

**ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNTY BUILDINGS, WIGTOWN,
ON MONDAY 13 APRIL 2015 AT 7.30 PM**

contact@WigtownCC.org.uk

www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT		
John McDowall	Nick Walker, <i>Convenor</i>	David McAdam
Willie McCartney	Jak Kane	Robin Richmond
Brian Vogan		

IN ATTENDANCE		
Joe McKeown	Louise Kerr, <i>Galloway Gazette</i>	Curtiss Wilson, <i>Free Press</i>
June Robinson, <i>Mins Sec.</i>	David Moran	Cllr Jim McColm
<i>Two Police Scotland reps.</i>		

APOLOGIES		
Matt Kitson	Cllr Alistair Geddes	Cllr Graham Nicol

1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND CALL FOR URGENT OTHER BUSINESS

Nick Walker welcomed all to the meeting and noted apologies. There were no additional items of business.

2 POLICE MATTERS

Recent crimes have included telephone scams to gather bank details, and the public urged not to disclose bank details to anyone over the phone. Organised shoplifting in various places including Wigtown Co-op recently, with Police Scotland following a positive line of enquiry. Minor antisocial behaviour locally, such as some knocking on windows in Wigtown, has led to extra police patrols. Operation Senna – relating to motorbike safety – is ongoing at present.

3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (9.3.2015)

Adopted: prop. John McDowall, sec. Willie McCartney.

4 UPDATES & REPORTS

4A Planning WP:

Report circulated before meeting:

Current applications

15/P/1/0071 REPLACEMENT WINDOWS, ALTERATIONS, NEW GARAGE, 33 BLADNOCH, WIGTOWN.

RECOMMEND – no submission.

Update on proposals

14/P/1/0600 REPLACEMENT WINDOWS, 33-34 SOUTH MAIN STREET, WIGTOWN. SUBMISSION per meeting 9.3.2015: no objection, but comment on requirement for listed building consent, and need to ensure windows are in keeping with conservation status.

Wind farm proposals

15/P/1/0031 SHENNANTON WINDFARM. 12 turbines, 100 m to blade tip, ancillary structures, etc. – Paperwork being considered by CCllrs (Willie McCartney, Nick Walker leading on this application), for discussion at meeting. Note – CC has until late April to submit an opinion to D&GC.

15/P/2/0053 CALIFORNIA WINDFARM. 7 turbines, 110 m to blade tip, ancillary structures, etc. - Paperwork being considered by CCllrs (Robin Richmond, David Moran leading on this application), including collaboration with Save Wigtown Bay and others in the community to assess planning issues and local opinion. For discussion at meeting, and consideration of need for separate dedicated session. Note – CC has until late April to submit an opinion to D&GC. California – appeal re Met. mast still pending, and decision now more than 3 months overdue. Details on website: www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk/CaseDetails.aspx?id=115342.

13/P/1/0366 AUCHLEAND WINDFARM. 7 turbines, 130 m to blade tip, ancillary structures, etc. - Now one year overdue for determination by D&GC. Ongoing SEPA and D&GC Landscape issues being debated; impact on locality of several D&GC Roads conditions still require clarification.

Recommendations

CC approve report and its recommended actions.

CC discuss and agree actions regarding California and Shennanton wind farm proposals.

Discussion

CC approved report.

15/P/1/0071 (above) and 14/P/1/0600 (above) have newly submitted applications for Listed Building Consent in relation to the primary applications. Resolved to make no submission to these given decisions already taken on primary applications.

15/P/1/0074 4 NEW ROAD AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP INSTALLATION. Agreed no submission.

15/P/1/0031 - SHENNANTON WIND FARM

After discussion, CC resolved to submit comments but neither support nor object:

The Community Council considers the pre-application consultation and community engagement processes undertaken in this proposal to be of a high standard. There has been open sharing of information from all involved, and changes have been made to the proposal as a result of feedback at various stages. We believe that the scale of the proposed development fits with its landscape setting. We are concerned about increasing numbers of turbines however, and there is growing public concern locally about cumulative impact. The application site is quite some distance from our community council area, and as such we feel that we have limited locus to comment. In addition there has been little comment among our constituents, and what comment there has been is mixed: neutral, supportive and opposing. Our duty is therefore to enter a neutral submission.

