

**ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNTY BUILDINGS, WIGTOWN,
ON MONDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2016**

contact@WigtownCC.org.uk

www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT

Matt Kitson <i>Convenor</i>	Willie McCartney <i>Vice Convenor</i>	Jak Kane <i>Secretary</i>
Ann Gray	Rob Harford	Kerr Inger
Joe McKeown		Robin Richmond

IN ATTENDANCE

David Moran	Cllr Alistair Geddes	Cllr Jim McColm
David McKay <i>Wigtown Free Press</i>	Louise Kerr, <i>Galloway Gazette</i>	

3 Members of *Save Wigtown Bay*: Lesley Grindley, Shona Heaney, Bill McClure

APOLOGIES

Ann Gray	Nick Walker	Cllr Alistair Geddes
Cllr Graham Nicol		

1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES & CALL FOR URGENT OTHER BUSINESS

Matt Kitson welcomed those present to the Community Council meeting and asked for apologies and items of other business. Apologies were noted from Nick Walker and Cllr Graham Nicol. Items put forward to be discussed under Other Business included a proposed BT telecoms cabinet in Bladnoch and changes to the Community Council's website.

2 POLICE MATTERS

There were no police officers present at the meeting and no report submitted.

3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 11 January 2016)

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were adopted; proposed by Robin Richmond and seconded by Joe McKeown.

4 PROPOSAL TO CO-OPT KERR INGER AS A VOTING MEMBER.

Kerr Inger had been nominated for co-option to the Community Council by Willie McCartney. The proposal was supported unanimously and Kerr was duly appointed.

5 UPDATES & REPORTS

A: Consultations WP

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting (see Appendix A). There were opportunities for responses to consultation on the Health & Social Care's Integration Joint Board (IJB) draft 'Participation and Engagement Strategy' and the Council's 'Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance on Developer Contributions'.

B: Planning WP

Nick Walker had circulated a report prior to his departure for his visit to New Zealand (see Appendix B). The only items of note were the approvals of four applications previously considered by the Community Council. Report approved.

Subsequent to the report, Ecotricity had lodged an Appeal directly with the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) for its California Wind Farm Project. The appeal against non-determination was lodged as a result of Dumfries & Galloway Council failing to deliver a timely decision on the application. The decision on the California proposal would now pass to a Reporter appointed by the Scottish Government. Representatives of the Save Wigtown

Bay group explained that those who had commented on the original planning application should be advised of the Appeal directly by Dumfries and Galloway Council and will then have 14 days from receipt to make any additional comments to the DPEA.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has been requested to provide its response to the Appeal by 19 February with other respondents having until 25 February to submit a response to the Reporter. It was agreed that Convenor Matt Kitson would revisit the Community Council's original objection to the planning application and draft a response to be circulated to Councillors within the aforementioned timescale. **ACTION: MATT KITSON.**

Cllrs Geddes and Nicol took no part in the discussion on planning issues.

C: Louis McGuffie VC Commemoration Working Group

An email had been received from Wilma McKeown, DGC's Area Committee Administrator proposing that the next meeting of the Working Group be postponed until 21 March 2016. This would provide time for detailed drawings and costings to be obtained which would allow the Group to investigate planning and funding avenues.

6 TASKS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Derelict Properties – 24 High Street: Cllr Geddes reported that there had been positive progress with the Council's Improvement & Repairs Officer arranging a meeting with the owner of the High Street property or his representatives. They would work together to identify what elements of the required work would be eligible for grant and agree a scheme for the way forward. With regard to the derelict property in North Main Street, Cllr Geddes undertook to contact DGHP to ascertain the up to date position. **ACTION: Cllr Geddes**

Broader Machars Federation – Nick Walker had circulated the minutes/notes of the Federation's January meeting with Police Scotland and the Community Safety Team along with additional attachments from the Police. He also sent a draft copy of the Federation's constitution and asked that the Community Council consider the document and agree its content. The Councillors agreed that Nick Walker could take their approval to the next Federation meeting.

Community Resilience – A preplanning application query for the temporary siting of the proposed container in the Lorry Park had been submitted to the Council. A quote of £1,950 with £450 delivery had been sourced for the purchase of a new container measuring 20ft x 8 x 8.5. A used container aged between 6 and 10 years old would cost approximately £500 less. Finally Matt advised that the Community Council had been provided with a grit spreader.

