



ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNTY BUILDINGS, WIGTOWN
ON MONDAY, 14 MAY 2018 June

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www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT

Sandra McDowall, Convenor	Jak Kane <i>Secretary</i>	David Moran
David McAdam	Willie McCartney	Jock McDowall
Joe McKeown	Robin Richmond	Kevin Witt

IN ATTENDANCE

PC M McFern, <i>Police Scotland</i>	Bryan Scott, DGC
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APOLOGIES

Kerr Inger	Matt Kitson	Nick Walker
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1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been sent by Kerr Inger, Matt Kitson and Nick Walker.

2 POLICE MATTERS

PC Mark McFern introduced himself as a Community Police officer based in Stranraer with responsibility as the Campus officer for Stranraer Academy.

The only local incident in the preceding month involving the police related to a van that left the road and ended on top of a dyke on the Wigtown to Bladnoch Road. The police had traced the driver and he had been reported for careless driving.

Other issues that the Police were concentrating on included the problem of agricultural contractors using their mobile phones while driving their tractor/trailers along rural roads and alerting rural landlords of incidences of rural properties being rented with the sole aim of cultivating cannabis.

In connection with the aforementioned vehicle incident, it was highlighted that a road sign had been knocked over by the driver and it was lying in a dangerous position at the side of the road. PC McFern undertook to have this dealt with. He would also ask colleagues to investigate caravans parked on Harbour Road and determine if they were causing an obstruction to the extent that the owners should be made to move them.

3 UPDATE ON CORE PATH, BLADNOCH

Bryan Scott, Team Leader with DGC's Outdoor Access Service had asked to come to the meeting to give an update on the Core Path 378 that ran along the River Bladnoch from the Distillery. He started by saying that Simon Fieldhouse had sent apologies that he could not attend as he had first indicated.

Bryan explained that Core Paths have protected status under the Land Reform Act but the difficulty with the Bladnoch path was that within the Core Path Plan, the path was shown as starting beyond both the main distillery buildings and the Manager's house with no direct link to the main road.

When the path was designated as a Core Path the then owners, the Armstrongs, did not object to walkers using the path and were deemed to have granted 'permissive access' across the Distillery car park to the start of the path but there was never any formal or written agreement to this effect. The new owners had withdrawn the informal permissive access and, following discussions with its Legal Services, the Council has determined that it has no powers under the Land Reform Act to enforce access. The Council had investigated but failed to identify workable options to access the path both from the north and south across the river, so the path was therefore inaccessible and had no functionality. A report would now go to the EEI Committee recommending that Core Path 378 be extinguished.

The Council would be carrying out a full Core Path Plans Review 2018-19 where it would look to identify gaps in the network where it would be beneficial to establish paths or provide links with existing Core Paths.

A discussion followed that clearly demonstrated the Community Council's dissatisfaction with the situation and intimated that the community would wish to see the Bladnoch Core Path retain its status in the hope that, at some time in the future, a solution to the access problem could be found with the co-operation of the existing or a new owner of the Distillery.

Bryan also reported that the surface of the Martyrs' Stake path had been improved.

4 APPROVAL OF AGENDA WITH NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Agenda was approved with the addition of grass cutting at the top cemetery and road drains.

5 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 9 April 2018)

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated. The minutes were adopted, proposed by Kevin Witt and seconded by Willie McCartney.

6 MATTERS ARISING

CCES Electric Car Recharging Point – In response to a request for Electric Car Recharging Point(s) to be installed in Wigtown the Council said that it “has no funding at the moment for charging units and the applications for funding aren't available as of yet”. Jak advised that there was 75% funding available now but few councils had taken advantage of the funding.

Registers of Scotland – the Secretary had requested an ownership search over the piece of land beside Park Cemetery and was awaiting a response.

CCES wall and railings around Town gardens - Karen Brownlie from the Council had said “Unfortunately there is no budget available to do this work this year, however we will request that this work forms part of the land asset class work in future years”.

7 UPDATES & REPORTS

a: Financial Report

The Treasurer had circulated a report prior to the meeting showing the breakdown of balances in the Administration and Festivals accounts as at 31 May 2018:

Administration	£1,500.92	Summer Festival	£2,433.43
Resilience	1,069.65	Christmas Festival	1,986.54
		McGuffie VC	<u>3,023.00</u>
Total	<u>£2,570.57</u>	Total	<u>£7,442.97</u>

Jak Kane said that he had paid £35 from the Admin account for the ICO annual fee. The £5,000 DGC Area Committee grant had been received for the McGuffie VC funds and £3,500 paid to the blacksmith fabricating the memorial archway.

b: Consultations WP

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting with information on current consultations, neither of which required a formal CC response:

Former Bank of Scotland– Wigtown & Bladnoch Community Initiative. The Initiative was consulting on the proposed community buy out of the Bank of Scotland building in Wigtown. They were conducting a survey as part of a programme of community engagement to identify best use of the building, to support the Community Right to Buy application and to secure funding support from the Scottish Land Fund

Community Conversations on Streetscene services – Dumfries & Galloway Council had arranged a consultation meeting in the County Buildings on 14 June 2018 that would influence the delivery of 'Streetscene' services in the community (including grass cutting, grounds maintenance and street cleansing). It was agreed that Sandra McDowall would attend and raise the issue of grass cutting in the top cemetery.

c: Planning WP

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. New applications had been received in connection with extensions to a property in Kirkland Terrace and with work involved in bringing a

ruined cottage at Barnbarroch back into use. The report recommended no submission on either application and this was agreed.

The update on the Duncan Park application was noted

d: Resilience WP

Joe McKeown reported that he had been contacted by an Assessor acting for the Kilgallioch Community Fund to discuss the funding application.

e: McGuffie VC Memorial

Nick Walker was not at the meeting but had earlier indicated that there was nothing significant to report other than that blacksmith, Paul Siddle had been paid a first instalment and was progressing with fabrication of the archway.

f: Civic Week WP

Sandra McDowall had circulated notes of a meeting held on 16 May 2018 and she said planning seemed to be progressing well.

8 CORRESPONDENCE

Galloway National Park Association (GNPA). GNPA had arranged a series of public meetings on what a National Park is and why they think it would be great for this area. All meetings start at 7pm with the Wigtown meeting on 11 June, which unfortunately coincided with the CC meeting. Other local meetings were scheduled for CatStrand, New Galloway on 12 June, Ryan Centre, Stranraer on 18 June and Douglas Ewart High School on 21 June.

Lochancroft Lane – An email had been received from a resident in Lochancroft Lane in connection with a neighbour dispute. Rather than provide details in the open meeting due to the confidential nature of the issue, the Secretary would liaise with the Council on the resident's behalf.

9 COUNCILLORS' ISSUES

There was no local authority member at the meeting to provide any information.

10 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Grass Cutting – Perhaps due to the weather, the grass at the top cemetery was very long and the graveyard was looking unkempt. As previously noted it was agreed that the Council's Community Conversations on Steetscape Services on 14 June would be the ideal place to raise the issue with the Council.

Drains – David McAdam said that there were two Wigtown locations subject to flooding in heavy rainfall which it appeared could be due to blocked road drains that had not been cleared for some time - a) corner of North Main Street and High Vennel and b) the junction between High Vennel and Botany Street. It was agreed that the Council would be asked to arrange for the drains to be investigated/treated.

10 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held on Monday, 9 July 2018 in Wigtown County Buildings starting at 7:30 pm.