

**ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNTY BUILDINGS, WIGTOWN,
ON MONDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2018**

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www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT

Sandra McDowall <i>Convenor</i>	Willie McCartney <i>Vice Convenor</i>	Jak Kane <i>Secretary</i>
Kerr Inger	David Moran	David McAdam
Joe McKeown	Robin Richmond	Nick Walker
	Kevin Witt	

IN ATTENDANCE

PC John Jamieson	Nick Dowson, Free Press	Cllr Jim McColm
	Gill Hay	

APOLOGIES

Matt Kitson

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Matt Kitson.

2 POLICE MATTERS

John Jamieson, Community Policer Officer based in Newton Stewart introduced himself giving a precis of his career experience so far.

He said that he and PC Crystal Martin had carried out a series of Autumn Community Surgeries, visiting all towns and villages in the Machars and the events had been well attended by members of the public. It was intended that the Surgeries would continue on a seasonal basis with the next pencilled in for January/February 2019.

He reported that there had been a number of local incidents in the past month including a minor theft from a car at a local farm and theft of a petrol strimmer. There had been a one vehicle Road Traffic Accident and a report had been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal in this connection. There had again been shoplifting incidents in the Co-op stores in Wigtown and Newton Stewart with those responsible being Romanian nationals. CIS head office were now looking at security issues surrounding alcohol supplies in their stores. The Police had been notified of the schedule for the annual tour of the area by the Round Table with Santa and his sleigh and they would be visiting Wigtown on the night of Monday, 3 December.

He finished by warning that online fraud was on the increase with the latest version being Vishing, with people phoning on the pretext of checking on or renewing TV Licenses in an attempt to scam people into surrendering private information like bank details that would then be used for identity theft.

3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business intinated at this point..

4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 8 October 2018)

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. The minutes were approved, proposed by Kevin Witt and seconded by David Moran.

5 MATTERS ARISING

a. Lightlands Terrace

It had been reported at the October meeting that the Council had responded that no defects had been categorised as needing repair in connection with the dead trees on the verge in Lightlands Terrace. The trees had now been cut down.

b. Bladnoch Distillery – Septic Tank

The Secretary had raised the issue of the siting and installation of the new septic tank to serve the Distillery Visitors Centre with Planning and SEPA. Billy Murray had said that the position of septic tanks relative to buildings and/or watercourses are not matters to be addressed as part of a planning application as they were technical issues covered under Building Warrant and registration with SEPA. SEPA had confirmed that they had agreed a scheme with the Distillery that could see a partial soakaway system with a final high level overflow to a watercourse. SEPA would be satisfied with this alternative whether that watercourse was the River Bladnoch or the Lade that runs beneath the Distillery and they would licence this activity as and when an application is submitted by the site owners.

c. Roon the Toon, Wigtown

The Secretary had written to James Galloway advising that he had provided insufficient information to allow the Community Council to provide the letter of support for his project but suggesting that he attend the December meeting to speak about the project. No response had been received.

6 UPDATES & REPORTS

a: Financial Report

Jak Kane had circulated his updated report prior to the meeting. Poppy Wreaths costing £208.50 had been ordered from Lady Haig's Factory. Jak explained that the bulk of this would be recovered from the Masonic Lodge, Primary School, Guides and Brownies. There had been a further £193 received from the sale of McGuffie VC books and £200 refunded from BFPS re First Day Covers returned. The Council had been paid to the Council for works to the steps at the new Gateway with the Council covering £2,500 of the costs involved. The Community Council had also purchased a poppy wreath that was laid at the gateway dedication ceremony.

b: Consultations WP

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting giving details of current consultations.

- a) **South West Scotland Transport Study** - Transport Scotland had commissioned consultants to research the case for change in transport interventions in the South West of Scotland.

Jak Kane had also circulated a draft response to the Study and asked for any comments or suggested amendments to be passed to him before the deadline of 16 November. Nick Walker suggested that the development of a light railway alongside the A75 could reduce car usage for those travelling in and out of Dumfries and other main towns. Nik agreed to send Jak a form of words to be included in the response.

- b) **Budget Consultation Process 2019/20**

It had been agreed at the CC's October meeting that it should approach the Council with a proposal that it would organise a Community Conversation before the end of November that could cover both the Democracy Matters and the Council's budget consultations. The Council had eventually identified Graeme McKie as its designated support officer but, although invited, he was unable to attend the CC meeting. Three CC members had met with Graeme and it emerged that what was involved was not a Community Conversation per se but that the consultation involved internet access to use a budget simulator tool. It was agreed that an event

based in the McNeillie Library would be arranged with afternoon and evening sessions. Graeme and another member of Council staff would be present to explain and guide members of the public through the process.

A further consultation had been notified after the report had been Issued The Scottish Government's Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee was looking for written views on the **South of Scotland Enterprise Agency Bill**. The consultation had a closing date of 7 January 2019 and it was agreed the Jak Kane would draft a response.

c: Planning WP

Nick Walker had circulated a report prior to the meeting in but a further application for replacement windows and doors for a High Street Property had been submitted. Nick explained that Listed Building Consent for the works had been given in June and it was agreed that there should be no submission. Updates on earlier applications were noted.

Cllr McColm did not participate in the consideration of the subjects of the report.

d: McGuffie Memorial Report

Nick Walker said that there had been an underspend on the funds raised for the McGuffie VC celebrations and the Working Party were now looking into the possibility of using the surplus funds to refurbish the walls and railings surrounding the McGuffie Gardens and installing lights at the Memorial Arch. Paul Siddle, the blacksmith who had fabricated the memorial arch, had donated a replica Louis McGuffie VC Memorial Gardens sign for the entrance to the gardens nearest the Mercat Cross. Plaques re the memorial gates and flagstone including funders were to be arranged.