7 COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, ETC

Area Committee Community Meeting – A Community Meeting had been convened to discuss Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway's 'Business Plan 2015-18'. The meeting would be held in the DEHS, Newton Stewart on Thursday, 25 February.

Dumgal Against Pylons (DAP) – an invitation had been received from DAP inviting the Community Council to add its support to DAP's joint letter of objection to ScottishPower Energy Network's D&G Strategic Reinforcement Project. (see Appendix C) After discussion, it was proposed by Robin Richmond that the Community Council should add its support but it was decided to defer a decision until councillors had the opportunity to consider a statement from DAP's President, Dame Barbara Kelly that had been seen by Cllr McColm. **ACTION: Cllr McColm**

8 COUNCILLORS' ISSUES

Cllr McColm advised that, as discussed at the CC's previous meeting, he had reported three areas suffering from the issue of deficient LED street lighting - Agnew Crescent, Church Lane and Lightlands Avenue.

He also highlighted that there was to be a Wigtown Area Committee Community Meeting on the issue of 'Dental Services in Newton Stewart' on Thursday, 11 February 2016. This had also been discussed at the aforementioned meeting when it had been noted that "despite earlier assurances that no decision would be made pending further consultation, NHS Dumfries & Galloway's... Board had agreed to the withdrawal of services at the clinic with closure in late summer 2016".

He reported that the Council Administration was still working on its Budget which would see the Council set Council Tax and produce a balanced budget and hopefully it would be in a position to be considered by the full Council on Thursday, 11 February.

Cllr Geddes advised that the Council's Economy, Environment and Infrastructure Committee would be considering a report on a review of Recyclate Collection Service in the Wigtownshire area that would put forward proposals for a reconfigured service that could be realigned within the allocated budget provision. The report proposed a pilot of new methods of collection that would be conducted only in the Newton Stewart area; chosen as it provides a good mix of urban and rural locations. The new pilot service would see the introduction of a separate box for glass with a weekly collection of recycling boxes by a single vehicle with residual waste collected fortnightly as currently.

9 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Gail Plunkett had advised that contact had been made with Ewan Green, Head of the Council's Economic Development team re the installation of a new BT cabinet in Bladnoch village that would provide fast broadband to residents and businesses in the Bladnoch Bridge Estate. The proposal had attracted the support of Richard Arkless MP.

Joe McKeown proposed a number of changes to the Community Council's website to make it more vibrant and relevant for prospective visitors to the area with more local pictures and links to other sites such as Wigtown Book Festival. It was agreed that the changes could be implemented.

10 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 14 March 2016, at 7.30pm, Wigtown County Buildings

Appendix A. Consultations Working Party Report – February 2016

CURRENT CONSULTATIONS

a) **Integration Joint Board (IJB) draft Participation and Engagement Strategy – DG Change. Closing date – 12 February 2016**

The IJB must develop and publish a Participation and Engagement Strategy in accordance with its local Health and Social Care Integration scheme by 1 April 2016.

The IJB is committed to participation and engagement being at the heart of all that it does. This draft Strategy provides a framework to ensure that all activities carried out meet with its principles and the National Standards of community engagement.

Consultation feedback will inform and refine this Strategy before a final version is presented for approval. This Strategy will be presented to the IJB for approval on 17 March 2016.

Complete the survey online - [Have your say on the Integration Joint Board Participation and Engagement Strategy Survey](#)

b) **Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance – Developer Contributions – Dumfries & Galloway Council. Closing date: 26 February 2016**

This consultation is another in the series to allow the public to comment on the content of the Local Development Plan supplementary guidance.

-  [Draft LDP Supplementary Guidance - Developer Contributions \[423kb\]](#)

Any comment should be sent in writing to: - Development Planning, Planning and Environment Service, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Militia House, English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2HR; Email - LDP@dumgal.gov.uk

FORTHCOMING CONSULTATIONS

a) **2015 consultation on Management of Inshore Special Areas of Conservation and Marine Protected Areas – Scottish Government. Scheduled for Winter 2015/16**

This consultation proposes possible fisheries management approaches for 14 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 6 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). This follows on from a similar consultation in 2014. The SACs are protected by provisions in the EU Habitats Directive. The MPAs are protected by provisions in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. A number of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the EU Wild Birds Directive are also likely to benefit from the proposals if implemented.

