(Jak Kane, Andrew Wilson, Carl Davis, Rob Harford, John Jennings)

Report provided before meeting as follows:

Scottish Government, Community Empowerment Bill (deadline 24.1.2014)

*Discussed in detail and agreed core elements of response per CC authority. Generally supportive of proposed changes which would increase rights on community taking on local assets and facilities from public bodies, improve community right to buy, enhance powers of scrutiny, provision of information and transparency of management of Common Good Funds.
Response submitted (copy available from Jak Kane).*

Scottish Water, Draft 2015-2021 Business Plan (deadline 31.1.2014)

*Unable to respond with timeframe as complex and insufficient time. CC could consider seeking Scottish Water management meeting with representatives of all Machars CCs for updates and discussion on range of water issues such as fresh supply, waste water, storm water, coastal waters.
No submission.*

D&GC, 4th Periodic Review of Scheme for Comm. Councils (deadline 6.2.2014)

*Short time scale and detailed responses to previous rounds; many suggestions from CC now included. Nick Walker responded seeking clarity over short term arrangements when CC membership falls below minimum as happened recently. Accepted D&GC decision not to change CC boundaries.
Response submitted (copy available from Nick Walker).*

Scottish Fire & Rescue, Local Fire & Rescue Plan for D&G 2014-2017 (deadline 14.2.2014)

Draft local plan sets out priorities and objectives for the next three years. Consultation aims to ensure they focus on right areas, as part of wider community planning and safety work. Fuller plan will then be developed.

Jak Kane 06.02.2014

Report accepted and approved by CC. The hard work of consultations was noted and appreciated.

5 WIGTOWN LIBRARY

D&GC budget Proposal to cut Wigtown Library's opening hours discussed. Considerable community effort already to counter this. CC opposed to reduction. D&GC new Community & Customer Services Committee (members include Cllr Nicol and Cllr Geddes) has some reserves to soften the impact of cuts. Agreed to coordinate community groups and organisations to build a case to go to CCS Committee as soon as possible. Robin Richmond and Carl Davis identified for this task, with Matt Kitson co-opted (non-voting) as associate to assist. Work should also involve Wigtown Primary School and Parent Council, (Book) Festival Company, Association of Wigtown Booksellers, and other groups using the library. All D&GC Councillors to be involved also. **ACTION ROBIN, CARL DAVIS, MATT KITSON**

6 D&G BUDGET "CONSULTATION" AND CC RESOURCES

John Jennings had circulated report on Area Committee community meeting on 16.1.2014 about proposed budget:

I am reporting 10/02/14 to Wigtown CC at my second meeting as a member. My first act as a member was to attend a Finance Budgeting Consultation meeting at Glenluce Community Hall.

It was attended by a goodly number. The meeting's aim appeared to be to publicly consult prior to making the D&G budget for 2014/15. Whilst perhaps well-intended, the meeting missed its objective. Upon arrival a voluminous document was provide for each attendee's consumption and digestion; an impossible task in the time available undermining the principle of consultation. A 90-minute meeting (to discuss half a billion pounds spending) commenced with a half hour introduction from Officers and Councillors of D&GC, leaving only one hour for deliberation, summary and conclusion. The introduction simply rehearsed what we already knew from the Press, that D&GC's £27M budget reduction would be met by slashing services to and resources in the community. There were then small groups formed to gather feedback on the proposals, in an unsuitably noisy environment with insufficient time to be aware of the proposal details.

To me, it appears that the meeting produced limited outcomes: D&GC can "tick the Consultation box"; D&GC's method of spending review is based solely on population which means that more rural, more sparsely populated areas are disproportionately affected, with no account taken of actual need.

I recommend to Wigtown CC that we -
set up a Finance and Resources Working Party;
remit the Planning Working Party to review the Sustainable Development Of Galloway in general, looking in particular to threats, weaknesses and opportunities for Wigtown in particular;
and join up with other CCs in the area in a Federation.

John Jennings 06.02.2014

The report was discussed and Cllrs Geddes and McColm contributed information from subsequent Budget discussions within D&GC, emphasising job creation elements and a degree of protection from cuts for education.

Decisions were to accept John Jennings' recommendations, with Finance & Resources WP established (6 in favour, 1 against) and membership to include David Moran and John Jennings, with a third member yet to be agreed. In addition, CC resolved to seek much earlier engagement of CCs in budget planning throughout the year (John Jennings to contact Stephen Jack and D&GC Councillors about this).

ACTION JOHN JENNINGS

Federation considered later in meeting.

