

**ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNTY BUILDINGS, WIGTOWN,  
ON MONDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2015**

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[www.WigtownCC.org.uk](http://www.WigtownCC.org.uk)

**PRESENT**

Matt Kitson <i>Convenor</i>	Jak Kane <i>Secretary</i>	David Moran
David McAdam	Willie McCartney	Jock McDowall
Robin Richmond	Nick Walker	Joe McKeown

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Kerr Inger	William Lindsay	Police
Cllr Alistair Geddes	Cllr Jim McColm	Louise Kerr, <i>Galloway Gazette</i>
	David McKay <i>Wigtown Free Press</i>	

**APOLOGIES**

Cllr G Nicol

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Community Council presented an engraved vase to Betty McGowan MBE to mark the substantial efforts she had contributed to the community over the years and her retiral after some 35 years of service to the Community Council. Although lost to the Community Council, she is still fully involved in other community projects in Wigtown such as Wigtown in Bloom and the Community Shop.

**1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND CALL FOR URGENT OTHER BUSINESS**

Matt Kitson welcomed all to the meeting and acknowledged apologies for absence from Cllr Nicol. It was also noted that the Wigtown Community Festival Photo Competition should be included as 'Other Business'.

**2 POLICE MATTERS**

The Police were pleased to report that there had been no major incidents of police concern in Newton Stewart or Wigtown in the preceding month. There had also been no issues with parking during the Literary Festival although some young people were guilty of mischievously switching off the power to the lights in the main marquee on the opening night.

**3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 14 September 2015)**

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were adopted; proposed by Jock McDowall and seconded by Nick Walker.

**4 UPDATES & REPORTS**

**A: Consultations WP**

Jak Kane had circulated a report prior to the meeting (see Appendix A). Report approved.

Jak Kane explained that the report contained details of a number of online surveys that had been initiated by DGC and were targeted at individuals or, in the case of the Education Service Review, at parents and staff members. These surveys included: **Dumfries & Galloway Community Engagement**, where the Council wanted to find out what the community thinks of its work with engagement so far and what it thinks they could do better; **A Cultural Strategy for Dumfries & Galloway**, a survey that will inform the Cultural Strategy by ascertaining what stakeholders think and believe in relation to Culture; **Proposals identified from 2-18 Structural Delivery Service Review of Education**, consultation on the areas looked at and the proposed savings that will identify £3.4M savings by 2017/18 from a Service Review of all the Education Services for children

from the age of 2 to 18 across all Dumfries and Galloway; and, **Community Safety Survey**, consultation to help direct the priorities of the Community Safety Partnership by telling them what issues affect the community and how they can improve their overall service.

A copy of the Community Council's draft response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland's (LGBCS) **Ward boundary proposals in Dumfries and Galloway** had also been circulated prior to the meeting (see Appendix B). It was agreed that the response could be sent to LGBCS as it fairly represented the Community Council's position.

The report also contained details of forthcoming consultations: DGC's **Health and Social Care Integration – Locality Consultation** due to be launched on 19 October and; the Scottish Government's **2015 consultation on Management of Inshore Special Areas of Conservation and Marine Protected Areas**, originally scheduled for Summer 2015 and now expected Autumn 2015.

#### **B: Planning WP**

A report had been previously circulated by Nick Walker (see Appendix C). Report approved.

**Extension to Workshop, Unit 2A, Bladnoch Bridge Industrial Estate** – Nick advised that there were currently two objections lodged in connection with this proposal with grounds of it being a steel framed building within a Conservation area and car parking impeding access. It was agreed that Nick should contact the Planning Department to advise that the Community Council would like to submit a response but would like some time to allow formal consultation. If a response was needed before the next CC meeting on 9 November, the Planning WP would consult by email to agree a position. **ACTION NICK WALKER**

**Shennanton Windfarm** – Willie McCartney had attended the CLG meeting on 6 October. It had been announced that the proposed development had been taken over by a Canadian company, Brookfield, who had acquired all of PNE's project pipeline. Brookfield had said that it would welcome sponsorship/grant opportunities in addition to the community benefit offer pending any potential commissioning of the wind farm. Awards would be in the region of a few hundred pounds and it was suggested that the Community Council could look for help with Christmas lights and electrics.