Appendix B. Planning Working Party Report For Full Comm. Council 12.10.2015

Members – Willie McCartney, Robin Richmond, Nick Walker

New applications

- 16/C/1/0003 Installation of Transmission Dish, Mactiers Farm, Mochrum, Whauphill, Wigtown. Utility notification only. No submission possible. **Recommend** – Indicate no concern to D&GC Councillors.

Update on applications

- 15/P/1/0314 Alteration To Outbuilding to Extend Dwellinghouse, 5 North Main Street, Wigtown. **Update** – Approved.
- 15/P/1/0226 Extension to Workshop, Unit 2a, Bladnoch Bridge Industrial Estate, Wigtown.
15/P/1/0227 Erection of Steel Framed Industrial Building, Car Parking, Storage Area, Bladnoch Bridge Industrial Estate, Wigtown. **Update** – Approved.
- 15/P/1/0197 Erection of Distillery and Assoc. Buildings, Septic Tank, Parking (10 Spaces), etc., Off A714, by Barhill Farm, Newton Stewart. **Update** – Approved.
- 15/P/1/0288 & 15/P/1/0289 & 15/A/1/0009 Installation of ATM and Display of Non-illuminated Sign to Front Elevation, Co-Op Store, 30 North Main Street, Wigtown. **Update** – Planning Application Committee – date not yet known.
- 15/P/1/0280 Planning In Principle – Erection of Dwellinghouse, Site Adj. To Sunnybrae, Botany Street, Wigtown. **Update** – Withdrawn.

Renewable energy proposals

- 15/P/1/0031 Shennanton Windfarm, Newton Stewart. 12 turbines, 100m to blade tip, ancillary structures, etc. **Update:** Expected Planning Application Committee now 2/2016.
- 15/P/2/0053 California Windfarm, Carsluith. 7 turbines, 110m to blade tip, structures, etc. **Update:** Nil.
- 13/P/1/0366 Auchleand Windfarm, Wigtown. 7 turbines, 130 m to blade tip, ancillary structures, etc. **Update:** Nil.

ACTION

Note report. Agree recommendations.

Nick Walker 29.1.2016

Appendix C. Dumgal Against Pylons



February 2016

Dear Community Council colleagues,

Fifty one Community Councils have so far agreed to our joint letter of objection to SPENs proposals and this strength of feeling has opened doors and allowed us to meet with cross-party MPs, MSPs, D&G Councillors and Officers, all of whom are concerned about the potential impact on the region this project will have. Following a meeting we had with Planning Officers, D&G Council decided to make a robust response to the first consultation as a statutory consultee. Councillors on the Planning Applications Committee unanimously agreed to the submission.

We do not oppose the need for an upgraded network, but we do believe that a better solution to an overhead line supported on 50m tall pylons must be found so that our most precious assets and economic resource, namely the landscape of Dumfries and Galloway, is protected for future generations. We do not want our region turned into another Beaulieu-Denny because as well as providing an attractive place to live and work our unspoilt natural, historic and cultural assets also provide the basis for our growing tourism economy.

We have formed a Management Team which is busy meeting different groups and individuals who can help, such as The John Muir Trust and campaigners involved in other infrastructure projects such the one planned for the Lake District. Expert technical advice has been sought from an ex-director of the National Grid. The local Chambers of Commerce support our efforts to find a better solution for Dumfries and Galloway and we have recently been delighted to welcome Dame Barbara Kelly as our President. She brings with her great experience in championing good causes as well as a passion for preserving Dumfries and Galloway.

We plan to have meetings with Ofgem, who regulate the amount of money that can be spent on the project, and also with SPEN. We also hope to meet the Energy Minister. One initiative we are currently investigating is independent research into the potential impact on the region's economy and its people, with the Crichton Institute.

We would welcome more Community Council support because, if we have learnt anything from the Beaulieu-Denny experience, it is that small groups are easily ignored – instead, working together creates a strong voice for the region. This does not prevent your Community Council submitting local concerns or issues in the consultations. Indeed, we hope you will submit comments but by standing together, supporting one another and sharing information and ideas we can all help secure a better, 21st Century solution for Dumfries and Galloway.

Enclosed is a copy of our alternative to SP Energy Networks (SPENs) Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Reinforcement Project proposal. We hope you will share it amongst your members and find it interesting and informative. If you also need an electronic copy please let me know.

We would be grateful if your Community Council would agree to your name being added to the copy of the joint letter of objection (copy enclosed for reference). You can contact me at the email address below to confirm you wish your Community Council to be added.