15/P/2/0053 - CALIFORNIA WIND FARM

After the Planning WP report was circulated, the Met. Mast Appeal was decided, and the Reporter has upheld the Appeal, approving the Met. Mast planning application for a two year period. There was discussion about Planning law and some discontent about local views being taken into account by D&GC Councillors on the Planning Applications Committee in coming to a decision, then overturned by an individual civil servant, based on an area of policy which requires interpretation relevant to the specific proposal and its setting. Planning law was reformed not long ago and Appeal processes were a contentious element of that reform. Resolved to raise this discontent with the process with other CCs and considered how best to lobby MSPs about it, perhaps leading up to Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2016.

The wind farm application itself was discussed with David Moran and Robin Richmond feeding back on views and opinions locally, and their engagement with local groups. Other CCllrs also contributed views expressed by residents. A draft expression of areas of planning concern was circulated, and some suggestions were made for clarification and additional points. Resolved unanimously to oppose the application, and final draft submission to be circulated to CCllrs for final approval before submission by late April. Nick Walker to complete the submission as soon as practicable.

4B Wigtown Week Committee:

Wigtown Riding of the Marches will be on Sunday 28 March 2015. Details are still be finalised by its organising committee which includes Wigtown Week Committee representation.

Wigtown Week itself will start from Saturday 11 July 2015. Wigtown Agricultural Show's vintage farm vehicles and equestrian event on Sunday 12 July 2015 will be advertised in Wigtown Week programme.

The Committee will meet in the County Buildings (Supper Room) on Thursday 23 April 2015 at 7.30 pm, and anyone wishing to help, advise, volunteer, etc. is welcome to attend. Gazette and Free Press agreed to include announcements for this meeting.

4C Consultations WP:

Jak Kane had circulated report prior to meeting. Four consultations ongoing at present:

Solway draft Flood Risk Management Plans It was noted that local residents should be aware of whether they live in a property which may potentially be affected by flooding in the future as this may affect insurance premiums. Comments to Jak for draft submission to be discussed at May CC meeting.

Local Development Plan supplementary guidance Business development in rural areas, Waste management infrastructure, and Dark Skies Park are being considered. Brief discussion agreed Jak to complete CC response, due before May CC meeting. Additional comments to Jak as soon as possible.

Good practice principles for shared ownership of onshore renewable energy developments Draft response to be discussed at May CC meeting, with comments to Jak as soon as possible.

Wigtown Bay Local Nature Reserve bye-law changes Due mid-May, so comments to Jak in time for May CC meeting to finalise views for submission; but this is a pre-consultation and there will be another, formal, consultation later in the year. CC welcomed progress on this long-delayed issue.

4D Finance & Resources WP:

David Moran reported that bank signatory changes are going ahead. CC formally noted agreement for CC Secretary, Matt Kitson, to be an account signatory.

The following bank account balances were noted:

Admin./General account £431.00;

Festival account £2948.70;

Christmas Lights account £2826.90 (2014 Xmas Tree invoice not yet received);

Action / Project account £18.40;

Response / Resilience account £50.25.

5 TASKS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Youth Representation – No update.

Community Resilience – Matt Kitson met Wendy Jesson and applied for £2000.00. Details at next meeting.

Wigtown Parking & Bus Stop – No response and Matt Kitson chasing up again. Rainwater drainage problem at entrance to Town Gardens where Louis McGuffie VC memorial is to go requires attention.

Meeting 15.4.2015 with Parks, Roads, Bus staff to consider situation and options. Willie McCartney and Jock McDowall to attend; Cllr McColm also able to attend.

Derelict Properties – No update but Cllr Geddes pursuing.

Public Toilets – Cllr McColm reported that upgrade of Wigtown public toilets is on the capital programme list. CC keen to be involved in deciding on plans. Nick Walker to contact Alan Mawson at D&GC to ensure we receive relevant info.

Teaching Support – Cllr McColm reiterated that Teacher numbers will not be reduced, but some contingency money for Teaching Support has gone towards the funding gap for Teacher posts. The impact of Teaching Support cuts on Wigtown and Kirkinner Schools is still unknown to D&GC Councillors, Parent Councils and Wigtown CC. Teaching Assistant posts are to reduce by 50-55 in the period 2015-18. Other CCs may be concerned also. Agreed to ask Broader Machars Federation of CCs to arrange meeting with Director of Education, and to include Parent Council representation, before end of current academic year.