#### **C: Louis McGuffie VC Commemoration Working Group**

Nick Walker had circulated the minutes of the Group's meeting held on 21 September. He explained that the new site proposed for the commemorative paving stone would allow it to be visible on entering the town gardens even when the Book Festival's principal marquee was in place. Meetings to discuss the town gardens' gateway would be arranged with Steven Dowling and the Planning Officer. DG First would be proceeding with the resiting of the bus shelter and related works once the tender process had been completed. The next meeting of the Working Group was scheduled for January 2016. **ACTION NICK WALKER/WILLIE McCARTNEY**

### **5 CARSEGOWAN PLANNING ISSUE**

William Lindsay had written to the Community Council re his concern that a potential purchaser of one of his buildings claimed that he had been told by a planning officer that planning permission for development of the building would be refused. Mr Lindsay attended the Community Council meeting to further expound on his frustrations and provide some background information. As statutory consultees, the Community Council could not do more than share Mr Lindsay's concern at the alleged stance of the Planning Officer. It was suggested that he should seek a meeting with Council members and perhaps a preplanning enquiry meeting with Planning Officers.

### **6 TASKS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Education Issue** – Wigtown Area Committee had convened a Community Meeting for Thursday, 5 November when DGC's Education Services would provide an update on the implementation of the agreed Committee recommendations from the Supporting Learners Service Review, and a chance to discuss how best to share information with parents. This was in addition to the aforementioned consultation on the proposals from the 2-18 Structural Delivery Service Review.

**Youth Representation** – Kerr Inger had been nominated as Community Councillor in the recent election but his nomination had been rejected because he was allegedly not included on the Electoral Roll despite having been registered for the recent referendum. It was agreed that this was

disappointing given the Community Council's long-held desire to have youth representation. It was agreed that Nick Walker would contact the Council's Area Framework team to resolve the situation.

**ACTION NICK WALKER**

**Community Resilience** – Nick had met with DGC's Wendy Jessop to discuss the Resilience Plan. With the prospect of additional resilience equipment being acquired and the need to store it somewhere accessible in Wigtown, it was agreed that an investigation into the potential siting of a storage container in the Lorry Park should be started. Nick undertook to contact DGC's Planning Department to determine the possibility and process of planning permission for such a project

**ACTION NICK WALKER**

**Wigtown Parking & Bus Stop** – As per Louis McGuffie report.

**Derelict Properties – 28 North Main Street:** Cllr Geddes advised that Jim O'Neill of DGHP had confirmed that Listed Building Planning permission for the work had been awarded subject to a redesign of doors/windows. DGHP had to take procurement advice on the retender process and with anticipated increase in costs, the revised scheme would need reapproval by DGHP board at its next meeting in 4-6 weeks' time. **24 High Street:** There had been no progress with work to address the issues associated with the property despite the ongoing assurances of the owner's son. Cllr Geddes had once more urged the Council to start the relevant Regulatory process by issuing a Section 179 Notice and contacting RSLs to gauge their interest in taking over the property. Cllr Geddes considered it unacceptable that the situation remained unchanged since the initial meeting in December 2014.

**Minutes Secretary** – There had still been no response to posters advertising the position.

**Wigtown Fairtrade** – No update

**Remembrance Day** - Nick confirmed that the wreaths had been received with the wreaths for Masonic Lodge and Kirkinner community given to Willie McCartney and Jak Kane respectively for distribution. It was agreed that Matt would collate the programme for the Remembrance ceremony and Nick should make efforts to secure a piper for the ceremony. **ACTION MATT KITSON/NICK WALKER**

**Community Council Elections** – DGC had confirmed that 10 candidates nominated for the Community Council had been elected unopposed as the number of valid nominations was less than the number of places available. These individuals would assume office as elected Community Councillors on 23 October 2015.

**Core Path** – Joe McKeown confirmed that he had been in contact with Richard Masters, DGC Access Officer. It had been arranged for the walk to be restored once the landowner had repaired a fence to make it stock proof.

**7 CHRISTMAS**

Matt Kitson advised that Wigtown Festival Company had confirmed it would again be organising its Winter Kist and he had been in touch with Creetown Silver Band re its participation in the community events. He would shortly be convening a meeting of the groups involved in the organisation of last year's festivities to follow up on the action plan agreed after last year's events.