The dedication ceremony had been streamed live and it had been suggested that the footage could be edited and burned to DVD. DGC had no remaining budget but had advised that the video editing and provision of final edited AV recording of the McGuffie centenary event would cost £250. It was agreed that the Community Council could pay for this from the McGuffie funds.

Photographer Stephen Jolly had been at the event and would be uploading images to his website for purchase.

e: Federation - Derelict Buildings Pilot Project

Robin Richmond said that it had been reported that the owner of the High Street property had died and the property would be going on the market as the heirs were willing to sell and there was an interested buyer on the sidelines. It had been agreed that the pilot project had been productive with key council officers working with communities in a more positive and proactive manner. The Council has traditionally not been keen on compulsory purchase of derelict properties but the Community Empowerment legislation now allows communities to apply to buy land and buildings which are wholly or mainly abandoned or neglected.

The Annual General Meeting of the Federation was scheduled for Saturday, 17 November in the County Buildings, Wigtown.

f: Christmas Switch-on

Sandra McDowall outlined the arrangements that had been made for Friday, 30 November including : Creetown Silver Band, Santa Claus, County Buildings, Wigtown Community Shop for refreshments, Wigtown Princess, Rev Steve McGarva, Christmas lights checked, Road closure and liability insurance

Brian Little would deliver and install the Christmas tree by 17 November to allow the lights to be installed.

7 Community Defibrillator

A letter had been received from the Practice Manage of the Galloway Hills Medical Group (GHMP) and circulated prior to the meeting. She asked if the Community Council would

be prepared to take over financial and physical responsibility for the community defibrillator fixed to the side of the Wigton Surgery building. This would involve monthly testing and reporting to the Scottish Ambulance Service and providing the funds required to maintain the facility. This could include annual insurance of over £300, replacement electrode pads £50+, replacement rechargeable batteries c£400. It was suggested that the £7,800 passed by the former Wigton Partnership for Health to GHMP for its Equipment Fund should be used to cover the costs involved. The consensus was that the practice had a moral responsibility to retain responsibility for the defibrillator going forward particularly with the reduced opening hours of the facility which increased the value of having the machine available. It was agreed that Nick Walker would speak to the Practice Manager on an informal basis to try and identify a way forward.

8 CORRESPONDENCE, ETC

Thomas Wheatley Gravestone – a freelance journalist had written re the headstone of Thomas Wheatley (local manager of the Wigtonshire Railway line) at his grave in the Wigton High Cemetery. The headstone was almost illegible and he suggested that, if the CC was interested in restoring the headstone, readers of the Heritage Railway Magazine might be willing to support the restoration project. Jak Kane circulated images of the headstone and reported that the granite did not seem to have eroded, only the black lettering had disappeared and the stone may only need repainting. It was agreed that, before agreeing to actually do anything, that the cost of repainting the stone should be obtained.

Participatory Budgeting (PB) – an invitation had been received via the Council to an awareness raising and training session that was being organised by the Scottish Government and COSLA. The event would take place in Dumfries on Thursday, 22 November but Jak Kane explained that none of the three sessions appeared to be targeted at Community Councils. Session 1 was for Elected members/senior officers; Session 3 was for relevant Local Authority officers; with Session 2 targeted at “relevant Local Authority departments, other service delivery areas and partner organisations”.

Jak Kane expressed his concern that, despite the concerns highlighted to the Council about the lack of publicity given to last year’s round of PB funding, Machars Action had received information on the Council’s 2018-19 funding programme but the Community Council had not. Jak would circulate the information.

Speeding & Speed Limits Briefing Paper – The Council had circulated a guidance note on a range of topics in relation to speeding and speed limits on the region’s local road network. The paper had been written in consultation with Police Scotland.

Quality & Accessibility Survey – The Council was consulting in an effort to improve the quality and accessibility of its customer service and digital offering across the region via a short online survey.

Ready for Winter Roadshow – The Secretary had circulated information on a Resilience Roadshow organised by the Council for Wigton on 7 November 2018 with information only released on the day before.

If these walls could talk – Anne Barclay of Wigton Festival Company advised that Astrid Jaekel was returning on Friday to remove the remaining installations at the weekend with volunteers clearing up at ground level.

9 COUNCILLORS ISSUES

Cllr McColm said that the Council budget was the main issue being considered by elected members with the need to identify around £40m savings over the next three years contingent on the Scottish Government’s Budget statement in December 2019. He also mentioned the three-day Scottish Rural Parliament that would be meeting in Stranraer from 14 to 16 November. The event was open to everyone although people

needed to pre-register online. The Rural Parliament would bring together people from rural communities with decision-makers to examine a wide-range of issues affecting rural communities and make recommendations for change.

10 OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There was no other notified business but the secretary agreed to report a number of items raised at the end of the meeting including:

Potato Mill Road – There were two complaints about a leaning lamp post with concerns about the effect of it completely falling over.

Crossroads at Lightlands Terrace/Lightlands Avenue – Faulty lights at the crossroads had been reported but not repaired.

Southfield Lane – A wooden pallet with a large tote bag of building sand was encroaching on the road way and had been there for weeks rather than days.

Drains – Surface water during heavy rainfall was not draining away properly on Bank Street, North Main Street and Lightlands Avenue.

10 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 10 December 2018, at 7.30pm, Wigtown County Buildings.