Wigtown Bay Local Nature Reserve – Recent meeting discussed revision of bye-laws (see item 4C above), incorporation of Crook of Baldoon into LNR, and changes to wild fowling permits (including the imposition of a fee).

6 COMMUNICATION, CORRESPONDENCE, etc

Freedom of Information request for recent years' accounts

The person making request asked for the request to remain anonymous. In fact, CC is not bound by the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 which applies only to Public Authorities. D&GC and the Scottish Information Commissioner confirm this. Therefore the request has been declined by the Convenor. The individual was also informed that correspondence to CCs is discussed and decisions made at CC meetings which are public, meaning that, in general, anonymity cannot be assured. He has informed us of his intention to make formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner (regarding Freedom of Information) and the Information Commissioner's Office (regarding identification of individuals at meetings which he sees as a breach of Data Protection Act 1998 compliance). CC agreed no further action warranted at present.

Poppy Appeal – Following Betty McGowan's retiral as coordinator, volunteers are sought for this role locally. CCllrs to consider who might take on this task in the community. Local papers asked to raise the issue also.

Fraser Suites Ltd – Commemorative tree planted, with plaque, in Lightlands Avenue, for the company's founder who came from Wigtown. This was raised at short notice as part of the company's anniversary celebrations.

Area Committee Community Meeting – Ryan Centre, Tuesday 28.4.2015, at 6.30 pm – All welcome (public and Cllrs) to this meeting which will focus on local NHS provision, and will feature NHS D&G Chief Executive, Jeff Ace.

Shop Frontage Improvements - Matt Kitson had circulated information which offer financial assistance.

D&GC formal announcement of Candidates for UK General (Westminster Parliamentary) Election – There are five candidates in our constituency, representing Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Scottish National, and UK Independence Parties.

Wigtown Food Festival Fairtrade talk Group, Dumfries – The Food Festival weekend (23-24 May) hopes to include a Fairtrade talk, and the Dumfries Fairtrade group was invited. They are keen to ensure Wigtown's Fairtrade group has the chance to take part. It is unclear again who coordinates Wigtown Fairtrade. Wigtown Kirk, Baptist Church, Quakers and Wigtown Primary School to be contacted for information, as all actively involved previously.

7 COUNCILLORS' ISSUES (Cllr McColm only)

The direct bus service to Carlisle has been stopped. Passengers must now change in Dumfries, and the service stops more and is slower. CC is aware of significant local demand for the service, and is unhappy that there was no consultation about the service's withdrawal. CC agreed to contact Swestrans (Harry Thomson, Transport Scotland and Stagecoach Ltd to raise concerns.

The Common Good Fund subcommittee agreed to invest most the Beddie Fund money which was transferred into Common Good recently, but £598.00 will be added to available funds for grants. There is approx. £640.00 available therefore in the current financial year. The next Common Good meeting is in September.

Area Committee (Business) Meeting approved the proposal for Community Councils to be allowed representation to speak on agenda items. This proposal is now passed onto D&GC's ad hoc subcommittee on Council Structures for consideration.

8 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Preparation requires accounts to be finalised for June Robinson to type, so that Independent Examiner can review. David Moran agreed these would be ready for CC to preview at May CC meeting. Nick Walker will complete Convenor's report. He reminded CC that he retires as Convenor at AGM.

There was discussion about presentation to Betty McGowan to recognise her long and valuable contribution to the Community Council and to community life in general. Agreed this will take place after AGM business, and the June CC business meeting will be on a different date.

AGM therefore scheduled for **Wednesday 3 June 2015**.

9 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

10 NEXT MEETING

Monday 11 May 2015, 7.30pm, Wigtown County Buildings

Annual General Meeting:

Wednesday 3 June 2015, 7.30 pm, Supper Room, County Buildings to include presentation to Betty McGowan followed by a tea.

Subsequent meetings:

Mondays 8.6.2015, 13.7.2015, 10.8.2015, 14.9.2015.

CC elections in October 2015.