**ACTION MATT KITSON**

**8 COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, ETC**

Correspondence received and not already covered previously in the meeting included:

- Dumfries & Galloway Business Week 5-10 October
- Community Council input into Area Committee meetings. (Stephen Jack, DGC Area Framework Team) To be considered by other Area Committees: Annandale & Eskdale – 21 October; Stewartry – 21 October; Nithsdale – 4 November. 'Ad Hoc Review of Schemes Sub Committee will consider their feedback on 4 December. It was agreed that the Broader Machars Federation should be asked to lobby its colleagues in other areas to engender support for this issue in their Area Committees. **ACTION NICK WALKER**

**9 COUNCILLORS ISSUES**

Cllr McColm reported that the Wigtown Area Committee had convened a Community Meeting on the Newton Stewart NHS Dentist Service. There remained continuing concern surrounding the

private providers ability to absorb the 660 patients currently using the NHS Service at the Health Centre and support for the continuation of a salaried Dental Service provision in Newton Stewart. Cllr McColm had met with Philip Gray of Bladnoch Distillery and had been told of the extensive range of improvement works to be carried out including the installation of two additional stills that would double capacity and cleaning out the old lade.

Both Cllrs McColm and Geddes spoke about the problems with the Council's Waste Recycling service which was running way above budget. An overspend of £435,000 had emerged with the council having to employ 26 additional collecting staff and a number of additional vehicles taken on. It had now been identified that the plan to roll out the recycling service across the rest of Dumfries and Galloway in its current form would not be sustainable. Cllr Geddes said that a number of Health & Safety concerns and unsafe working practices had also been identified by workers delivering the new service and he considered it a debacle that the service had been imposed on Wigtownshire with the full roll-out to the rest of Dumfries & Galloway now in abeyance.

#### **10 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Nick advised that despite the Community Photo competition being relaunched for children's entries at the start of the new school term, there had been no entries submitted. It was agreed that in future years there would need to be better advance publicity to generate a response. The Adult competition had been won by Sandra Birch with a picture of Garlieston.

Nick advised that the Broader Machars Federation of Community Councils was due to meet again in November 2015 and the reformed Sorbie and Port William Community Councils would be contacted to invite their participation.

#### **11 NEXT MEETING**

**Monday, 9 November 2015, at 7.00pm, Wigtown County Buildings**

Note earlier start time to allow for establishment of new Community Council before its first Business meeting

## Appendix A. Consultations Working Party - October 2015

- a) **Dumfries & Galloway Community Engagement** - Dumfries & Galloway Council. Closing date: 18 October 2015

Dumfries and Galloway Council wants to involve local residents and communities in its work and decision-making processes. This survey is to find out what you think of its work so far and what you think they could do better.

Online survey to be completed by residents, community groups & organisations and people who work in D&G but not resident. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VL89HJG>

- b) **A Cultural Strategy for Dumfries & Galloway** - Dumfries & Galloway Council. Closing date: 20 October 2015

In partnership with stakeholders, DGC is developing the region's second Cultural Strategy. It has been recognised that participating in a diverse cultural environment brings benefits to individuals and communities. The development of a Cultural Strategy will provide a framework from which local stakeholders and communities can combine resources, energies and commitment to developing, maintaining and promoting the regions cultural diversity.

The online survey is targeted at individuals and will inform the strategy on what stakeholders think and believe in relation to Culture. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SVKTJPR>

- c) **Ward boundary proposals in Dumfries and Galloway** - Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland (LGBCS). Closing date: 22 October 2015

The Commission is asking local people and interested parties to comment on its proposals for ward boundaries in the Dumfries and Galloway council area in a 12 week period of public consultation on proposed ward boundaries.

DGC's electoral arrangement will see 43 councillors representing five 3-member and seven 4-member wards.

Stranraer & North Rhins, Wigtown West and Mid Galloway wards will be merged to create two wards – Stranraer & the Rhins and Mid Galloway & Wigtown West - with each having four councillors.