7 COUNCILLORS' ISSUES

Cllr Jim McColm updated on grass cutting reductions at the Top Cemetery, Wigtown, which is a minimum three mowings per year. This can be increased if needed, by request to Alan Bradley, DGFfirst via CC Secretary. Also, Wild-fowling permits will now incur a charge, to cover administrative cost to Machars Action (which runs the scheme), in compensation for D&GC no longer funding the permit process.

8 OTHER REPORTS

8A Festival Committee

(Carl Davies, Lynn Drysdale, Robert Harford, John Dickson, Willie McCartney, Agnes Cluckie, David Moran, Betty McGowan)

Carl Davis reported on meeting held on 6.2.2014. This was well-attended by CCllrs but not by community volunteers which was disappointing. A long weekend of family events is proposed for Friday 11.7.2014 to Sunday 13.7.2014, with some events the week after for adults (as in previous years) and if other groups wish to arrange additional activities. Next meeting Thursday 6.3.2014 at 7.30 pm in County Buildings.

8B Machars CCs Federation

Nick Walker reported positive replies from all CCs to have answered so far (5 out of 7 CCs). Date for initial planning meeting to be set for early March. Nick Walker and Andrew Wilson to be Wigtown CC reps.

8C Review of Organisation of CC Working Party

(Nick Walker, Andrew Wilson, Willie McCartney, David Moran, Jak Kane, John Jennings)

No meeting held yet but date to be set (now agreed as 24.2.2014, 7.30 pm). John Jennings proposed that Matt Kitson be co-opted as non-voting associate to support website and communications (with public, social media, press, etc.) as he has relevant experience and an interest in CC work, and lives locally. He accepted nomination, which was seconded by Andrew Wilson. CC resolved to co-opt Matt Kitson as proposed.

9 CORRESPONDENCE

9A D&GC re: CC Enquiry Service now activated for managing enquiries via CC secretary.

Noted.

9B William Saunders re: question about flag flying.

This was passed to D&GC for consideration. Ownership of flag poles is not clear, but D&GC assumes ownership. DGFirst follows limited protocol of flag flying. Apparently a few negative comments about flags in recent months. Stephen Jack, D&GC Area Framework Manager, Wigtownshire, suggests DGFirst protocol and no other flag-flying pending further consideration. Brief discussion as meeting out of time, resolved that Finance & Resources WP look at various flag protocols, gather information from D&GC, etc., and report back, so that a proposal can be put to D&GC and perhaps directly to the community.

9C D&GC re: Day of the Region

Possible source of funding for community activities, but requirement to take part in region-wide event in October which clashes with Wigtown Book Festival.

Noted.

9D D&GC / SWesTrans re Bus Stop move and new shelter – site meeting 4.2.2014

Several CCllrs attended meeting with officials and agreed an aesthetically appropriate bus shelter, with Royal Burgh of Wigtown printed on it. There remains some concern about modern buses manoeuvring through especially when turning back towards the New Road around the new Mercat Cross given parking in that area. Agreed to leave D&GC and SWesTrans to address this with bus companies.

9E DGFirst re cherry tree pruning – site meeting

Andrew Wilson and Malcolm Booth (Wigtown in Bloom) met DGFirst staff and were content with plans to prune the more over-grown cherry trees around the bowling green. Work has just started.

9F D&GC re Lottery Licence renewal and feedback report request

Agreed Treasurer to attend to this. **ACTION DAVID MORAN**

9G D&GC re Induction / Training for Wigtown CC

Meeting scheduled for Wednesday 12.2.2014 at 7.00 pm in County Buildings (please confirm attendance with Wendy Jesson, D&GC, Stranraer).

9H D&GC / Scottish Power re next Forum meeting

Two meetings set - site visit Monday 17.2.2014 from 12.00 noon, from St Couan's Hall, Kirkcowan; and main Mid-Galloway CCs Forum meeting Wednesday 26.2.2014 at 7.30pm in County Buildings.
Agreed Nick Walker and John Jennings to attend.

9I D&GC re Winter Resilience – equipment update request

Betty McGowan confirmed flasks are the only equipment held at present. Nick Walker to respond.
ACTION NICK WALKER

9J 123-reg.com re: invoice for website hosting, £43.05.

This had been paid as due while CC in abeyance. Matt Kitson indicated that he could arrange cheaper (or free) website hosting in future.

9K Wigtown Quaker Meeting re thanks for provision of signposts.

Noted.

10 NEXT MEETING

Monday 10th March 2014, at 8.00 pm, in Whauphill Hall

Then subsequent meetings in County Buildings: 14.4.2014, 12.5.2014, 9.6.2014, etc.