Yours faithfully,

Maureen Johnstone
Management Committee of Dumgal Against Pylons
dumgalagainstpylons@gmail.com

Scottish Power Energy Networks

By email: dgsr@communityrelations.co.uk

Dear Sir,

**Joint Response of the Dumfries and Galloway Community Councils to
Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) D&G Strategic Reinforcement Project**

Notice of the proposal was first received in late May, by post, in a folder entitled "Powering your Future". Distribution of the folder was such that just over half of the households within the corridor of SPEN's preferred route claim to have received a copy. The period of the first consultation was stated to be June 8 to July 24, with 9 road shows at various towns along the route between June 9 and June 25. This short period of consultation was extended, after protests by our elected representatives, to August 31. This period is still inadequate, given the size of our Region and the fact that some Community Councils are in recess over the summer months. Notwithstanding these difficulties, we, many of the Community Councils affected and in the Region, have considered the proposal, and unanimously reject it as wholly unacceptable.

We do so for the following reasons:

- The proposals, if carried out, would destroy the beauty of the scenery along a large swathe of territory across virtually the whole Region. The proposed height of the pylons is such that the magnificent views of our gentle hills would be ruined for great distances. SPEN's preferred route would wreck some of the finest scenery in the country.
- Tourism, an increasingly important part of the local economy, would be badly affected. Its value to the Region exceeded £300m for the first time last year with over two million visitors; 6,000 full-time jobs depend on it directly and at least a further 1,500 indirectly. The local economy has declined since 2000; numbers employed in agriculture and in business in the Region are falling, and it is vital to encourage alternative employment such as tourism. This proposal would harm it.
- The cultural, artistic, literary and historical heritage of the Region is abundant, and is reflected in the number of archaeological sites, listed buildings, and features of historical interest in the area. Tourists, scholars and visitors come in order to see these, and the more attractive the surroundings, the more likely they will be to enjoy and appreciate their visit, to speak well of it to others, and to return. To take but a few examples, the proximity of the pylons to Burnswark, an iconic hill, hill-fort and archaeological site visible for miles around, would wholly spoil the fine views of it. Thomas Faed, and James Paterson, famous artists from Galloway, painted scenes near or within the corridor. Visitors want to see the scenes as they were when they were painted. The home of our National Poet, Robert Burns, at Ellisland, lies within the corridor. The birthplace of Thomas Carlyle, the great Scottish author and philosopher, at Ecclefechan, is close to the corridor, and his home at Craigenputtock, near Dunscore, is within it. The surroundings and the atmosphere of all these homes, still largely unchanged, would be wrecked by a view of pylons. Spring Fling, in which artists show their work in their own homes would be adversely affected, as would the Galloway Forest Tours. The graves of the Covenanters, who successfully withstood tyranny, are visited annually by their descendants. It is vital that the setting of such attractions for visitors is protected, as there is clear evidence that the majority of the public find the landscape impact of pylons and overhead lines unacceptable.
- Wildlife, and birdlife, for which the Region is famous, would be harmed.
- Residents are deeply concerned at the damage to their residential amenity, and by the real possibility

of harm to their health, which this proposal would create.

- Residents are deeply concerned about the substantial devaluation of their homes and property that this proposal would create. This loss of value would greatly exceed the additional cost of alternative means of transmission.

This project was planned when public subsidies for on-shore wind farms were in place. Planning applications are now fewer in number, and are increasingly being refused by both D&G Council and the Scottish Government. as the number of suitable sites diminishes. The removal of subsidies in June this year will accelerate this trend. It seems likely that the project, whose main purpose is to carry the power from the wind farms in Galloway away from our Region, is now over-engineered, and the need for it, and its scope, should therefore and in any event be re- examined.

Recent research shows consumers are willing to pay a premium on household energy bills over an extended period in order to avoid overhead lines and pylons, and savings on constraint payments and a realistic write-off period should also be included towards funding alternative options in order to preserve the Region's landscape. This would represent long-term value, and avoid so environmentally destructive and so economically harmful a solution as that proposed by SPEN.

We repeat that the pylons and the overhead line proposed by SPEN are totally unacceptable to the Community Councils affected, and to their constituents, and must be ruled out as a possible means of transmission. We are however willing to work with SPEN to help to identify a solution that is generally acceptable.

Yours faithfully,