- d) **Proposals identified from 2-18 Structural Delivery Service Review of Education** - Dumfries & Galloway Council. Closing date: 10 November 2015

Dumfries and Galloway Council to carry out a Service Review of all the Education Services for children from the age of 2 to 18 across all Dumfries and Galloway in order to identify £3.4M savings by 2017/18. This breaks down to £1.4M in 2016/17 and a further £2M in 2017/18. This saving is 11% of the total amount to be saved by Dumfries and Galloway Council by 2018. By looking at everything from age 2 to 18 the Council will be looking to find ways of "re-arranging services to ensure there is fair access to them and they make the best use of the money that's available". The Scottish Government decided in February 2015 that no local authority was allowed to reduce their teacher numbers. The budget for education services is mostly made up of teacher salaries so this meant that the Review Team had only a small number of budgets to look at to identify potential savings. The Review Team looked at all available remaining budgets and produced a list of potential savings totalling £1,877,215. This list includes proposals for both direct services within schools but also services which support schools from the centre. Some of the proposals identified will not directly affect school staff and pupils as they are part of the support mechanism for schools. You should read the background paper and FAQs before completing the survey. This will give you the details of the areas looked at and the proposed savings from each area:

- [Background paper \[177kb\]](#)
- [FAQ's \[93kb\]](#)

[Complete the survey on the Service Review of 2-18 Education here.](#)

- e) **Health and Social Care Integration – Locality Consultation** - Dumfries & Galloway Council. Closing date: 14 December 2015

It has been announced that the consultation for each of Dumfries and Galloway's four locality plans will be launched on 19 October. No details about any consultation events in Wigtown area but

Nithsdale Area Committee has already arranged a Community Meeting on the Nithsdale Locality Plan for HSCI for 13 October

- f) **Community Safety Survey** - Dumfries & Galloway Council. Closing date: 23 December 2015  
Dumfries and Galloway Community Safety Partnership wants the region to be the safest place in which to live, work and visit. The purpose of the consultation is to help direct the priorities of the Community Safety Partnership by telling them what issues affect you and how they can improve their overall service.

Online survey for individual residents. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BDLTMM9>

- g) **2015 consultation on Management of Inshore Special Areas of Conservation and Marine Protected Areas** - Scottish Government. Closing date: Autumn 2015

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. The management of Luce Bay & Sands SAC will be included in the consultation.

**Appendix B. Draft Response to Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland (LGBCS) re Ward boundary proposals in Dumfries and Galloway -.**

October 2015

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland  
Thistle House  
91 Haymarket Terrace  
Edinburgh  
EH12 5HD

Dear Sir/Madam

**FIFTH REVIEWS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS -  
WARD BOUNDARY PROPOSALS FOR DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY**

I have been instructed by Royal Burgh of Wigton & District Community Council to respond to the LGBCS's consultation on its proposals for Ward Boundaries in Dumfries & Galloway at the current stage of the Fifth Review of Local Government Electoral Arrangements.

The views expressed below are the unanimous views of the Community Council.

Wigton & District Community Council's main cause for concern with the proposals is that the methodology adopted by the Commission in determining Councillor numbers appears arbitrary and discriminates against rural areas in general and Wigtonshire in particular.

The Boundary Commission's proposals would see Wigtonshire losing both a full ward and one councillor. We believe that the three current Wigtonshire wards are already large and complex enough, and they ought to remain unchanged. The brunt of councillor number reductions should be borne by less remote and larger centres (in and around Dumfries especially) where the resultant direct impact on the level of community involvement from elected members would be diminished.

Rurality and distance from Council headquarters will result in our local elected members having a much harder job both in their ward (interacting with residents and groups, involvement with at least 10 community councils) and between their ward and Council HQ in Dumfries which can be up to 2 hours' drive away. The proposed Mid Galloway and Wigton West ward would be by far the largest of all D&G wards and would have four councillors covering an area that extends 30 miles west to east (Castle Kennedy – Carsluith) and north to south (Bargrennan - Isle of Whithorn). Much of the Mid Galloway and Wigton West area is classified as remote rural, with small communities often far apart, poorly connected by road and serviced by limited public transport. This makes a geographically large ward area very difficult for elected members. The nature of these small communities is variable and their issues often differ in nature, but even where they share specific concerns, solutions may need to be different. The level of need in some respects is particularly high in rural areas, with hidden rural deprivation, substantial isolation, and sparsely scattered, often poorly provided services. For all these reasons, large rural wards are best avoided, and multimember wards serve us poorly.

We have previously questioned the justification for the use of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation since it is widely accepted that the Index is not a good measure of rural deprivation. Even the LGBCS acknowledges that *"rural datazones generally cover larger areas than their urban counterparts and so contain a greater mix of deprived and less deprived people. This is compounded by the fact that poverty and deprivation are more spatially dispersed in rural areas than in urban areas. So in rural areas there are fewer small area concentrations of multiple deprivation for the SIMD to identify"*. Having said that Wigtonshire has four datazones in the first quintile of the most deprived datazones in SIMD 2012 and a further 16 in the second quintile (20-40% most deprived). With almost 50% of Dumfries & Galloway's population living outwith settlements of 3,000+ and living in settlements classified as remote rural at best, the Commission needs to make some allowance for the various

difficulties councillors encounter, especially in rural areas where there are problems in gaining access to constituents in more sparsely populated areas.

In its response to the proposals Dumfries & Galloway Council (DGC) made the point that there is no evidence to support the assumption on the part of the Commission that a Councillor who represents an area which meets the ratio in the Index will have a greater workload than that of a Councillor who does not and the cynical view might be that it is being used as a device for reducing the number of Councillors in rural areas and increasing those in urban conurbations. Dumfries & Galloway has been placed in Category Four along with seven other Councils based on population and deprivation distribution; six of these eight Councils have had their Councillor numbers reduced with a total loss of 16 Councillors.

We would contend that the multimember ward system should be repealed so that rural areas of a manageable size have a single elected member to deal with, and each elected member has a patch that can realistically be known and understood. This needs to be recognised and set against the ease with which more urban-based elected members, with less disparate issues to address, can get around their wards. Therefore, remote and rural wards ought to be smaller (on population count) than larger settlements and less far flung areas where the logistics of a councillor's job is easier.

## Appendix C. Planning Working Party Report For Full Comm. Council 12.10.2015

**Members** – Willie McCartney, Robin Richmond, Nick Walker

### Current applications

- 15/P/1/0226 EXTENSION TO WORKSHOP, UNIT 2A, BLADNOCH BRIDGE INDUSTRIAL STATE, WIGTOWN. **Recommend** - consider if submission appropriate.
- 15/P/1/0197 ERECTION OF DISTILLERY AND ASSOC. BUILDINGS, SEPTIC TANK, PARKING (10 spaces), ETC., OFF A714, BY BARHILL FARM, NEWTON STEWART. **Recommend** -consider if submission appropriate.

### Update on general applications

- 15/P/1/0205 RENEWAL OF PERMISSION (12/P/1/0261) FOR ERECTION OF DWELLINGHOUSE, GLENARROWN, BRAEHEAD. No CC submission per September meeting. D&GC has approved the application.
- 15/P/1/0217 FORMATION OF EARTH BANKED SILAGE PIT AND ASSOCIATED WORKS, ORCHARDTON FARM, KIRKINNER. No CC submission per September meeting. D&GC has approved the application n.

### Renewable energy proposals

- 15/P/1/0031 SHENNANTON WINDFARM, NEWTON STEWART. 12 turbines, 100m to blade tip, ancillary structures, etc. UPDATE: Ongoing negotiation and discussions between developer and other agencies, regarding bats, raptors, visual impact and listed building effects (on Shennanton House). Community Liaison Group met on 6.10.2015 (Jak Kane attended and can update).
- 15/P/2/0053 CALIFORNIA WINDFARM, CARSLUITH. 7 turbines, 110m to blade tip, structures, etc. UPDATE: Scottish Natural Heritage objection on several groups, mainly landscape impact. Decision deadline extended again, to 31.10.2015.
- 13/P/1/0366 AUCHLEAND WINDFARM, WIGTOWN. 7 turbines, 130 m to blade tip, ancillary structures, etc. UPDATE: Nothing since developer complained on 3.8.2015 at lack of word from D&GC on application progress to Planning Applications Committee. No significant activity since May 2015.
- 15/E/1/0008 SOLAR PANEL FARM, BALDOON. UPDATE: nil.

### Recommendations

Note report, consider new proposals.

**Nick Walker 11.10.2015**